distinctions between sorcery and witchcraft: the two imply different modes of behaviour, and different social relationships (Evans-Pritchard 1937). Nupu witches become what they are through an act of choice: they buy their secret, they don't inherit it (Nadel 1933). Wambuiage make clear-cut linguistic distinctions between witches and sorcerers, but these distinctions trend to blur in practical situations (Gray 1963). In a world marked by such variety in beliefs and behaviour, our best approach is to report accurately what we find, and to closely analyze those distinctions or features that appear to be significant either to the actors involved, or in a cross-cultural perspective. Rather than be guided by a formal paradigm, we should adopt an inductive paradigm of utility. For example, Lindenbaum (1979) tells us that Foure distinctions between pollution, witchcraft, and sorcery may represent a continuum of danger and power. For one (1970) reports the differences between sorcery and witchcraft among the Abelam, and relates them to differences in internal and external threats to society. Our task is to distinguish between differences that are significant and meaningful in terms of social behaviour, and differences that are trivial. Only through adequate description can we guard against letting our concepts and distinctions run away with themselves. We create theory as a tool to aid in the analysis of data. When data do not conform to theory, the fault lies with the concepts, not with the information. If concepts and theories are inadequate or artificially binding, they must be rejected or modified to suit the information at hand. When theory fetters analysis, it is counter-productive.

A Final Word

This introduction and the papers in this volume do not exhaust the issues involved in the study of sorcery and social change. The papers should provoke discussion on the topic. Melanesianists have long sought to explain the variety and permutations of cargo cults as a reaction to the pressures of social change. The contributions to the present volume explore another avenue of explanation of the process of social change and interaction between, and colonial and post-colonial institutions. One cannot only hope that the relationship between sorcery and social change receives the attention it so rightly deserves.

NOTES
1. Most of the papers included in this volume initially formed part of a symposium on "Sorcery and Social Change" held at the 1978 and 1980 annual meetings of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania. In addition to the present contributors, the symposium benefited from the active participation of Jennifer Brindle, John F. Fischer, Peter Hob, William Michael, William and Margaret Radin, and Roger Ward, as well as from a stimulating audience. The present author would like to thank the editors and referees of Social Analysis for their support and constructive criticism. Jat Griffin for his editorial help and encouragement, and Savi Amaring for delaying her entry into this world until I could finish a draft of this introduction.
2. The lines of debate, of course, were not in clear-cut as the above would suggest. Marwick succinctly ignores the growing body of evidence from Africa (e.g., Bohannan 1938, Gray 1963, LaFraunze 1963, Nadel 1951) which contradicted his position; indeed, there are many African societies where sorcery and witchcraft had valid, legitimat social contexts of use.
3. I am not presenting a formal theory of power and sorcery here. Formal anthropological theories (of power exist (see, e.g., Adams 1977, Burn, Cooper & Wild 1972), but here there are no explicit hypotheses to be tested. Before such hypotheses can be formulated, we need a preliminary examination of the phenomena in question. The following discussion covers the preliminary groundwork.
4. Sorcery as a necessary or legitimate attribute of leadership frequently poses a dilemma for followers, as they recognize the potential for corruption (see Bohannan 1959, LaFraunze 1963, Nadel 1951, Smith 1959).
5. The replacement of warfare by sorcery is a frequently noted event in Melanesia. See, for example, Lederman and Zelnitz (this volume).

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SORCERY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN MENDI

Rena Lederman

Introduction

The recent history of the Mendi has been laced with concern about a new form of sorcery, called boitol. Boitol is said to have been imported to the Mendi Valley, in the Southern Highlands Province, from economically more developed parts of Papua New Guinea. Some Mendi people think that boitol originated somewhere on the coast, and a few think it came from Simbu Province. In any case, they believe that those who invented boitol follow customs of the white people (Australians and other "Europeans"). Boitol sickness is characterized by absence-like symptoms which are thought to be caused by bits of glass, bottle caps, nails and wire accumulating in the victim's body. A ritual cure involves the use of trade tobacco, tinned corned beef, instant coffee and other items. Like the glass and nails said to be used by sorcerers, these are also products of Western industry. While neither the ailments to which boitol is attributed nor the basic format of the cure are new in Mendi, boitol's novel symbolism reflects a basic shift in the Mendi's perception of their social universe. This universe itself has changed dramatically in the last thirty years since the coming of the whites and of Australian administrative control.

This paper presents an account of one boitol curing ceremony which took place in 1978 among the Suolol tribe, in the Upper Mendi Valley, and seeks to set beliefs and practices with respect to this form of sorcery in a wider sociocultural context. Sorcery accusations (that is, ascriptions of responsibility for certain illnesses and deaths to human agents who are believed to achieve these harmful ends by means of the systematic manipulation of powerful substances) are the terms in which social and political conflict is expressed in Mendi. As elsewhere in the New Guinea Highlands, Mendi sorcery beliefs and practices constitute what Shirley Lindenbaum (1979:126) has called a "political epidemiology", and contrast with our own "germ" theory of disease. Some observers claim that the fear of sorcery is a mechanism of social control, but it is surely more than this. In particular, sorcery beliefs are a part of the moral or ethical framework of traditional Mendi social relations. Therefore, an understanding of them must be an important part of any sensitive description of the transformations Mendi society has undergone since the initial Australian colonial presence there in 1950, through to the present period of Papua New Guinea's political independence.

Until recently, the Mendi understood sorcery both as a means to averge [sic] the death [sic] of members of one's own group by members of enemy tribes in times of war, and as a weapon used by people against less-than-generous Big Men of their own tribe, who did not redistribute their wealth adequately. As a new kind of illness, boitol is explicitly understood to be the work of the Mendi as just one more tool employed by sorcerers in the same ways that their older forms of sorcery are used. But then, boitol has emerged in a period of Mendi history qualitatively different from the time when older forms of sorcery appeared. Perhaps because of this, it is a telling reflection of the complex new tensions concerning increasing inequalities among close relatives, tensions that have come with opportunities for cash-earning development projects.
It may be significant that, unlike the common, traditional uses of sorcery against the members of enemv groups, or against arrogant Big Men within the sorcerer's own group, *botol is thought to be used in conflicts between allies and "brothers"; people who have joint interests and land being developed as sites for commercial cattle pastureage and coffee gardens.

**Mendi Social Groups, Localities and "Development"**

It has frequently been suggested that one has to understand the structure of in-and-out-groups in order to interpret political action like sorcery feuds (cf., e.g., Douglas 1970, Lindenbaum 1979; Patterson 1974: 5). Therefore, some background on Mendi social structure is necessary before presenting an account of *botol*. Mendi "clans" (sem omda) are corporate land-holding groups; each clan has a discrete territory within which members may garden, build houses, collect firewood, and so on. Clans are maximal exogamous units as well. Marriages take place predominantly with members of neighbouring, allied groups. Women usually move to their husband's clan territory when they marry, though they retain strong ties with their natal group. In preserving these ties, far from encouraging a further separation of the women from their natal group, the exchanges of women are a further indication of the internal organization of Mendi society. Women usually move to their husband's clan territory when they marry, though they retain strong ties with their natal group. In preserving these ties, far from encouraging a further separation of the women from their natal group, the exchanges of women are a further indication of the internal organization of Mendi society.

While the Mendi articulate patrilineal descent idioms to express the solidarity of their corporate groups, they are nonetheless, however, continually defined and redefined in the context of ceremonial and exchange relations. For example, men have very strong rights of membership not only in their father's clan but in that of their mother as well. Membership in the latter group may be acquired by taking up residence there. During the precolonial period, individuals or groups of men often sought refuge with their mother's (or alternatively, their sister's) kin when their own clan was defeated in war. Individuals and groups still change their residences this way during serious disputes, including those involving sorcery accusations. Therefore, even through the 1970s, many Mendi clans included some individuals and whole sub-clans claiming no agnostic relationship to the ancestral founder of the clan. But whether they are related agnatically or not, sub-clans live in "neighbourhoods" within the clan territory, and plant their gardens on plots of land in all parts of it intermixed with the plots of members of other sub-clans. Each clan territory includes one large active ceremonial ground (koma), which is used for large-scale prestations and public meetings, and around which one or more men's clubhouses are grouped. It also may include several smaller *koma*.

Mendi clans ally themselves into "tribes" or clan clusters in Ryan's (1959) terminology; also called sem omda in Mendi). Tribes may have between 700-1,500 members, most of whom live in several localities within a contiguous territory. They are political units whose component clans have a history of cooperation in warfare against major enemy groups and in ceremonial exchange. They may join together in even wider alliances, which may include as many as 3,000 people. When a organized lethal aggression within clans is rare, such fighting has occurred between members of different clans within a tribe, and between allied tribes. However, this is not the case. In both the Mendi and their neighbors, there were no large-scale wars, sporadically selling rice, tinned deaths that result. On the other hand, fighting between enemy tribes is systematic and expected, rather than exceptional, and these groups do not expect to receive compensation payments. In such occasions, they will occur and have occurred in the past, but heavy rains washed out a bridge, and landless clans, nor are they exogamous. Their origin stories do not imply the existence of a single founding ancestor, and members of their component clans often marry one another.

Waparapa, the Southern Highlands Province government "census unit" of 340 people in which fieldwork was conducted, was comprised of several sub-clans of the Molem and Kurekla clans of the Suolol tribe, living in three localities: Kurekla sub-clans at Wepra, and Molem sub-clans at Molmanda and at Sonkere. Members of these groups were in the final stages of preparations for a *sukle* (mokok indi) pig festival during the time I was in residence. The Molem koma in Sonkere had been enlarged to accommodate the long houses built in preparation for the arrival of festival visitors, and as a result, Sonkere constituted a social centre for the area, though there was also an active koma at Wepra. Members of other sub-clans of the Molem and Kurekla clans lived in the next "census unit" to the south, Kombal, about fifteen minutes walk downhill from Sonkere; these people also planned to kill their pigs at Sonkere. Still other sub-clans of Molem and Kurekla lived on the other side of a forested ridge, about four hours walk to the northeast, in another "census unit" called Kuma; members of the groups living at Kuma would be killing their pigs on the same day as the people living at Waparapa and Kombal, but would do so at their own main koma. The Suolol tribal territory, including these three "census units", is a discrete physical unit, although subclans identified with Molem and Kurekla also live in localities in other parts of the Mendi Valley, and even in other parts of the Southern Highlands Province.

Thus, another characteristic of the internal organization of Mendi tribes and clans is relevant to the subsequent discussion of *botol*. Even though the Mendi use patrilineal descent idioms to express the solidarity of their corporate groups, they are nevertheless continually defined and redefined in the context of ceremonial and exchange relations, sorcery accusations and other arenas of competition and conflict. Clans and tribes are not organized hierarchically, as segments of a lineage system; sub-clans do not always combine in a manner predictable from the clan genealogy (Lederman n.d.). In the particular case I will be discussing, three sub-clans of the Kurekla clan were ranged against each other. Two of the Kurekla sub-clans living at Wepra (which I will refer to as Kurekla-2 and Kurekla-3) supported a sub-clan of Molem (Molem-1) living at Kombal in its dispute with the third Kurekla subclan (Kurekla-1) also resident at Kombal, which was itself supported by affinal and ceremonial ties with the Suolol sub-clan of the Kurekla tribe. Intra-tribal "brothers" do not kill one another, after all. The accused sorcerer in Kurekla-1 denied this realignment at the same time as he denied being a sorcerer.

Mendi fits the central Highlands pattern of pig keeping and sweet potato gardening. Their particular variant is most similar to the Enga population described by Waddell (1972), and includes intensively cultivated, permanent fields of tubers planted in large mounds, and closely managed pig herds. For a variety of geographical and historical reasons, Mendi and the Southern Highlands Province generally are economically under-developed (from a Western viewpoint) relative to most other places in Papua New Guinea. The Australian authorities first set up a government station in Mendi only in 1950, and a good quality extension of the Highland Highway did not pass through Mendi town until the mid-1970s. In the Sersa sub-tribe, there were a few trade stores, sporadically selling rice, tinned mackerel and tobacco, but there were no operating coffee or cattle projects (though there is much interest in cattle in the valley). A road had been extended through Kombal and Sonkere in 1975 or so, but heavy rains washed out a bridge, and land slides destroyed much of the road between these two Suolol localities the year after it had been built. No repair work had been attempted, partly because its destruction was implicated in the complex web of sorcery accusations of which the botol episodes were a part. Numbers of men from the community had been to work temporarily in Mendi town (the provincial government seat of the Southern
Highlands) or elsewhere, and several were beginning to have small incomes from coffee (these they owned on the land of a branch of Suolod located outside Mendi, in another district of the Southern Highlands, Saliba. A handful of men had schooling past Standard 6 (Australian/British primary school level). A few men had permanent jobs, with the exception of the Aid Post Orderly, they lived outside the rural community, in Mendi town or elsewhere in Papua New Guinea. A World Bank-financed rural development project, which was gaining momentum in 1978 and 1979, will change the Province dramatically in the next several years, but it is likely that places like Senkerei will remain on the sidelines of economic development because of high altitude, rugged topography and social factors affecting the availability of land and labour (Simpson 1976; 1978).

While production projects aimed primarily at market sale are uncommon in Mendi, Mende do participate vigorously in non-market wealth-exchange ceremonies centering on death, marriage and pig festivals. Modern Papua New Guinea currency and traditional pigown wealth circulate in these exchanges, and European-introduced cows occasionally change hands, along with pigs, at marriages, at funerary payments, and during pig-killing festivals. Consequently, there is a need for money and introduced livestock generated within the traditionael economy. Money-making projects are increasingly seen as prestigious activities in themselves, much like ceremonial wealth displays, but they are convertible into indigenously meaningful social credits only if the wealth is reinvested in traditional exchange networks; the capital must be redistributed generously to relatives and other change partners. There is a crucial conflict between this social ethic and the kind of social relations engendered by money-making (in)vidual (Melanesian pidgin for business or commercial) projects, which depends on the reinvestment of capital in enterprises that are individually owned and which are associated with a more individualistic attitude to the uses of wealth. The conflict between the social ethic of redistribution and the (in)vidual ideal relates directly to the sources of sorcery accusations and fears in Mendi.

Sorcery, Exchange and the Morality of Social Life in Mendi

Sorcery accusations in Mendi reflect disturbances in proper social relations. Mendi social relations are relatively egalitarian, even in the Highlands context. As elsewhere in the Highlands, members of a proper social relationa evis. They are the expected outcome of human between antithetical values of "strength" and "equivalence" (Read 1959). The tension between "strength" and "equivalence" is demonstrated particularly clearly in competitive ceremonial exchanges, which may involve interclan imbalances or "wins" by one side (be it a person or a group), as each asserts its strength over the other and acquires prestige. But overall, these imbalances must even out or else they will lead to feelings of envy or resentment (cevy noli in Mendi) between the parties. Antagonism resulting from a lack of equivalence is most satisfactorily dealt with through a sustained and successful effort to balance exchanges. However, this is not always possible.

While it is one expected result of bad feelings, sorcery is deemed a poor way of righting a balance. The only context in which "good" men are forced to act against their will is when they are accused of sorcery (Big Men) are said to use sorcery to avenge deaths inflicted upon their group by major enemies. For example, in Mendi several men from a group suffering such a death might gather together at night to perform a kind of sorcery called ulimo, which is said to have been imported to Mendi long ago from the Huli, another central Highlands people living to the west of Mendi. Ulimo ritual procedures are said to have the power of "downing" or neutralizing of sorcery status (Big Men) are said to use sorcery to avenge deaths inflicted upon their group by major enemies. For example, in Mendi several men from a group suffering such a death might gather together at night to perform a kind of sorcery called ulimo, which is said to have been imported to Mendi long ago from the Huli, another central Highlands people living to the west of Mendi. Ulimo ritual procedures are said to have the power of "downing" or neutralizing of sorcery
balanced either by other deaths or, preferably, by wealth exchanges. Positive and negative exchanges — the amplification of social networks through wealth exchange and the construction of networks by means of death — are interconvertible: there are mechanisms conducive to and polarizing deaths into socially constructive exchange networks again.

The Mendi claim that the incidence of sorcery is increasing. While there is no way of confirming this claim, the observation of doubling of named types of sorcery over the past twenty years does support it indirectly. In the past, "poisons" and sorcery procedures were said to be obtained primarily from places like Erave, an area to the south of Mendi and on the lower 3tribe, more heavily forested periphery of the Highlands, where Mendi believed many powerful sorcerers lived. Today, in a period of widening geographical awareness, new forms of sorcery like botal are thought to come from other places, like Simbu and coastal Papuan New Guinea, which are more sophisticated and economically more "developed" than Mendi. This shift from a concern with Erave (representing "forest" people) to a concern with Simbu and the coast (representing industrial and commercial society) reflects a change in the Mendi's perception of their social universe, and a corresponding change in their belief system. This, in turn, relates to their perception of themselves and their community and the Mendi dilemma: How do we begin to understand the situation to which I will return below. More deaths are attributed to sorcery nowadays also partly because of mission suppression of beliefs in ancestor ghosts (see Tankard, this volume). Ghosts and ancestral spirits were used to be regarded as a more significant cause of death than they are today.

The increase in sorcery deaths is seen by Mendi as directly related to the prevalence of men working for wages within and outside of Mendi. They see this new source of vulnerability to the reasons why Big Men are traditionally targets for sorcery attack. I was told by Big Men and other, ordinary men that people who did not go to school or work for money — just like people who are not successful in traditional exchange — feel envious of those who do these prestigious things, and sorcerer them as a result. People who work for wages or who engage in bistas are generally thought by rural people to share their wealth inadequately and to be concerned exclusively with buying food, clothes and such for themselves. Independence, in 1973, merely exacerbated the problem (in the view of many people. They claim that there are now fewer jobs, that educational requirements for work are too high, and that there is no great desire to take orders from a wanskin (non-white Papuan New Guinea).

Like the bad feelings generated by the behaviour of a Big Man who is ungenerous, similar feelings provoked by differential involvement in Western education and wage work (together with the withdrawal from rural social networks these things imply) are motivated by sorcery. The general confusion of community members about the particular mechanisms involved in practicing this form of sorcery, and about the nature of the symptoms, can be explained perhaps by botal's novelty. People generally thought that the symptoms were caused by a sorcerer who made glass, wire, nails and other items enter the body of the victim, and accumulate under the skin, eventually causing death. The idea behind the cure was to feed Pau certain foods which could cause the botal's poison to rise to his skin's surface and collect at a point where they might be extracted.

The ritual expert for this particular ceremony (known by the general term nemron or "spell maker") was in his 35, came from another part of the Mendi Valley, and had been brought in by a member of the Senkere community whom he had met at another time. The nemron of had to have had a dream telling him that the cure would be successful before agreeing to try to help Pan. In all of these characteristics (except perhaps his age) this nemron of was typical of Mendi curers. He was also similar to curers, for example, among the Eastern Highlands Fore.

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Lindernbaum notes that Fore experts also belong to neutral parishes, distant from that of the victim. Curers among the Fore also often derive their powers from dreams or trance states.

Present at the curing ceremony were Pan and his witnesses: his father, two men from his sub-clan (Kureaka-2), a mother’s brother’s son, and a member of Kureaka-3. The nemokol of his sponsor from Molem was also present, as was his husband. The cure took place in a small, enclosed shelter outside Pan’s house.

In the first part of the ceremony, the nemokol of boiled beef, which he had brought with him, in a pot of water and washed Pan’s neck and upper back with it, as well as with soap. Pan had purchased from a trade store in town. He then rolled a long cigarette, the length of a tabloid newspaper page, using trade-store tobacco and part of the same leaf he had boiled. He blew smoke from the cigarette onto the area he had washed. With another leaf, he brushed the washed area as if to push something underneath the skin to one central spot. When he had finished this procedure, he bit hard into the skin of the swollen area on Pan’s neck, sucked vigorously, and spat out blood and fluid. This second area had nothing visibly wrong with it before it was bitten. The blood and fluid were brushed into a banana leaf and placed in the roof of the shelter. Pan, who had neither flinched nor uttered a sound during this operation, then smoked the cigarette, swallowing or inhaling the smoke of nemokol. Pan’s sponsor went out to prepare an earth crust in order to cook a pig which Pan had contributed as part of the payment for the nemokol of services. This first part of the ceremony was inconclusive since so much evidence of the nemokol itself had been found in the blood.

The nemokol of then opened a tin of corned beef and placed four slices of it on a tin plate. He broke small pieces of a bit of bark, which he had brought with him, onto the corned beef sliced pieces of bark, and covered each with a second slice of meat, making four “sandwiches”. Simultaneously, one of the observers prepared a cup of instant coffee, adding three tablespoons of sugar. Bark was scraped into the coffee, and the nemokol of relit the cigarette. Reversing the previous procedure, he placed the lighted end in his mouth. He blew the smoke of out the end of the cigarette onto the meat and coffee. Pan then ate all the meat-and-bark sandwiches and drank all the coffee. During the second part of the ceremony, outside the shelter, the pig was killed and its blood collected and put in a jar of water set simmering over the fire.

At this point, Pan’s mother brought in a net bag containing the pearlshells and money meant as payment to the nemokol. A total of six pearlshells (worth an average of U.S.$12-15 each) and K21 (about U.S.$30 in 1978) were shown to the nemokol of. After he approved the payment, two long strips of pig belly far were shared out and eaten by the observers, who were all thus bound to follow certain food and activity restrictions for at least two weeks. The success of the cure depended in part on their adherence to these restrictions.

The nemokol of then completed the second part of the ceremony by once again biting Pan three times and placing four slices of glass along with more blood and fluid. He bit each twice, as before, but produced only more fluid. He then explained that the three fragments of glass were all there. He claimed that Pan has three times has been through his back and the second time through his neck. He said that the boil in his back had moved up to the spot in his neck to cause the swelling. Every “vermiform” has the same source.

In the final part of the ceremony, the main hole through which the nemokol of claimed boil in Pan’s body was sealed. A square of soap was cut, moistened with water and pig blood and stuck to a spoon on Pan’s back just below where the nemokol of had bitten. Five matches were struck into the soap, lit, and a tin cup quickly placed over them. The cup held fast to Pan’s back when it was released, perhaps because of the vacuum-like effect caused by the burning matches. One of the observers pulled cup off. The matches, soap and banana leaf containing the glass were all put into the cup and crushed together. Later, they were buried. Pan’s back was finally wiped with the cooked and congealed pig blood. The ceremony ended with the distribution of the pork, the pearlshells and money payment, and the commencement of the period of food and behavioral restrictions.

While its symbolism is unusual, in some ways, boil is typical of society in Mendi. No one claimed that Pan’s symptoms were unusual. The boil ritual was itself similar to other cures in Mendi which generally involve a meal of marusipal or forest rat meat and barks, and work by attempting to reverse the procedures by which the illness is caused. In particular, the victim’s skin is often punctured to draw out harmful substances by the same route along which they had passed when they entered the body. Cures reflect a concern with the “porousness” and vulnerability of the body, a concern Lindernbaum describes at length for the Eastern Highlands Fore (1979:55-68).

But, instead of the more usual gives of bamboo, the boil victim is violated by albers of glass. Instead of consuming marusipal meat and the smoke of indigenous tobacco and leaves, the boil victim is fed boiled corned beef and the smoke of trade tobacco and sheets of newspaper. Traditional sorcery cures combine products of the village (e.g. pork) with products of the forest (e.g. barks, marusipal meat). The boil cure substituted products of Western industry for some of the usual forest products used in typical cures. It might be noted that many Mendi feel that store-bought foods like tinned meat and fish, sugar and coffee, and even snack foods like “cheese pops”, have special nutritive value in everyday, non-religious, contexts. Western things are considered “strong”, like the society that produced them. The replacement of Western things for forest things reflects a reorientation in Mendi perception of the boundaries of their social world. Formally bounded by the powerful and dangerous worlds of the forest spirits and ancestral ghosts relations with whom are controlled through ritual exchanges—Mendi society is now also divided by the world of town, home and government, with which mode of relationship has yet to be devised.

The boil cure provides some clues about Mendi solutions to the problem of their relationship with the Westernized world. Since the dangerous power of boil came in part from this world, so too the cure. Instead of having an older traditional man, the boil nemokol of was a young man who was somewhat Westernized himself and could plausibly claim to know how to manipulate the white man’s things to undo the damage they had caused. Under his guidance, but manipulated according to traditional patterns, “strong”, store-bought things could be made to undo their harm. Indigenous control over the well-being of Pan was not relinquished. He was not sent to the hospital in town.

Boil was typical of Mendi sorcery on another level besides the one discussed above. Lindernbaum argues that among the Fore, “the image of the human body is used to make symbolic statements about the body politic”, and she notes that Mary Douglas’s “has commented that when ritual express anxiety about body orifices, the social counterpart is the group’s concern to protect its political and cultural identity” (1978:68). Similarly, Mendi concern with the vulnerability of the body is echoed by a congruent concern with the viability of their tribal groups. Incidents of boil are inserted into a dense mesh of accusations concerning unbalanced exchanges between the Kureaka and Molem clans of Suolol, and reflect the emergence of new sources of inequality and competition between individuals and groups. Boil was
additional problems such a project would entail for what they consider proper social relationships.

In the account given here, the significance of a development project was conditioned by the particular history of social and political tensions in the community. Many factors contributed to its failure, and where one might have been sufficient. Thus, Mendi land tenure rules are a barrier to those development projects which require large blocks of land. Traditionally, production is individualized, and coordination of production is an indirect result of the requirements placed on producers by their joint plans to participate in tribal group ceremonies. In a cattle project, on the other hand, cooperation in production is required, whereas the proceeds become individualized and possibly even centralized in one person's hands. Equally, traditional social morality, and the sanctions (like sorcery) upholding it, may also be a barrier to development projects so long as these projects are understood to promote systematic inequality, and to withdraw wealth, land and labour from traditional social networks and from group producers. That business has itself become a context for the ramifications of sorcery accusations in the Highlands in this way can be gleaned from a review of the literature on the limits on entrepreneurial activity in the Highlands (e.g., Finney 1973).

The abolition of warfare, and mission criticism of some of the ceremonies which validate and actualize Mendi tribal groups, may tend to result in political fragmentation. Development projects threaten to contribute to this situation. On the other hand, pig kills are an important expression of tribal unity, of the common purpose of large numbers of people. The successful demonstration of unity and of the viability of indigenous political organization, embodied in Suolol's recent titular, parallels the assertions of autonomy and indigenous control implicit in the botol cure. Although the cure invokes the power of Western produce, it attempts to turn their destructive power into a healing force, by means of an indigenous, not an introduced, curative idiom. The cure substitutes manufactured items for forest things, reflecting a reorientation of Mendi understanding of the powers available both for constructive and destructive use by human beings. Like the pig kill, the botol cure expresses a faith in indigenous social and cultural forms. Implicitly, botol also contains a critique of Western society, where the exchange of products which have become ends in themselves threatens to overwhelm the medium through which relations between people are continually expanded, deepened and equalized.

NOTES

1. All names in the account are fictitious. Thanks to S. Lindenbaum, A. Rosman, M. Zeleznick, and to Social Science's outside reader for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper. The research on which the analysis is based was made possible by predoctoral grants from the National Institutes of Mental Health and from National Science Foundation.

2. Hence the term botol, Metabolism Piggin for glass or bottle. Botol is reminiscent of a form of sorcery common (and increasing in incidence) in the Eastern Highlands, a region with a longer colonial history than the Southern Highlands. See references to Tokubai in Lindenbaum (1979).

3. Indeed, as I argue elsewhere, Mendi Big Men do fear of sorcery, and this fear has a real effect on their behaviour in exchange (Lederman n.d.). Such a system of belief can be transformed, of course. For example, in the Fire case, where the number of deaths attributed to sorcery was excessive and could not be justified, local social processes may have been blamed and scapegoated by Big Men (Lindenbaum 1979:145). We have another structure of power entirely in cases where the alleviation of leadership believed to depend on access to dangerous powers, or where systems of ascetic ritual are superficially similar beliefs.

4. Mendi men as well as women will attest this about warfare in particular men do pride themselves on performing well in battle. There is, however, a stark contrast concerning attitudes to warfare between men who are too young to have experienced pre-colonial fighting and older people who remember three times. In the context of young men's warlike glorification of fighting dies, older men resent the discussions of vigilance and the horrors of surprise attack and rout.

5. O'Anny Ryan, who worked in Mendi in the 1950s, reported two types of sorcery whereas, twenty years later, I heard about eight kinds. However, sorcery was a primary research focus for neither one of us, and no doubt neither of our lists is complete. Lindenbaum uses this comparative method in her discussion of the increased incidence of sorcery among the Fuei (1979:16).

6. However, I do not think that this shift has the same implications for the Mendi concerning changes in cultivation techniques, as it does for the Tari. See Lindenbaum (1979: Ch. 6.)

7. Thanks, here, to Michael Merril for his blow by blow description of this ceremony. My description is based on his detailed account and on discussion with other participants. On the day of the Paun's curing ceremony, I was attending a memorial purification ceremony elsewhere in the village.

8. These restrictions involved a ban on the eating of certain greens (including introduced cabbage), and on labour in the forest (e.g., cutting bush rope and lifting trees), and were similar to the restrictions following many other ceremonies (including marriage).

9. In that it involved the manipulation of Western items, a few superficial similarities to some coastal cargo cult performances. The contrasts and relationships will be explored in another paper.

10. On the most general level, all forms of sorcery in Mendi are associated with physical symptoms in the body. The procedure assumes that the manifestations of sorcery can be treated, and that a person can be cured by administering appropriate medicines, pig bones and ash-like powders. Of which may, in principle, be found and used as evidence of the sorcery performance. These facts point to an interpretation of sorcery beliefs as empirical, not "metaphysical" (see Lindenbaum 1979:88 for a corresponding view). From this perspective, there is no radical separation between science and "magico-religious" and medical scientific interpretations of disease. Both systems of thought link together physical facts about the world by means of theories about the relationship between those facts. What distinguishes these systems is the nature of their theoretical postulates. For a provocative discussion of some of these issues, see Winit (1964).