

GIVEN TO ANGER, GIVEN TO SHAME
The Psychology of the Gift among the Urapmin of Papua New Guinea*

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In the preface to their book “The Meaning of Things”, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton refer to a short-lived French literary genre inaugurated by Georges Perec and called *chosisme*. To quote Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton:

The goal of this all but stillborn literary movement was to portray human life mainly in terms of the characters’ acquisition, use, and disposal of objects, and not in terms of an inner stream of consciousness or of a sequence of actions and events. Thus the reader learned, exclusively from the things he owned and from what he did with them, what a hero valued, whom he loved, and what his thoughts and actions were (1981:xi).

Although *chosisme* never became a popular literary genre, readers familiar with anthropological studies of exchange, particularly the highly developed analyses which exist in the Melanesianist literature, cannot help but notice how well its description also fits what this brand of anthropology produces.¹ Characterising human life in terms of people’s ‘acquisition, use, and disposal of objects’, learning about people’s identities, about what they value and what they think by looking at the things they own and what they do with them – all this reads as if Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton had fairly accurately taken the measure of sociological and symbolic ethnographies that argue for exchange as the foundation of social life and then misrecognized what they had been reading as the offerings of a minor French literary movement. The similarities are indeed impressive, except on one point: *chosisme* seems largely to have been a failure, ‘doomed by the narrowness of its chosen limitations’; exchange-centred ethnography,

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¹ The fact that Perec was influenced by Roland Barthes in writing “Les Choses” (1990), the founding and perhaps only work of *chosisme*, and that he later became involved in the highly formalist OuLiPo circle suggests a potentially deeper intellectual connection between the spirit of *chosisme* and that of structuralist ethnographies of exchange than I explore here (cf. Bellos 1990).

by contrast, has been a signal success, despite, or perhaps because of, its own similar limitations.²

By exchange-centred ethnographies, I mean those that rely theoretically on the body of literature inaugurated by Mauss and Lévi-Strauss and developed extensively since the 1960s. Especially in Melanesia, anthropologists focusing on exchange have had great success in explaining the indigenous creation of social order by arguing that this occurs through exchanges in which people and groups both differentiate themselves from others and relate themselves to them. Anthropologists working on exchange have also shown how the same objects that, in their movement, delineate social orders also give those orders cultural meaning by symbolising valued powers and states such as femaleness, maleness, fertility, and productivity (Robbins and Akin 1999). The movement of objects between persons in these exchange-centred models thus works both on the sociological level to create identities and solidarities, and on the cultural level to elaborate a system of meanings by which this social world is understood.³

Whatever its shortcomings as a way of representing Western subjectivity and sociality, the anthropological, exchange-focused version of *chosisme* has given us some of the finest portraits of Melanesian social life that we have. Still, as the juxtaposition with *chosisme* indicates, there certainly are blind-spots in our standard models of exchange. One outstanding lacuna is in the area that would be covered by a broadly construed psychology of the gift. As is ideally the case in works of *chosisme*, anthropological accounts of exchange treat 'the inner stream of consciousness' as epiphenomenal to the real data of objects and their movement between people. Even if it be argued that bringing back the whole of other people's 'inner stream of consciousness' is not a viable anthropological goal, it remains true that we know little from our ethnography about such more manageable phenomena as people's stated motives for engaging in exchange, or what specific exchanges mean to them personally in either conscious or unconscious terms.

Structural-symbolic anthropologists tend to read the meaning of specific transactions from their place in a system of exchanges. Thus death payments, for example, serve to disarticulate the various social substances of which the deceased is made up, while brideprice serves to replace the wife-givers' loss of female powers and substances by enhancing their male powers and substances. By offering no alternative information, exchange ethnographers imply that the transactors in these exchanges are motivated to carry them out because of their desire to realise these abstract systemic 'meanings'. Alternatively they leave readers to imagine that people carry out transactions because they are customary; because such exchanges are what one does when someone dies, or when a woman gets married, or when one is with one's cross cousin, or on other occasions.

² On the success of exchange-centred ethnography, see the influential works cited in footnote 3.

³ Ethnographies that illustrate these points include LiPuma (1988), Schieffelin (1976), Schwimmer (1973), Strathern (1988) and Wagner (1967).

Given this lack of attention to motives and personal meanings in typical accounts of exchange, there is clearly room for psychological approaches to enrich our understandings of this aspect of social life. Furthermore, there is an opportunity here for psychological anthropologists to study the way the individual psyche relates to highly structured cultural systems that are already well-understood anthropologically from other points of view (cf. Lévi-Strauss 1963:186–205, Trawick 1992). We know that, like languages, exchanges in many societies constitute ramifying systems of meaning that, among other things, help to construct all sorts of social relations. Given this knowledge, we should go on to ask how the individual psyche confronts and attaches itself to this mobile symbolic world and responds to the demands that world makes for engaged performance. Similarly, we need to consider how people work out their own intrapsychic concerns through these systems when such systems are important parts of their environment.

One of the goals of this essay is therefore to encourage anthropologists to adopt psychological approaches in examining a topic that has already been extensively studied in other terms. With these few questions, I have just tried to sketch briefly what this exercise might be worth to psychological anthropologists. My own background, however, is more firmly on the symbolic-structural side. The lack of a psychology of the gift was forcefully brought home to me not by abstract theoretical speculation about the value of merging various anthropological approaches, but rather by my discovery in the field that the Urapmin people of Papua New Guinea with whom I worked had highly developed models of the motivations for and psychological meanings of exchange none of which made much reference to custom or to the ways in which exchanges delineated a social order or a coherent symbolic world. It is an examination of these Urapmin models that forms the ethnographic substance of this paper.

EMOTION AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EXCHANGE AMONG THE URAPMIN

Like many Melanesian peoples, the Urapmin share and exchange constantly, and major exchanges marking important life-transitions give their social life much of its shape. But most often they discuss these exchanges in terms we would recognise as psychological rather than sociological or broadly symbolic. An account which – in canonical Melanesianist fashion – shows how exchange functions sociologically and symbolically in Urapmin, though informative in many respects, would also leave out most of what the Urapmin told me about why they carry out particular exchanges and what they think exchanging achieves in their lives.

Urapmin ethnopsychology gives exchange a central role to play in the transformation of emotions, and their thinking about exchange relies on their ethnopsychology to make sense of many of their transactional practices. Probably the easiest way to

introduce the ethnopsychological bent of Urapmin thinking about exchange – taken broadly here to mean sharing and gift-giving, as well as the two-way transaction of material goods – is to mention the fact that they often talk about buying someone's anger (*aget atul saanin*) or shame (*fitom saanin*). The Urapmin consider anger and shame to be two of the most powerful and destructive emotions (*aget tem*: literally 'inside the heart') that people can experience. Anger can not only lead to violence, it can also cause sickness both in the person who experiences it and in the person or people to whom it is directed. Shame can lead to withdrawal from social life and, if unresolved, often turns to anger. Both anger and shame, then, are emotions the Urapmin think it is important to address as quickly as possible once they arise. 'Buying' anger and shame are the most important ways of addressing them. When you have angered or shamed others, the only way to ensure that their bad feelings will unequivocally dissipate is to give them a gift of some sort: some money, a string bag, a bow. Once their anger or shame has been 'bought', the recipients of these gifts no longer feel the emotion, and their behaviour bears out their claim to be 'sitting down well' (*tenemin tangbal*) again with the people with whom they were formerly at odds. It is important to note that Urapmin do not think of 'buying emotions' as an activity that merely symbolises a peace that has been brought about by some other more fundamental process of reconciliation or appeasement; Urapmin do not trust 'talking it out', for example, as a way to end bad feelings (*aget tem mafak*: literally 'bad inner heart'), nor can the passage of time alone dampen anger or shame. Only the gift of material objects can decisively resolve these emotions and restore good will.⁴

The idea that emotions can be addressed through exchange is also one that the Urapmin have recently begun to develop in new directions. Since the coming of peace in the colonial era, people travel more frequently about their region, especially to the mining town of Tabubil, where they can buy all kinds of Western goods and food-stuffs. It is now common for those relatives who stay at home to 'charge' travelers to 'buy their worry' over them with a small gift on their return. This represents an elaboration of the basic ethnopsychological ideas about the way exchange addresses the emotions of anger and shame to apply them to a new sort of emotional situation: the very intense feelings of worry and perhaps abandonment and jealousy that Urapmin feel when those close to them go on these often extensive trips. This suggests how fun-

⁴ In the cases of buying emotion that I witnessed, where I knew one or both of the participants well, my own ethnotheory of emotion, which does not allow for the resolution of these emotions simply through material exchange, was tested by seeing how effective the exchanges did seem to be in dissipating the anger or shame that had occasioned them. We need to be careful, in analysing this material, not to protect our own notions of how people work through emotions by dismissing the effectiveness the Urapmin claim for these exchanges and interpreting them away as merely public demonstrations or rhetorical assertions of desired states of peace which they themselves are not instrumental in achieving. As far as Urapmin are concerned, exchanges do serve to resolve these feelings. The Urapmin material presented here also bears comparison with similar though brief discussions in Strathern (1993) and Rosaldo (1984:144), and fuller discussions in Schieffelin (1976, 1983).

damental these ethnopsychological ideas are to Urapmin thinking about emotion in general.

Of course, the sorts of gifts of material goods involved in buying emotions – one-off transfers wholly contingent on the vicissitudes of emotional life, and carrying primarily emotional meanings – are not of the type that anthropologists usually claim have the ability to make social orders or evoke meaningful worlds. At most, these very personal transactions mend breaks in those orders or worlds that more elaborate public exchanges create. What makes the Urapmin case interesting, however, is that the Urapmin also see these more public, structurally significant exchanges as being contingent on emotion and as having important therapeutic goals.

Three of the most structurally significant exchanges in Urapmin are those that occur at marriage, death, and between trade partners. A sociological analysis of these three types of exchange would demonstrate that they do in fact define social identities and integrate social relationships among the Urapmin and between the Urapmin and members of other language groups who live near them. A symbolic analysis would illuminate, for example, the way wife-givers receive as brideprice (*unang kun*) shell money (*bonang*) and other items that serve as the basis for an image of enduring male fertility and productivity, while giving return gifts that include not only their daughter, but also cooked pork and garden produce as tokens of female productivity. The symbolic analyst could also point to the way exchanges with trade partners reveal the delicate balance of internal and external relations that together ground male productivity in Urapmin. Indeed, since death payments, brideprice and transactions with trade partners all involve similar objects, the three types of exchange knit together into a complex system that sociological and symbolic approaches do without a doubt help to reveal (Robbins 1999). But despite their sociological and symbolic importance, Urapmin themselves persistently offer emotional rationales for the occurrence of each of these types of exchange.

Death rites, for example, only involve exchanges of exactly equivalent goods (*tanum kun*) when some members of the deceased's family who have not been living with him or her are angry enough to demand them from those among whom the deceased had been living. These unhappy relatives do not attend the burial and the feasting that often accompanies it, but instead send word that they are angry because the deceased's spouse and other relatives or affines with whom he or she had been living did not take better care of the deceased and thus caused his or her death. The exchanges that follow 'finish the talk' or 'finish the anger' of the aggrieved party. Because these exchanges, for all of their sociological and symbolic import, do not always take place following a death, the Urapmin see their occurrence as contingent on the anger they 'finish'; if no one is angry enough to demand them, they do not take place.

In talking to Urapmin involved in negotiating brideprices for their daughters, it becomes clear that they also understand these exchanges, like those made at death, to be important as therapeutic treatments for anger. Urapmin are usually angry over the

loss of their daughters at marriage. Often, they phrase this anger publicly as resulting from the way the daughter has been unduly influenced in choosing her marital partner. There is a widely held belief among the Urapmin that women must choose whom to marry on their own, and prospective husbands and others should not try to influence them in any way. This belief allows the parents of a daughter who has recently decided to marry to direct their anger initially at those they think may have tried to guide her choice. However, extended conversation with parents reveals that their anger is more firmly anchored in regrets about the separation that occurs when, normatively, the daughter goes to live with her husband's family. It is out of this anger that the relatives of the bride charge brideprice.

Although almost all marriages do involve some brideprice payment, and in this sense the institution of brideprice seems less contingent on emotion than that of death exchanges, it is also true that almost every separation of a daughter from her family involves some anger, and so one never sees a brideprice demand made in the absence of an emotional rationale.⁵ Urapmin also raise or lower the amount they charge for a daughter's brideprice depending in part on the intensity of the anger they feel over her loss. This point was brought home to me when I asked a man who had a daughter of marriageable age how much he planned to charge for her brideprice when she married. He replied that he would wait to see how angry he was before setting a price. Another illustration of this practice of setting the price in relation to the intensity of one's anger is the way parents, in the initial flush of anger when they learn of their daughter's marital intentions, often set brideprices outrageously high, asking for meaningless sums in the 'thousands' and 'millions'. It will often be months or even a year later, after they see that her new husband and affines are allowing their daughter to visit her natal home often, before their anger lessens and they lower their demands.

A final kind of exchange I want to examine briefly is that between trade friends (*tisol dup*). Urapmin men maintain trade relationships with men from neighbouring language groups. These men visit Urapmin and sleep in their friends' houses. Before such a visitor leaves, his Urapmin friend will give him items such as bows or, most importantly, fathoms of shell money. Some months later, the Urapmin man will visit and sleep in the house of his friend and receive exactly equivalent items in return for those he gave. Later visits initiated by either side start the cycle moving in the other direction. Urapmin insist that they give things to their trade friends because they feel 'shame' when these men come and sleep with them. Emotionally, the gift is a way of managing their own feelings of shame in the presence of their friends.⁶

⁵ The occasional exception to the statement that all marriages involve both anger and the payment of brideprice also proves the rule that anger is a crucial motive for carrying out these exchanges. In cases of sister-exchange marriage, Urapmin do not expect brideprice to be paid. People do, however, end up demanding payments even in cases of sister-exchange if they become angry over the way their daughter is being treated by her husband and affines.

⁶ This seems a good place to raise an issue which applies generally to the material contained in this arti-

Thus far, I have established that the Urapmin think of exchanges in terms of the way exchanges are motivated by shame and anger and serve to resolve these emotions. In the remainder of this article I want to give a sense of how complex the personal issues involved in any exchange can be by discussing the feelings that one Urapmin man called Peter⁷ brought to the matter of his sister's daughter's brideprice. This example illustrates how exchange, when it is a language not just of social relations but also of emotion, can become an important factor in the psychological lives of individuals.

EXCHANGE AND PERSONAL LIFE: AN EXAMPLE

I had known for some time that Peter was angry about the recent marriage of his sister's daughter (ZD), Damuk. His anger, or at least part of it, was over the usual issues that propel people to begin negotiating a brideprice. An initial indication of the depth of his anger was his report that he was unhappy because he felt Damuk, despite the

cle. To what extent are we dealing, in all these cases in which Urapmin talk about the emotions that lead them to exchange, with a rhetoric of emotion, rather than with people's actual feelings? Crapanzano (1992) has urged us to attend to the distinctions between emotional glosses, which, like all parts of discourse, have pragmatic meanings as well as, or even more than, referential ones, and emotions as felt. Abu-Lughod and Lutz similarly point out the value of looking at 'emotional discourses as pragmatic acts and communicative performances' (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990:11). A full treatment of how this perspective would influence our understanding of the Urapmin material I present here would have to begin by sketching their linguistic ideology, which does not trust the referential power of words to the extent that our own does (Robbins 2001). Thus, from the point of view of an Urapmin auditor, a person's verbal claim to anger is not something to be judged in terms of its accuracy, which Urapmin see as impossible to determine, but rather to be tested out by responding to it. If it was really felt anger, rather than say greed, that led to the charge, then an exchange should finish the matter. In any case, since the primary focus of this article is on Urapmin ethnopsychological models concerning the ways emotions are resolved through exchange, and on the role of these models in Urapmin understandings of why people engage in exchange, it does not rest on a claim to know what Urapmin actually feel as opposed to what say they say they feel. At the same time, however, one of the goals of this article is to suggest the value of more focused psychological anthropological research on people's experience of exchange than I have been able to draw on here. Toward this end, I have indicated throughout the article my sense that in many cases the feelings Urapmin models expect to accompany exchange actually do accompany it, and in the case I present below my personal familiarity with the person involved leads me to feel confident in stating that he was experiencing, as well as reporting, significant psychic turmoil.

⁷ This and the other personal name mentioned below are pseudonyms. Most Urapmin have several names, each of which signifies different things about them. In the pseudonyms used here I have preserved the distinction between those people who go by their Christian names and those who use Urapmin ones. In a fuller study of the psychology of the man here called Peter, it would be important to note that his Urapmin name means 'he cries for water' and commemorates the fact that his mother was killed in revenge for his father's death while she was still nursing him. Peter almost always goes by his Christian name, which has important connotations in the discourse of Urapmin Christian healing in which Peter is very involved.

fact that she had been living with him as a daughter for several years since the death of her father, had married 'of her own accord' (*ulumī san*: 'her own will') rather than consulting him on her choice of a husband. As I noted above, Urapmin believe that women should make their own choices about whom to marry and that no one has a right to interfere in their decision-making in this matter. Peter's bald claim that he felt he should have had a say in her choice was unusual, and it did not accord with Peter's generally very careful observation of the social norms that govern what one should and should not say.

Indeed, in an earlier conversation Peter had also gone beyond the boundaries that usually govern the expression of anger over a new marriage in a different way, by claiming not only that he was not consulted, but also that Damuk's marriage was incestuous. When I asked him to explain to me the basis of his charge, he first spelled out Damuk's very distant relationship (in Urapmin terms) to her new husband.⁸ Moments after saying this, he admitted that in fact they were appropriate marriage partners. He had, he concluded, not been speaking accurately when he called their marriage incestuous. He then went on without being prompted to tell me that he would not take part in negotiating the brideprice for Damuk. Instead, he would leave that to her brother and her half brother (who had as much but no more claim to be involved in negotiating her brideprice than he himself had).

Why, I asked him, was he going to refuse to be part of the group that negotiated her brideprice?

'I am confused', he replied and then told me a long and complicated story about his relationship with Damuk's mother, her father, and her mother's father. It is significant that Peter was the pastor in the local Baptist church. Urapmin Christians consider anger to be among the most injurious of sins. As a pastor, Peter was expected to set a good example by avoiding disputes and maintaining a calm demeanour at all times. In this respect he was a good choice for this role, for he did in fact deeply fear anger in himself and others, and he went to great lengths to side-step the kinds of conflicts that regularly come up in the course of Urapmin daily life. Given all this, I was surprised that, as he was telling me about what was bothering him about Damuk's brideprice, his face visibly tightened and he became progressively more enraged, even to the point of verbally proclaiming his past anger rather than announcing to me, as he usually did, that although others had done him wrong, it had not bothered him.

The story Peter told, in as simple terms as I can recount it, goes like this. Peter's parents died when he was a baby. He was adopted, and his adoptive father also had a much older daughter who, as Peter's step-sister, took care of him. Eventually, when Peter was in his early teens, his step-sister married a leader from another village and gave birth to Damuk. Several years later, when Peter was in his middle teens, his adoptive father died and he went to live with this step-sister and her husband. This hus-

⁸ He was her mother's father's father's brother's son's son (MFFBSS).

band, Peter's much older 'brother-in-law' (*basim*), quickly became 'just like a father'⁹ to Peter. Peter usually talks about his adoptive father (Damuk's maternal grandfather) and about his brother-in-law (Damuk's father), who died about three years before our conversation, in idealising terms. He points again and again to their prowess as hunters and leaders, and he routinely expresses how grateful he is for the care they gave him.¹⁰ In the present conversation, however, he reveals significant anger at both men that turns on how they handled the brideprice that his brother-in-law paid for his step-sister.

As part of this brideprice, his brother-in-law had taken the unorthodox step of giving Peter's adoptive father not only three fathoms of shell money and other goods, but also a live female piglet.¹¹ This piglet grew up and gave birth to five of its own piglets, one of which Peter's adoptive father gave to him. Peter was only about 13 years old at this time, so his adoptive father looked after the pig for him and it grew very big. Then the time came to give a return for the brideprice, which had to include a pig as a return for the shell money. Peter's adoptive father asked Peter if he could give Peter's pig to Peter's brother-in-law as part of this payment. In return for relinquishing his pig, Peter's adoptive father promised to give him the three fathoms of shell money he had been paid for the brideprice. Peter knew that the pig was worth more than three fathoms of shell money, and he was angry at the terms his adoptive father had offered him. But he finally relented and gave the pig to his adoptive father, who killed it and gave it to Peter's brother-in-law in return for the brideprice. Since he had been too young to look after his own pig, Peter was also considered too young to be entrusted with looking after the shell money that replaced it. Thus, his adoptive father continued to keep the shells with his own possessions. A few years later Peter's adoptive father died and, according to Peter, his brother-in-law, who became his caretaker, took back the shell money he had originally paid for Peter's step-sister and gave Peter nothing in return.

Now, more than 25 years later, Peter was still angry over this string of mishandled gifts and exchanges. At this point in his telling the story his anger was at its height, both towards his adoptive father, who forced him to give up his pig for less shell money than it was worth, and towards his brother-in-law, who stole the payment he was given for the pig. Turning his attention suddenly back to the present, Peter proclaimed: 'That's all, it's all right, I can give them Damuk and they can kill a pig for me. I don't want brideprice', just a pig. Or, as he put it at the end of an equally heated retelling of the story a few days later, 'Now Damuk is married. Fine. My pig was taken without return and so now I wonder, will they give me brideprice or return a pig?' If they do return the pig, he concluded, this will finish his anger and bring to an end a fraying

⁹ 'Olsem papa', as the Neo-Melanesian Tok Pisin (TP), the *lingua franca* of Papua New Guinea, has it.

¹⁰ In talking this way, Peter's behaviour is in keeping with how most Urapmin men and women talk about the adult men who cared for them as children.

¹¹ This was unorthodox because the groom's side is not expected to give live pigs or pork as part of a brideprice.

emotional thread that runs through 25 years and several of the most important relationships in his life.

I should point out here the complex determinations involved in both the return payment Peter imagines will finally bring an end to his anger and his claim that Damuk's marriage was incestuous, which was where our conversation began. While in Urapmin terms marriage with one's MFFBSS is not at all incestuous, in this case it involves Damuk marrying a young man in the line of Peter's adoptive father, the man who took Peter's pig from him. And Damuk herself, of course, is the daughter of the man who stole the shell money that Peter should have received as the return for that pig. It is thus appropriate in Peter's opinion that members of his adoptive father's family return a pig to him in return for his brother-in-law's daughter. In a sense, such an exchange would mean that Peter could see his brother-in-law as having given him a daughter (Damuk) in return for the shells he took while also seeing that daughter as allowing him to get back the pig that his adoptive father took from him from his adoptive father's line.

Despite the neatness of Peter's proposed solution of having Damuk's husband's line give him a pig as part of the brideprice, in accounting for his claim that the marriage was incestuous, we can note that it was undoubtedly Peter's own discomfort at the way Damuk's marriage implicated all of these very meaningful relationships from his past that led him to mislabel the marriage as incestuous. It was, in fact, 'too close for comfort' as far as he was concerned. Peter would undoubtedly have felt the usual sort of anger at losing Damuk no matter whom she married, but the specifics of her actual marital choice allowed him to condense all sorts of personal issues into his demand for a pig as part of her brideprice. And the tensions that this condensation awakened found expression in his claim that the marriage was incestuous, as well as in his 'confusion' and ambivalence about being involved in the brideprice at all.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I wish to return briefly to the contrast that framed the introduction to this article. To look at Damuk's brideprice primarily as a matter of sociological and symbolic import would be to miss both the stereotypical emotional terms in which Urapmin understand such exchanges, and the way in which, for Peter, this particular exchange drew together important personal themes of relationship and betrayal, and the emotions connected with them. And Peter's case is not a special one. I was constantly surprised in the field by how complex people's motives were for engaging in even the most mundane everyday sharing, and by how idiosyncratic were the meanings they derived from these activities. It is clear that exchange is deeply embedded in the psychological life of the Urapmin.

With Peter's example before us, I would also like to mention a couple of senses in which we might appreciate the psychological import the Urapmin attribute to the exchange systems that play such a prominent role in their lives. On the one hand, the Urapmin constantly put themselves forward in exchange, staking their own highly valued feelings of 'inner peace' (*aget tangbal*: literally 'good heart') on the co-operation of many others. It is very often frustrations linked to exchange – returns not made, gifts not given to one because they were given to others etc. (see Robbins 1998) – that cause people to feel anger in the first place. Yet, it is also exchange that allows people to regroup when their inner peace has been shattered. We see both aspects of exchange clearly in Peter's case. When I left the field he had still not received his pig, and his anger over this, among other things, had subjected him to challenge in his treasured role as pastor. Yet at the same time he continued to hold out a hope, quite reasonable in Urapmin terms, that he could settle decades-old scores with his long dead adoptive father and his more recently deceased brother-in-law simply by receiving a pig that neither of them had ever laid eyes on. The perils of living a psychological life emotionally invested in far-reaching systems of exchange are all too well known to the Urapmin (cf. Jorgensen 1981), but so too are the ways these systems allow relations with valued others to keep developing and giving as exchanges affect reparation both with the living and with the dead.

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