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EMOTIONAL MONIES
Aesthetics and affect in a Highlands mortuary payment (Papua New Guinea)

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ABSTRACT. In this article I argue that paying attention to the emotional aspects of economic transactions can be a means of understanding how value is produced. I use a case study of a mortuary payment between two clan groups in the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea to demonstrate the significance of aesthetic and affective processes that women and men use to transform money into a valuable and the high stakes (literally) this comes with. I am concerned with the explanations that my interlocutors gave for this gift exchange, leading me to suggest that theories of emotion should be considered relevant and important aspects of economies. Treating aesthetics, affect, care and emotion as critical to this context also allows us to recognise the significant place of women in creating the conditions for gift exchange. Money becomes an adornment, decoration and object that moves in different quantities, velocities and temporalities according to the social relationships that are being made and recognised.

Despite the many theories of how and why money has become integrated into the ceremonial economy in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and to what effect,[1] less attention has been paid to the aspect of affect. Through my experience of a dramatic public exchange involving a mortuary payment just outside Goroka town, in the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea (PNG), I follow the explanations and understandings of my interlocutors regarding how and why they conducted this exchange.[2] They, like subsequently myself, give credit to the importance of aesthetics, performance and creative efforts in bringing about emotional reactions in others, a crucial component of gift exchange. I argue that paying attention to the emotional aspects of economic transactions can help us understand how value is produced and to identify who contributes to this process.

Studies of economies generally fail to acknowledge the significance of emotions in how things or people gain value and how processes of exchange are enacted. Building a sensitivity to emotions and affect into explanations and understandings of economies can enable anthropologists, and others, to expand notions of economy. In this article, I not only explore the ways in which money is turned into a ceremonial valuable, an adornment and decoration, but also emphasise the importance that the transactors themselves place on affect, aesthetics and emotions, specifically the emotion of joy or

1 Akin and Robbins (1999), Nihill (1989), Robbins and Akin (1999), Sexton (1980, 1986), Stewart and Strathern (2002a)

2 From October 2013 to November 2014, I spent eleven months living and working with various food-growing communities around Goroka as part of a project investigating food insecurity in a context of rapid urbanisation. This project was funded by the Marsden Grant, Royal Society of New Zealand.

happiness. At the same time, I highlight the role women play in these ceremonial moments as organisers, performers and transactors of affect. Women contribute in terms of decoration, sound and movement to the creation of a collective space and temporality by drawing everyone's attention to the exchanges taking place. Their actions create a spectacle in which objects and people acquire value. Thus alongside men, who are already well recognised as orators and transactors of wealth in Highland ethnographies, women are part of the process of shifting objects from having a use-value to an exchange-value: for example, broccoli, when hung up as part of a mortuary payment, is not for consumption, but becomes a decoration.

Money has a similarly ambiguous place: people value it highly both for making commodity purchases and as an esteemed gift (if given appropriately) (LiPuma 1999, A. Strathern 1979). Money is increasingly the barometer of value, with ceremonial items such as pigs being given a numeric monetary value according to their size. Ceremonial foods such as taro, yams and pigs have retained their ceremonial value and status in prestigious exchanges despite also gaining monetary value through food markets and agribusiness. In Goroka, as elsewhere in PNG, acknowledging others' humanity is achieved by acknowledging their emotional states: gifting food and money is key to doing this (Robbins 2009). The gifting of particular foods in these moments also works to define ongoing kinship relations. As Marilyn Strathern (1988) explains, social relations are objectified and reified in persons and objects, which in PNG stand in for social relationships. Cash crops, grown and sold in the local market place, do not hold such symbolic value or meaning in local ceremonial economic realms, but selling cash crops is necessary if the men and women in the Goroka market place are to generate an income and fulfil their kinship-related duties while meeting every household's needs (Barnett-Naghshineh 2019).

Figure 1 shows a mortuary payment ('het pe' in Tok Pisin, PNG's lingua franca), made between two factions of a large Gahuku clan that spans North Goroka, West Goroka and Goroka town in July 2014, in a village about twenty kilometres north of Goroka. *Het pe* is a transfer of food, pigs and money between two or more kinship groups, after or before the death of an elderly family member. The two sub-clans had congregated around a payment of 25,000 PGK,[3] which one of them was gifting to the other due to their kinship ties as 'uncles' (*kandere*). The relatives on the mother's side of the deceased usually receive a compensation payment for the loss of their relative and to acknowledge the care work they did for him when he was alive. The deceased person in the example examined here was a leader in his community, and thus the payment had particular importance and resonance through different sub-clans and families. These sub-clans, now spread out across the Goroka valley, have long histories of being connected through time and space thanks to such exchanges and intermarrying over time.

[3] PGK is an acronym for Papua New Guinean Kina, the national currency, also known as Kina.

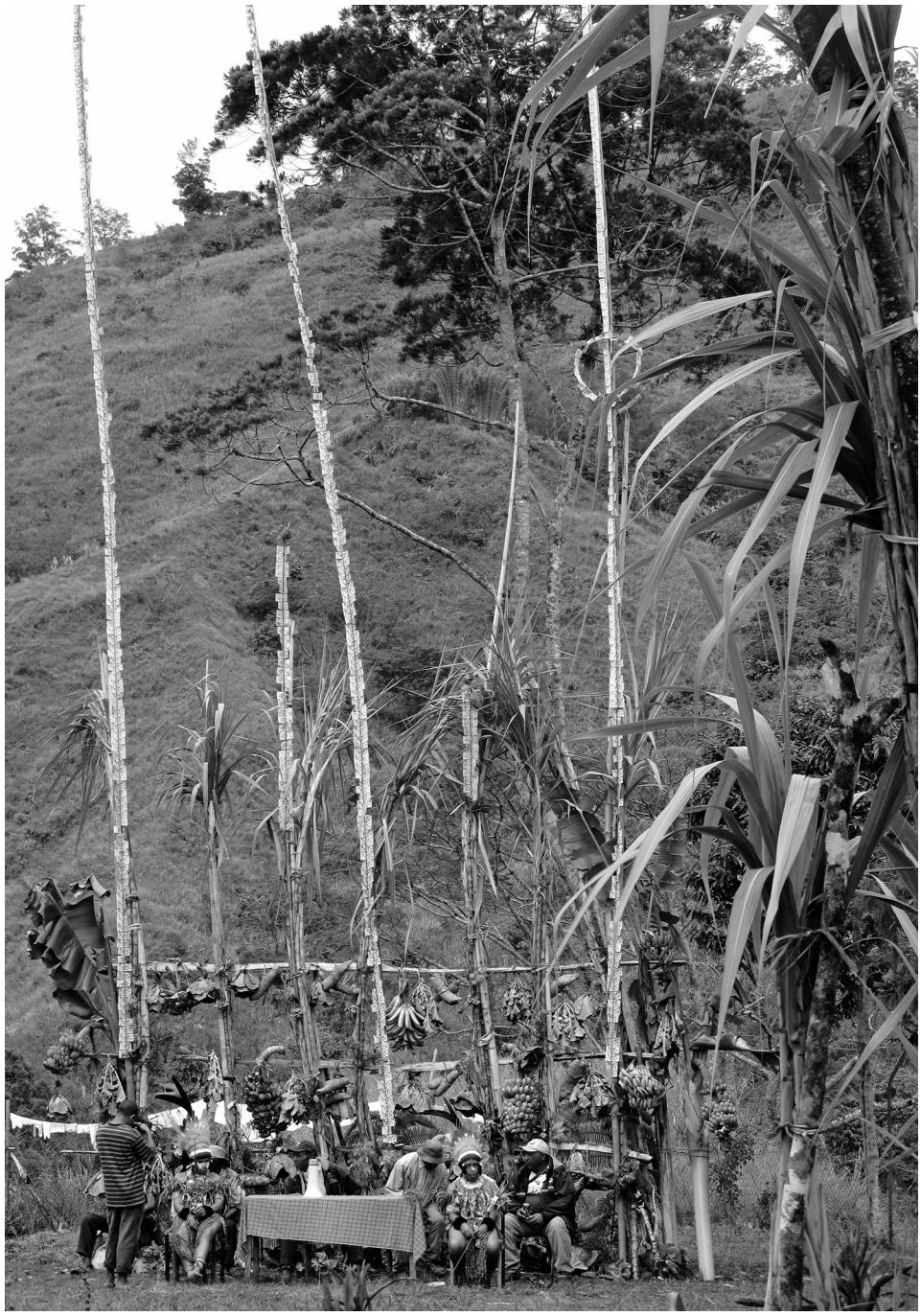

Figure 1: Mortuary payment (*het pe*). Near Goroka 2014 (all photos: O.B.-N.)

They now have an expansive town between their ancestral lands but maintain their connections through such exchanges.

In this article, I have not used the formal names or locations of the two sub-clans involved, who were far from homogenous, but in fact made up of many villages, families, friends and colleagues. The main people who invited me to attend agreed that they would prefer their communities to remain anonymous. Furthermore, due to my own familiarity with the people who were making the payment, I was able to speak with them at greater depth than with the recipients. The latter lived on the other side of Goroka town and before I could ask any questions feuds emerged between clansmen on both sides as result of the transaction, women and children ran into the surrounding gardens, escaping through the bushes and I fled with them.

Despite the sour ending, however, in general I heard that the event was considered an impressive affair. Indeed the scale, composition and visual impact of the payment was unlike anything I had seen in other public exchanges, including marriages, funerals, haircutting ceremonies and other ceremonies. I was moved to feel awe and wonder which successively turned to amusement, trepidation and concern as the day went on and the general mood shifted from joy to tension and anger. Many of those attending the event were known to me from the market place: the members of these sub-clans were frequent traders and lived in neighbouring villages. Such a public prestation often provides the weekend's entertainment. There was a jovial spirit to the day: people had dressed up especially, and some were singing, dancing and drinking, following the lead of their hosts until the last moment.

Two of the main organisers of this prestation, Margaret and Jona (pseudonyms), were an older couple who worked hard in their hillside gardens outside Goroka growing broccoli, bananas, carrots and sweet potato to sell food in the market place. Through my relations in a nearby village I got to know them at other ceremonial events and after numerous conversations in which they were both forthcoming and friendly, we became closer as we shared stories of our family lives and an interest in food gardens and the market place. Margaret had a bold and fearless charm that meant she could be strident in instances of conflict, but sweet when tending to those she considered family. Like many older women in Goroka, she was assertive and slightly intimidating in her readiness to order me about and give me instructions. By comparison Jona was also charming, but quiet, relaxed and had an aura of wisdom. He was modest in his daily interactions, but a good public orator. Jona had earnt the respect of local men and women in his clan and others spoke highly of him in the market place. He was respected for being an active gardener, while Margaret was known for being concerned with political matters regarding the family and local government. Their dynamic challenges the old anthropological tropes of Highlands women as relegated to the private sphere while men navigate the politics of public life (Lederman 1980). In this instance, both were publicly active with different but vital roles, especially in respect of their clan obligations and social relationships.

The het pe *display: the aesthetics and affect of a spectacle*

Walking around gardens and villages in Goroka it is clear that aesthetics matter. In almost every village women grow orchids, which are perched on high corners of their houses and gardens, carefully planned with neat rows of crops. Women also make an effort to look clean and fresh when they sell goods in the market and wear colourful dresses and bags when attending special events. Aesthetics were also important in the presentation of the payment discussed here. It was evident that the hosts meant this display to impress. I had seen colourful food items, for example, as bride-wealth, piled up neatly at other ceremonial events, but this was the first time I saw such a large and spectacular display. I gasped at the scale as I came to realise that what I was seeing shooting up into the sky were indeed tall bamboo sticks pinned with money. Each bamboo stick was adorned with a different denomination of money, making them appear uniquely coloured, as some notes were predominantly green or purple in colour depending on the amount. It was not just the visual quantity of money that created awe; different foods within the display made it a colourful and vibrant symbol of the productivity, fertility and collective strength of the donor clan (Figs. 2, 3).

As I gazed up at the display, Margaret came over to stand beside me. I asked her why broccoli was attached to the display, as I knew this is not usually a ceremonial valu-

Figure 2: Food and money on ceremonial presentation. Near Goroka 2014

Figure 3: Twenty Kina notes tied to a bamboo. Near Goroka 2014

able – i.e. it is not a food that has social value as a gift in bride-wealth such as taro, yams or sugarcane. She gave me a simple answer: 'It looks nice and adds colour'.

I began to read the display differently. Whereas I may take for granted the significance of decorating Christmas trees in the UK or the *haftsin* table (seven things beginning with 'S' for Iranian New Year) as part of the feasts and gifting that I am used to, I had been neglecting to give credit to the aesthetic aspects of this display at the moment of gift exchange. Yet, different local grasses and flowers were used as decoration to add colour. The display not only presented objects of value but looked vivid and beautiful. Its appearance added to an overall sense of spectacle and was made to be seen (M. Strathern 2013). The food items were ornamental touches that associated money with the life of the land and soil, and with the fertility and vibrancy of donor sub-clan itself.

As I mused on the display, craning my neck to look up to the top of the bamboo, Margaret explained that the men sitting in front of the display were local 'leader men': a judge from the village court, a councillor, a church pastor and sub-clan leaders. All of them were dressed in shirts and jackets prepared for the formality of the occasion. The men were flanked on either side by young women in full traditional dress. I had only seen such bodily decoration, including colourful face paint, shell adornments and skirts made from local leafy vegetation during graduation ceremonies where children wear the

Figure 4: Young woman wearing part of the *het pe* (detail). Near Goroka 2014

patterns and colours of their family and clan. Brightly coloured Bird of Paradise feathers stuck in the top of the young women's headdress complemented the greenery attached to the bamboo grid. The young girls had chalky white paint across their cheeks, with ochre yellow dots and a bright red stripe down the centre of their noses. Their attire was slightly different from that of those who arrived from the other clan, dressed in darker hues of red, black and yellow. I was told by a market woman in her fifties who was also in her clan dress that it had been normal for women to wear this kind of decoration in their marriage ceremonies up to the 1960s, but this had become rarer.

One young woman, a member of the donor sub-clan, was not dressed in traditional attire, but walked around with a bamboo frame around her head with 5 PGK notes attached to it (Fig. 4): a living, breathing part of the display, and a representation of the nexus of relations that the valuables were materialising (M. Strathern 2013). Valuables of the highest esteem within gifting economies are often adornments – Māori cloaks (*korowai*) in New Zealand, for example, or *kula* arm shells in the Trobriand islands of PNG – and may be important objects in demonstrating and acquiring prestige as a result (Graeber 2001:93, Mauss 1967). In this instance, what is primarily an object of exchange (money) was transformed into an adornment. Marilyn Strathern (1979) argues that Hagen men reveal their social persons on their skin – that the skin is where social

relations are displayed to the eyes of others. By wearing the money, this young woman contributed to representing the wealth of her clan and became a moving part of the display, literally bringing it to life.

Women also played other roles apart from adornment, however: they were major contributors to both the wealth being gifted and the organisation of the event. Margaret told me that she had started growing broccoli six months in advance to sell in the market and had organised many of the other market women in her sub-clan to do the same. Like the large-scale pig kills of *moka* exchanges in the Western Highlands,[4] where Big Men make a name for themselves, such events are the result of months of planning, galvanising networks of relations into action by local leaders, men and women alike.

A reciprocal acknowledgement: the beginning of proceedings

Axel Honneth argues for the importance of people recognising one another's humanity for purposes of general well-being.[5] In the following narrative, I demonstrate a series of performative acts involving singing and speech that displayed mutual recognition in a back-and-forth interaction of movement and sound. The dance and song that occurred at the beginning of the event clarified the relationship that was being established through the gifting. Four times the donor sub-clan came back and forth greeting its guests on the road before the recipient sub-clan was allowed in through the entrance to the field where the bamboo structure was standing. The recipients waited in the driveway. They kept singing out their unique war cries and slightly jumping up and down on the spot. Soon the calls and dances of the hosts eased, and the remaining guests made their way inside, individuals shaking hands and hugging those they knew as the field filled up with an audience of relatives and neighbours. The donor women were still singing and dancing when one of the leader men, sitting behind the table, told them they were delaying the proceedings and asked them to stop. This was the beginning of the tensions that emerged later.

The expansive grassy area in front of the bamboo display was soon full of people. They formed a calm semi-circle, leaving an empty space in front of the table where the leader men sat. Throughout the initial proceedings, women on both the giving and the receiving side bounced themselves on the balls of their feet as they called out 'Oh oh oh oh!' in staccato, high-pitched calls, some holding ceremonial grass (*tangket*), others wearing skirts made of the same plant material. The women did not make any formal speeches, as the orator's role is usually given to men of suitable calibre, but they helped create the atmosphere of what was meant to be a joyous occasion, which the women themselves deemed an important element of the event.

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4 Cf. A. Strathern (1971) and M. Strathern (1979).

5 Honneth (1996, 2001), Fraser and Honneth (2003)

Jona, the orator for the day and my host, then started to shout and address the crowd:

> Thank you, everyone. I am very happy. Our father had a lot of children. He died and for a long time we have not given you anything. Now we have got money and have called you to come. You had a daughter and she gave birth to this boy, so now we give you payment to say thank you. This boy became a Big Man here and he had many wives and lots of children. He was a good man. He looked after people and he was a nice person. So thank you to all of you who have come.[6]

The speech continued to explain that this was a moment of thanks and gratitude in recognition of the life of the old Big Man who had died and to remember his behaviour, his generosity and his leadership. In the speech the various clans related to him were named, a key aspect of their recognition. The exchange of material items, which represented ongoing kinship ties, was couched in emotional terms, including gratitude, justifying the immense efforts to impress and create a happy day.

Moving towards emotions and affect in economies

Emotions, care and affect are key to local understandings of economies in Goroka, as elsewhere in PNG, but are rarely part of economic theories or models within academic contexts. However, happiness as an economic goal has not always been absent from European philosophy. It was the original meaning of utilitarianism, that is, to create the conditions of happiness for the greater good. However, since the Second World War this understanding of utility has disappeared, and the significance of well-being and happiness has only recently returned to the interest of European economic theorists (Dixon 1997).

Emotions and affect have also played a relatively minor role in the analyses of economic anthropologists. Andrew Beatty suggests that emotions are 'the elephant in the room' for anthropology, something so critical to human life that they are easily ignored (2005:2). However, emotions are also immensely difficult to understand cross-culturally. Emotions within western paradigms of philosophy and psychology have generally been thought of as 'natural' and 'universal', not necessarily as cultural. But the anthropology of emotions has attempted to tease out the particularities of emotions in specific times and places. How they are expressed, by whom and in what context is closely tied to ideas of morality and the content of specific social relations.[7] Hence the debate within the social sciences over the extent to which emotions should be regarded 'universal', rather than being culturally contextual and socialised (Leavitt 1996:515).

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6 This speech was in Tok Pisin and translated by the author. The quote is from fieldnotes.

7 Boellstorff and Lindquist (2004), Lutz (2017), McCullough *et al.* (2001), Solomon (2003)

Moreover, emotions are notoriously difficult to analyse for anthropology. The cultural baggage anthropologists carry with them can make it difficult to know what they are observing. As Beatty states:

> Anthropology is a comparative venture but, with emotions, how do we know what we are comparing? Are the emotions we call 'anger' and 'joy' universals, or does every culture produce its own repertoire? Are emotions natural kinds, like species, or cultural inventions, like the 'hairy heart'? Where, in a sequence of behaviour, do they begin and end? Are there a few basic emotions, of which the rest are variants? If differences are radical, how would we know anyway? (Beatty 2019)

There have been varying degrees of interest in emotions in PNG since the 1960s.[8] While the importance of emotions to models of gender has been explored,[9] few studies have specifically focused upon emotions in gift exchange or the economy more broadly apart from the important exceptions of Maschio (1998) and Nihill (2000), who have both described emotional displays and sentiments as part of ceremonial transactions.

In western thought more generally, it is commonly held that an emotion term serves the function of labelling an internal state and communicating that state to others (Lutz 1982:113). But as Catherine Lutz (1982) and Niko Besnier (1990) point out, in parts of the Pacific, emotion words may be statements about relationships between people and events, and not necessarily reflections of one's own internal state or that of others. In PNG, the emotion word 'wanbel' (to be in agreement) has attracted attention for its meaning of being without conflict (Troolin 2013, Hukula 2017). Similarly, when 'hamamas' (a Tok Pisin word for happiness, joy, elation, contentment, to be pleased) is used as a local theory of acts, I interpret it to refer to a desire for positive on-going relations, not just an individual state of harmony, but a collective well-ness of social relations. 'Hamamas' is also used in more everyday settings and by individuals, but it is still often used within a context of relationships, e.g. 'Mi hamamas long lukim yu' ('I am happy to see you'). My interlocutors in Goroka saw *hamamas* as being brought about by joyful acts expressed through dance, war cries, jumping and other embodied acts during ceremonial exchanges. As Geoffrey White remarks, 'emotions arise in contexts of transaction, marking boundaries between inside and outside, and defining relations between me and you, or we and you-plural' (1994:237). Emotions can be collective,

8 See Epstein (1984), Rumsey (2008), A. Strathern (1993), M. Strathern (1968).

9 Pamela Stewart and Andrew Strathern (2002b), Bambi Schieffelin (1990) and Steven Feld (2012) have explored the sentimental and emotional aspects of gender relations in communities on the fringe of the Highlands. Among the Kaluli living in the Southern Highlands, Bambi Schieffelin (1990) examined the way emotional dispositions are socialised in children from a young age. In the same area, Feld's work explored the way in which particular songs could move people to tears and highlighted gendered stereotypes of men who are considered temperamental with more irrational, unpredictable and moody behaviours than women, who are generally deemed steady and constant (Feld 2012:262). Don Kulick (1998) similarly shows that linguistic practices are used to create the boundaries between male and female domains by stereotyping the emotions of men and women.

plural and political. The acts of joy at the ceremonial event I describe here contribute to symbolically transforming money into an object that materialises the relationships being established.

Marcel Mauss's famous text "The gift" (1967) was attentive to the obligations of demonstrating emotions to maintaining respectful relations.[10] In his short essay "The obligatory expression of feelings" he refers specifically to 'greeting with tears' based on studies of aboriginal funerary rituals in Australia: 'One […] does more than show one's feelings [through tears], they are shown to others, because they must be shown to them. They are shown to oneself through expressing them to others and for the other's account' (Mauss 1921, Garces and Jones 2009:302). Mauss was countering a common assumption that emotions are merely part of individual and internal psychological states rather than socially produced, and he challenges the notion of the independent liberal subject at the heart of moral philosophy, which is often the basis for neo-classical economic theories (Garces and Jones 2009:289). Similarly, Mauss argued that it is the 'good feelings' established between gifting tribes that motivate the economy. It is thus partly the good feelings that are created when objects pass between people, breaking down the distance between Self and Other that is crucial to gift exchange, beyond the actual material items exchanged. As Mauss further established, gifting can be done for the sake of making others feel good in the process of making social relations, at the same time helping to gain recognition and prestige from others. Recognising another's feelings and gifting something material is necessary for maintaining harmonious relations and demonstrating the power and prestige of the giver. Given this, rather than seeing emotions as purely internal psychological dispositions, it is possible to see how they work in concrete and particular ways, mediating relationships between the individual and collective.

Affect theorist Sara Ahmed (2004) understands feelings as precognitive, prelinguistic and intersubjective, but helpfully argues that they circulate through the social body, working to bind and separate subjects. This idea of emotions both binding and separating is particularly relevant to the present context, where there was an explicit attempt to elicit particular emotions within a ritual context. Affect can be used as a noun and a verb, but in either case it involves an interrelationship between one who affects and one who is affected (Skoggard and Waterston 2015). It is an interior phenomenon with distinctly outward manifestations. 'Affect as noun and verb has as much to do with senses and sensibilities of the collective unconscious and conscious and the body writ large – the body politic, the social and the cultural – as it does with an individual's mind, body, and emotion' (Skoggard and Waterston 2015:112). The performances and aesthetic presentations that surrounded money at the event examined here gave it an affect that worked to do just that – collapse the material and immaterial aspects of money's value with the social relations it was being used to represent.

10 See Alexeyeff (2004).

The emotional and affective aspects of exchange are not merely of interest for theoretical reasons – they also take seriously what my interlocutors themselves say they are doing.[11] Indeed, market women and others in Goroka explain gift exchange practices in terms of emotional states or compensation for previous efforts of care. The local explanation for particular sounds, sights and behaviours was entirely centred on the emotion of *hamamas*,[12] and was thought to be brought about through singing, beautiful presentation, decoration, ritual greetings and dances. How money was presented gave it different values and meanings at different moments, but fundamentally transformed it from a commodity into a gift which requires willing recipients, each party having to play their appropriate role as either giver or receiver.

Thomas Maschio (1998) argues that an important dimension of 'the spirit of the gift' as theorised by Mauss (1967) is contained in the gift's embodiment of personal memories of relationships. He argues that the rationale for, and objectives of, particular exchange scenarios matter and that when explained in emotional terms, become key to how his interlocutors create a narrative of the gift. These emotional narratives constitute a moral perception of gifting. Maschio (1998:90) explains that some moments in ceremonial exchange are specifically about either bringing about particular affects or performing particular emotions as aspects of 'ritually patterned drama'. In the course of the mortuary payment I attended there was pattern, spontaneity and drama.

As later happened, the recipient may at any point refuse to accept the gift. Therefore, coercive attempts through many considered efforts can nonetheless be thwarted by other aspects of the event. In this case, one of the recipients who was due to take home one of the tall pieces of bamboo with money attached and a big pig tied to the bottom of it grew angry at what he considered too much prevaricating. While it quickly became unclear to me who was fighting whom, rumours after the event clarified that the people fighting were in the same sub-clan, i.e. the recipients of the payment. Some of its members were angry at the donors for not giving them enough of a share and taking too long before getting to the main payment. The refusal to accept the gift may show that even attempts to satisfy one's guests cannot guarantee that donors will achieve their goal at the time they want.

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11 Joel Robbins (2003:250) suggests that anthropologists listen to how people explain their own motivations for gift exchange rather than the abstract 'meanings' offered by structural-symbolic analyses.

12 Similarly, in the film "Ongka's big moka", Hagen leader Ongka expresses concern about the anger the recipients of his pigs may exhibit if he does not perform the ritual *moka* exchange, and therefore he works hard to satisfy his recipients (Naim 1976). In the inverse of *hamamas*, he does not want to fail to meet his obligations and make others angry.

Coercive adornments and aesthetics

In asking why money readily became a part of ceremonial gift exchange in PNG, Michael Nihill (1989) describes how 20 PGK notes become equivalent to shells among Anganen in the Highlands partly due to the similarity of their shimmery quality to their traditional shells. Their fluorescent quality allowed some equivalence as much as their commodity exchange value. Thus, how people react to and feel about the colours and materials used in gift exchanges is significant both to what they deem valuable and to how objects are used to give an impression of grandeur and capability in prestigious realms.

In its aesthetics and affect, the ceremonial use of money contrasts significantly with exchanges in the market place. A characteristic of money generally, and in PNG especially, is its ability to be hidden. In the market place, market women often keep money in their locally crafted net bags (*bilum*) or pockets, tucked away and subtly disposed of in small amounts when necessary. There is generally little eye contact during a transaction in the market place and the exchange of money is conducted in modest, quiet acts often made in small increments. In the context of the exchange examined here, however, money was on display in a fashion that revealed the internal capacities of the group and its social power.[13] This money, pinned to bamboo, showed what this group had achieved in its past and was looking to continue into the future through the relationships that the 'bamboo money' indexed (Robbins and Akin 1999:18).

Hirsch argues that objects are only meaningful in PNG in a context of action, particularly coercive action, in the form of ritual and aesthetics (1995:68). His argument suggests that the aesthetics of objects matter for the purpose of eliciting action in others (1995:61). Hirsch draws on Marilyn Strathern's (1988:61) formulation: 'it is not what the object "says" or "expresses" that is the key issue for Melanesians, but what it does'. However, the notion of coercion implies the potential use of force. Instead, the use of aesthetics and affect in Goroka may be considered persuasive rather than forceful, involving a desire to bring about good feelings in a collective other and to continue relations with that other over time, as well as impress their collective strength upon recipients. The donors conduct such exchanges with humility, men's speeches being infused with appreciation of the other side's feelings and contributions. This is part of an economy in which ceremonial events bring parties together in an act of common humanity and mutual recognition in the aforementioned sense of Honneth (2001). However, in tension with this is what Gregory says about such exchange: 'Gift exchange – the exchange of like-for-like – establishes an unequal relationship of domination between the transactors. This comes about because the giver usually is regarded as superior to the receiver' (1982:47). Andrew Strathern (1971) suggests that this superiority may or may not imply political control. This depends on the individual systems in question. In this instance,

[13] M. Strathern (1999:97), Pickles (2013), Strathern and Stewart (1999)

it was not clear to me whether one side was any more politically influential or powerful than the other. It was clear however, that despite all attempts to create an affective and emotional reaction, some of the recipients still went home angry.

Emotions of aesthetics: local explanations

As many anthropologists have shown in the Highlands, there is a common reluctance to presume knowledge of another's intentions or to state why they may have taken a particular action.[14] However, with my interlocutors here, to bring about a reaction or an emotion in others is explanatory. As already stated, the result of all the touches of colour, arrangement and composition was an impressive show of this sub-clan's wealth and vitality. The decoration of young women at this event may play a role similar to the one Marilyn Strathern describes for Hagen, west of Goroka, when she writes that 'decorations […] act as a medium of display, for the clan adorn its individual members' (1979:246). As the granddaughters of the deceased man whose name was being honoured in the exchange of wealth between him and his uncles, the girls represented the power and strength of the group in relationship to him as a local leader. Furthermore, as Nancy Munn suggested for Gawan in the Trobriand Islands of PNG (1986:100–103), beauty is important in making exchange relations. Gawan present themselves in beautiful ways as one of their tools to persuade recipients to accept their gifts. Closer to Goroka, in the Western Highlands, Michael O'Hanlon (1993) has suggested that displays are a necessary part of the assessments and evaluations that groups make of each other in the struggle for respect and influence. More than mere aesthetics, how Wahgi performers in the Western Highlands present themselves influences how they are perceived by others. In particular, such displays are intended to showcase their strength as a group and to enchant their opposites to engage in the reciprocal process of mutual recognition. The young women here were examples of the continuing reproduction of the sub-clan. Their display comes from a long history of seeing women as part of their wealth in the Eastern Highlands and may symbolise the making of alliances across subclans as well as helping resolve disputes or conflicts (M. Strathern 1984).

Stability and flow: bamboo and play money

Joel Robbins and David Akin (1999:18) highlight the significance of stability and flow in PNG's currencies as they feature in social reproduction. Currencies can be at once owned, held and static, and simultaneously circulated and put into motion. Movement and appearance matter. Here, money was not only presented in a stable form affixed to

14 Keane (2008), Robbins and Rumsey (2008), Schieffelin (2008).

bamboo, it was also circulated in rapid movement and flow and was referred to as 'play money'. The term 'play' ('pilai') referred to the way people were exchanging this money in contrast to the 'bamboo payment'. 'We want to play money now', called out one of the leader men as the dancers were cleared away and individual families were beckoned using men's names, being given smaller denominations of money while the dancers called out and bounced around them.

Some days after the event, I asked Margaret, Jona and two of their relatives, who had helped organise the event about what I had observed on the day in general and about the 'stable money' on the bamboo in particular:

Olivia:	This is hard for me to understand. For what reason should money go on the bamboo sticks like that?
Jona:	We gave the bamboo to the family of our mother's brothers [uncles]. Our mother's brothers cooked food and gave it to our father (*papa*). When our father died, we are supposed to pay back this debt (*dinau*). Each bamboo went to a family that killed a pig for our father. With each pig, there is a bamboo. To pay back this debt, we tie money to the bamboo.
Margaret:	We give them money on bamboo so that they will be happy.
Jona:	To make sure payback is 100 percent. We pay back the pig, and we pay back the same again in money.
Olivia:	So the bamboo sticks have the same money as the price of the pig?
Wesley:	Yes, one pig is 1,000 Kina. So we give this back again on the bamboo.[15]

Andrew Strathern and Pamela Stewart (1999) note that, while money takes on the representational capacity of gifts, it cannot stand alone. In this display, money was surrounded by other objects: pigs, fresh produce, banana trees, bamboo. It was made into a ceremonial gift through the company of these objects, the acts of dancing and singing, and the affect of money being 'played'. However, it must also go through a process of transformation in order for it to be made in to the right 'kind' of money, one that is clearly a gift. For instance, Jona's sister-in-law, Gee, explained that one had to find new notes to tie on to the bamboo as only pristine notes could be used in this exchange (cf. Nihill 1989:153).

Gee:	I went to the bank and got new ones. We get new clean ones from the bank so that they will stand up straight. It is about the decoration. People see it and are happy. They will be excited.
Olivia:	I noticed that each of the bamboos has different notes. Some of them were 5 Kina, some were 50 Kina. Is there any reason for this?
Margaret:	It was just for decoration. To make it colourful.
Jona:	What matters most is the amount that we are giving. That is very important.

[15] This conversation was conducted in Tok Pisin and recorded, then transcribed and translated by the author.

While the women emphasised the aesthetics of the presentation, Jona explained that it was the monetary value that was most important. One can surmise that both the quantity of notes and their colourful aesthetics were necessary if this display were to have a meaningful impact and be clearly visible (as a valuable in the eyes of its recipients) (Graeber 1996).

The 'bamboo money' was for specific amounts, allocated to particular families and people who had performed the care work for the old man before he died. The bamboo represented the large amount of money going to the different families in the sub-clan and the enduring relationships through time that both sub-clans were maintaining by partaking in this event. While this money was to go to specific people, it was handed out in a jovial manner, not formalised and premeditated, was in smaller amounts, and people were called out from the crowd by their family names. I found it difficult to keep track of who was receiving how much, as women and men at the front took cash notes from their own pockets and placed them directly in the hands, pockets and mouths of those who came forward from the crowd.

When I asked about the 'play money', Jona, Margaret and their relatives started laughing at my interest in the details. Nevertheless, they took pity on me and attempted to explain the intention behind this aspect of the payment, at which point the importance of pleasing the recipients became the focus:

Olivia: So before you gave bamboo money, you had to give play money?
Gee: Yes. We were doing it to make them happy.

In this context, the 'happy' emotion is generalised to a collective of people who are, in that moment of mutual recognition with another sub-clan, considered as unanimous in their feeling, even though the reality usually involves extensive negotiation, talk and debate.

In trying to understand the nature of play money, I went with what I understood it to mean in English; that this was for fun, for the atmosphere or the festivities, to make the occasion joyous:

Olivia: So this money isn't serious? It is just to make people happy? This isn't the real *het pe* – it is just to make people happy?
Gee: No, it is still part of the *het pe.*

I struggled to ask questions that would elicit a clearer view of what the play money aimed to achieve. Margaret intervened by saying, 'It is for those people who helped, but don't have a bamboo, or big name. So we still call their names. To make them happy'. In this Margaret demonstrates the desire to recognise those who were attending from the recipient sub-clan but who had not specifically contributed to the food given to the Big Man before he died. The people receiving this more informal kind of money-gift may not be leaders or specifically required to be compensated, but they were nonethe-

less recognised by the hosts of the ceremony. Margaret explained that her and the other hosts' intentions were coercive, even though playful: 'We put it in their hands, in their pockets, inside their clothes. Sometimes we put it in their mouths to stop them making a noise – they can't make war cries too much if we shut them up with the money'. They were physically and symbolically being pacified with money.

William Beeman argues that making a spectacle involves heightened emotions: 'The mere event of displaying these symbolic representative elements in a special framed context is enough to elicit strong positive emotional responses from the observing public' (1993:380). By putting money playfully in their mouths, pockets or bags, the donors publicly and personally recognised the receiving families and individuals. In receiving the money as their name was called out, the recipients also demonstrated mutual recognition of the donor sub-clan by agreeing to engage in the spectacle. As Hirsch (1995) explains, such aesthetic efforts are an aspect of persuading others to act. For instance, an equivalent scenario in my family in the UK may be Christmas Day, where the desire that someone else receives my gift and enjoys opening it is about drawing them and everyone else in the family together in an act of reciprocal exchange, the spirit of which is created through the aesthetic elements of the decorated tree, the wrapped gifts and even the Christmas music. The mood of the event and the aesthetics of the gifts are all creative efforts made as part of an event that revolves around drawing others into relationships of affection, emotion and mutuality (and arguably is part of what organises people into 'families'). Similarly, in Goroka, the play money was a direct attempt at elicitation in that the intention was to produce a particular form of reaction which may or may not be achieved:

> Acts must appear in a form other than the agent's intention, and to that extent are 'separated' from the agent. Furthermore, the subsequent outcome of acts, their effect, is always embodied in another (relation, person). If force is applied to an external object it is to display the imprint of one's own effectiveness, and in this sense to make the object part of oneself (M. Strathern 1988:297).

In this case, the intention to create a joyous occasion was not separate from the agent; it was a conscious attempt to display one's own effectiveness by bringing about a positive emotional reaction in others. Thus, as Graeber (2001) states, value is the result of people's creative attempts to represent the importance of their own actions. The giving of money initially in small amounts and accompanied by shouts and cries of joy added movement, energy and sound to the occasion. It emphasised the capacity for money to flow and move at different velocities. While its value comes from its transactional benefit in an array of commodity exchanges, its meaning in that moment was about connection, recognition and the acknowledgement of social relations. Yet the playful and jovial aspects of the exchange came with an underlying coercive objective of ensuring that the recipients accept the gift.

As Jona explained, however, the event was not just about making the other side happy, but also about celebrating one's own joy at having this obligation brought to an end: 'It is a happy time. This obligation (*hevi*) is finished now. We are celebrating. We put it in their pockets, in their mouths, in their bags'. It is thus the emotions and the affective aesthetics that mean that money momentarily becomes more than money, becomes a valuable object that represents the generations of care and relationality that have existed between these different groups, and the relief of repaying an emotional and material debt. Money is brought to life and represents life through embodied joy, entertainment and excitement, and the rounding off of relational excesses. But there is also the desire to get rid of the burden of reciprocity – a goal that requires an aspect of coercion, while also demonstrating wealth and accomplishment.

Conclusion

In order to understand how and why money becomes a gift in the Highlands, it is necessary to pay attention to the emotional (as narratives and terminology), aesthetic (as visual and representational) and affective (in terms of embodied reactions) efforts and outcomes of such exchanges. This builds on the work of Michael O'Hanlon (1993), Edward LiPuma (1999) and Pamela Stewart and Andrew Strathern (2002a) in their examinations of the symbolism of money. This approach recognises the significant role of women in large-scale gift exchange events, as they dress up, perform and organise much of the financial logistics beforehand. In Goroka today, it seems that women do not seek out their own forms of ceremonial exchange as in the *wok meri* system of Daulo District in the Eastern Highlands, (a short distance from Goroka) in the 1980s,[16] but rather have their own role in public, collective exchanges. Women are active organisers and transactors and go to great efforts to create an entertaining shared moment.

Yet the materiality of money also continues to be relevant. If Papua New Guinea's Kina were not in the form of lightweight plastic paper, it might not be so easy to hide and to reveal, or to flow between bodies. In Goroka people use aesthetics and affect to turn money into a ceremonial valuable and divide it into different kinds of 'special monies' through the presentation and performance of gifting (Zelizer 1989). My inclusion of emotions and affect in the understanding of economies develops the idea that both material and immaterial elements matter for ceremonial exchanges (Hirsch 1995:61). The immaterial elements that make a gift exchange are just as vital as those which are evidently material. An array of emotions is expressed and acknowledged during such payments. To make the recipients *hamamas* is to ensure that one's social obligations through time have been met appropriately, and it relieves the donors of their requirement to reciprocate as part of the cycle of reproducing their social relations.

16 Sexton (1982, 1984, 1986), Warry (1986)

In this instance, the donors had completed their task of providing an impressive and beautiful day, and eventually the full *het pe* money was distributed. The decorative and performative efforts of women and their clansmen on the day provided entertainment for their local communities and maintained ties of kinship as they deemed fit. They also recognised themselves as key actors in creating affect, a component that can be given more attention in analyses of ceremonial gift exchange and economic systems generally.

Nonetheless there are ambivalences about the amount of money that should be given, and conflicts arise in such events despite of much effort. While I cannot state that these conflicts are because of money *per se*, I do suggest that the aesthetic efforts of ritual performance are attempts to limit the association of money with a commodity and thus its alienating potentials. Tensions can nonetheless run high, as money is always in circulation and must often be used to pay other debts and obligations. This fungibility of money means there is potential for gifts to result in anger and jealousy, despite the donors' best efforts.

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