

Growing up on the Trobiand Islands in Papua New Guinea

Barbara Senft
Gunter Senft

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Growing up on the Trobriand Islands in Papua New Guinea

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Nijmegen

Volume 21

Growing up on the Trobriand Islands in Papua New Guinea
Childhood and educational ideologies in Tauwema
by Barbara Senft and Gunter Senft

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The way in which each human infant is transformed into the finished adult, into the complicated individual version of his city and his century, is one of the most fascinating studies open to the curious-minded.

Margaret Mead (1930: 9)

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Preface

In 1981 Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt – the head of the Human Ethology Unit at the Max Planck Institute for Behavioral Physiology in Seewiesen – offered Gunter Senft a post-doc position as the linguist in his interdisciplinary project on “Ritual Communication on the Trobriand Islands”. The project, which was funded by the Max Planck Society and the German Research Society (DFG) involved an anthropological PhD student of Mainhard Schuster from the University of Basel, Ingrid Bell-Krannhals, an expert in tropical medicine, Wulf Schiefenhövel, and the human ethologist Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt. While Schiefenhövel and Eibl-Eibesfeldt planned to do field research on the Trobriand Islands for about 6 weeks only in 1982 and in 1983, the anthropologist and the linguist were supposed to do field research there from July 1982 till December 1983 – with a break of 6 weeks between the years. Barbara Senft planned to accompany her husband back to the field in 1983 after his break in the second week of January 1983. When the National and Provincial Governments of Papua New Guinea had approved the project and issued the necessary research permits, the project was carried out as planned.

In July 1982, Gunter arrived in Papua New Guinea and a few days later he first set foot on the beach of the village Tauwema, his place of residence during his field research on Kaile’una Island, the second largest island of the Trobriand archipelago. He almost immediately started to learn Kilivila, the language of the Trobriand Islanders and to tape-record and process Kilivila speech data. At the end of his first five months of field research in 1982 he had come up with a very basic sketch of the grammar of this language and a first Kilivila-English word-list to be later transformed into a dictionary. This word-list was based on a corpus of audio-documented speech data encompassing a variety of text categories or genres which represented both forms of everyday verbal interactions and of forms of ritual communication.

Barbara gave up her position as a teacher in a German primary school to accompany her husband. Given her educational and professional background, she was very much interested in the life of children on the Trobriand Islands – from birth until they reached adolescence; she had made up her mind to follow Malinowski’s (1923: 318ff) early plea for researching the socialization of children in a non-European culture. She wanted to learn something about the relationship between children of different ages in what Malinowski (1927: 45) had called “their own little community”, about their forms of play, about the relationship between

children, their parents and their greater family and about the Trobriand Islanders' educational ideas, ideals and ideologies. Besides acquiring the verbal competence in Kilivila necessary for answering these questions, she was gathering data on her topics of interest in regular sessions of participant observation, via pre-structured interviews and during conversations with mothers and fathers of the children she had observed.

Among the verbal data which Gunter documented in 1982 and 1983 were a number of texts that were also relevant to his wife's interests. During another joint field trip in 1989 – this time accompanied by their two and four year old children Sebastian and Frauke – Barbara and Gunter could further broaden their data and information on childhood in Tauwema and on the Trobriand Islanders' indigenous educational ideologies. During his 13 additional field trips between 1992 and 2012 Gunter could gather further data which helped augment the observations, the different kinds of information and the insights on which this volume is based. This book presents these data and attempts to illustrate what it means to grow up on the Trobriand Islands.

The introduction to this volume provides a brief survey of ethnographic studies on childhood, starting with some of Franz Boas' ideas about this research topic that influenced his students Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict on the one hand and with Malinowski's plea for researching the socialization of children in different cultures on the other. We then discuss the impact of the ideas of Irving Child, William Lambert and John and Beatrice Whiting and the influence of their famous "Six Cultures Study" – launched in the mid-1950s – on new ethnographic, sociolinguistic and anthropological linguistic research on childhood in the second half of the 20th century and up till now.

Chapter 2 provides the bulk of Barbara's data which she gathered during our joint field research in 1983 and 1989. The chapter zooms in on indigenous ideas on conception, birth and birth-giving, the child's early developmental phase from suckling and toddler to the traumatic experience of abrupt weaning when the child can walk, the child's introduction and gradual integration into the children's group, and the size and composition of the children's playgroups and the games they play. Moreover, it also discusses the children's relation with their parents and their kinspeople, and their overall socialization via play within the children's community and at home. When children reach the age of seven years, the Trobriand Islanders regard their essential socialization phase as being completed. The chapter ends with a brief outlook on the children's future development until they marry and thus reach adult status within the Trobriand Islanders' community.

Chapter 3 presents some of the Trobriand Islanders' educational ideas and ideologies. First we document and analyse three different narratives. The first one, a most probably true and thus semi-documentary story, contrasts a good, busy

and caring husband, father and villager with a bad, lazy and careless man. Our consultants refer to this story as “*livalela valu*” – as “village talk”. The second text is a tale – a typical “*kukwanebu*” in the Trobriand Islanders’ indigenous typology of text categories – about a good and a bad girl (for other such tales see Senft 2015a). The third text, a speech directed to children, is explicitly educational; it tells children how to behave properly, especially when they have reached adulthood. The Trobriand Islanders metalinguistically label this speech as “*gugwadi asi guguya*” – as a piece of “advice for children”. After the analysis of these three texts we present, analyze and discuss a speech Keda’ila, a man in his late thirties, presented to schoolchildren during a meeting called “*education pela gugwadi pela bubunesi bwena valu Tauwema*” – “educating children in the good customs of Tauwema village”. All these texts were documented by Gunter. The interested reader of this book has the opportunity to access original data presented in Chapter 3, which were documented on audio- and video-tapes, via the internet. The data can be found on Gunter’s website under the following URL: <<http://www.mpi.nl/people/senft-gunter/research>>. In order to access the recordings, please make sure that you have a modern browser.

Chapter 4 summarizes Chapters 2 and 3 in an attempt to synthesize the various data and observations, analyses and insights gained into the complex process of growing up on the Trobriand Islands, a process during which the children are influenced, educated and socialized by various agents and institutions in both culture specific and ethologically universal ways and modalities to become not only independent but also socially competent individuals who can take up the challenges of social competition which pervade Trobriand society. This education provides them with the insight that they live in a what we have called “balanced society”. The members of this society love to compete with each other in ritualized “games” like the men’s harvest competitions or the competitions in women’s wealth. The winners of the ritualized competitions gain not only personal fame and status, but also prizes which provide them with surplus possessions. However, the Trobrianders’ balanced society does not allow any kind of individual accumulation of wealth because it would threaten its balance. Any surplus property gained by the winners of the competitive rituals has to be redistributed to rebalance the society again. This results in yet more fame of the winners who played the competitive games so successfully – but fame, status and influence acquired by an individual in this way is not regarded as a threat to the balance of the Trobriand society; it is acknowledged and respected as a personal achievement.

Acknowledgements

This book is the result of Gunter's by now more than 30 years of researching the language and culture of the Trobriand Islanders in Papua New Guinea, Barbara's 15½ months of field research in Tauwema and our continuous joint discussions of our Trobriand experiences ever since 1982.

Writing this book would have been impossible without the help of many people and institutions. First, Gunter would like to thank the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG: Ei-24/10-1-5; Se-473/2-1-2) especially Ursula Far Hollender and Manfred Briegel; the Research Unit for Human Ethology of the Max-Planck-Society and its director Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt; and the Department of Language and Cognition (formerly the Cognitive Anthropology Research Group) at the Max-Planck-Institute for Psycholinguistics and its director Stephen C. Levinson for their support during and after his field research.

Gunter also thanks the National and Provincial Governments in Papua New Guinea, the Institute for PNG Studies – especially Don Niles, and the National Research Institute – especially James Robins, for their assistance with, and permission for, his research projects.

Karin Kastens, the librarian of the MPI for psycholinguistics, deserves special thanks for her great help in realizing this book project.

The technical group of the MPI for Psycholinguistics, notably Paul Trilsbeek, Nick Wood, Ad Verbunt and Reiner Dirksmeyer made it possible to combine data presented in this book with the Internet access to the original audio- and video-documents. Herbert Baumann and especially Ad Verbunt improved our digitized photographs electronically. We very gratefully acknowledge their excellent cooperation. We also thank Gunter's student assistants Cielke Hendriks and Maartje Weenink for their help in finalizing the map of Tauwema and its immediate environment.

We owe special thanks to Brigitte Bauer, Harry Beran, Ad Foolen, Clare Harding, Volker Heesch, Heidi Keller, Pieter Seuren and Eric Venbrux for very extensive and stimulating comments on first drafts of this volume. Harry Beran and Clare Harding carefully corrected what the authors supposed to be English. Remaining mistakes are ours, of course.

Our gratitude also goes to Kees Vaes, Patricia Leplae and the other staff of John Benjamins Publishing Company who have been – as always – very professional, helpful and most pleasant to work with.

Last but not least we express our sincere thanks to the people of the Trobriand Islands, and above all the inhabitants of Tauwema and our consultants for their hospitality, friendship, and patient cooperation. With great gratitude we dedicate our book to the children of the Trobriand Islands – *pela gugwadi!*

Abbreviations

1.	first person
2.	second person
3.	third person
CP	classificatory particle, classifier
DEM	Demonstrative
DIR	Directional
EMPH	Emphasis
EXCL	exclusive
FUT	Future
HABIT	Habitual
INCL	inclusive
LOC	Locative
P.C.	personal communication
PL	Plural
PPII	possessive pronoun (intermediate degree of possession)
PPIII	possessive pronoun (alienable possession)
PPIV	possessive pronoun (inalienable possession)
REDUP	Reduplication
s-	Subject-prefix
TAM	Tense-Aspect-Mood
\$	syllable boundary

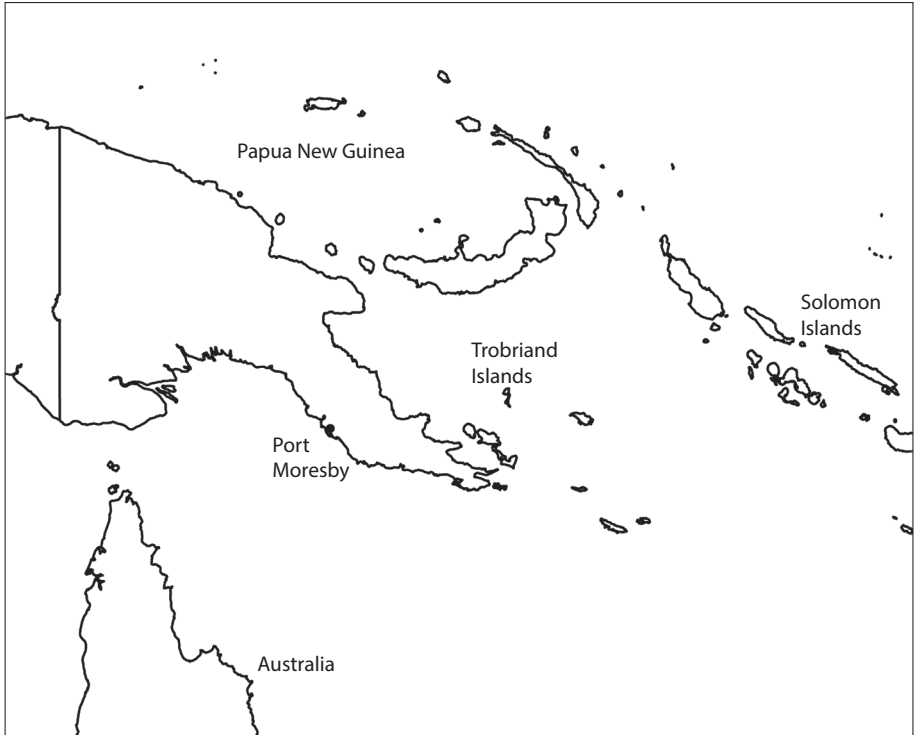
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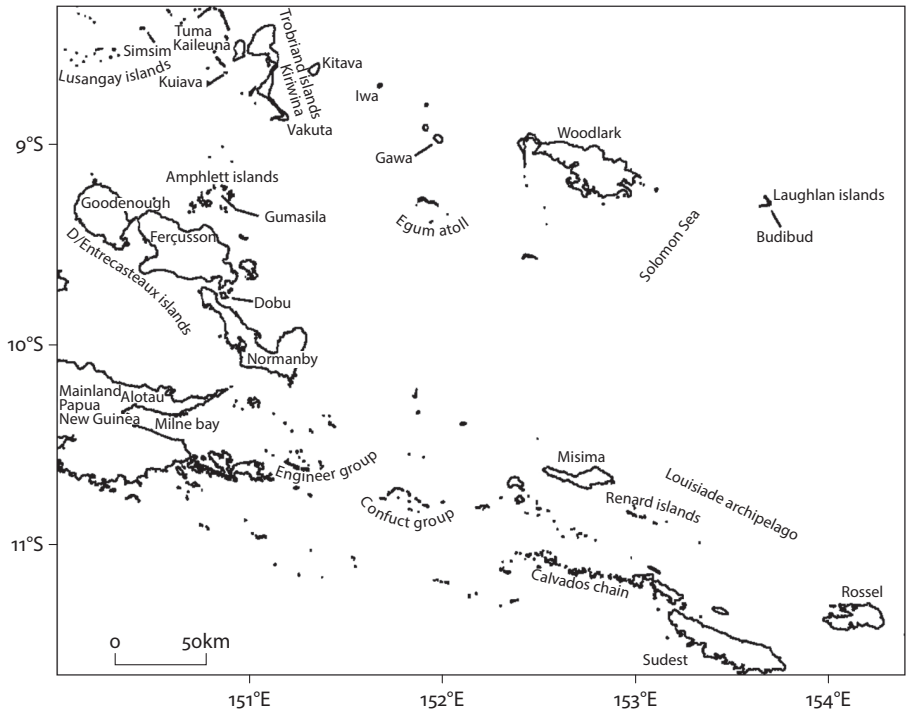
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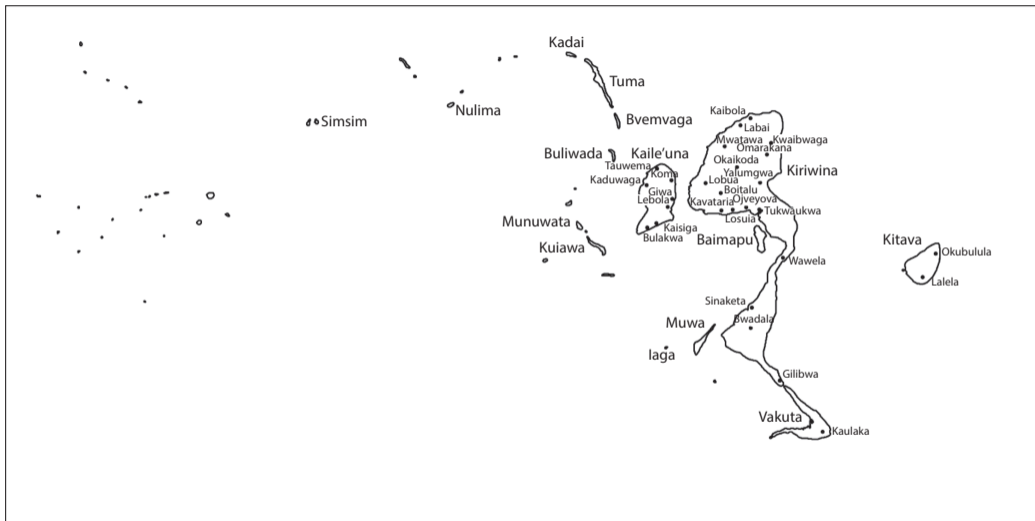
Maps



Map 1. Papua New Guinea



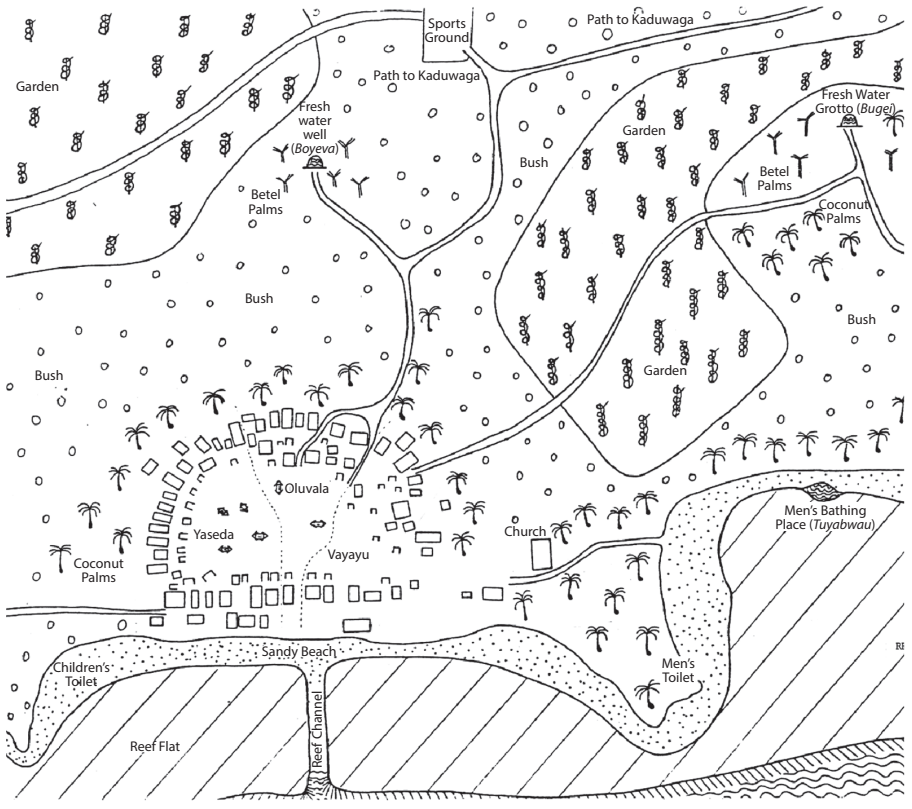
Map 2. Milne Bay Province (= the Massim area)



Map 3. The Trobriand Islands



Map 4. Village plan of Tauwema (after Bell-Krannhals 1990: 48)



Map 5. Tauwema and its immediate environment

Introduction

The publication of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's philosophical pedagogical treatise "*ÉMILE OU DE L'ÉDUCATION*" in 1762 was a landmark not only in pedagogy but also in the study of human beings in general. Already in the preface of his *Émile*, Rousseau complains about the fact that the world of the child is completely unknown and therefore not understood at all and asks for the proper, serious and adequate study of children and their world. Rousseau's ideas had an important impact in pedagogy, but not in anthropology. Despite the fact that some travellers' reports published in the 19th century included some descriptions of and comments on child rearing practices in "exotic" cultures, it was only in publications of missionaries and colonial administrators published in the late 19th and the first decade of the 20th century where some information on customs of child rearing was provided. Some of these missionaries and administrators who also had an anthropological background were the first to publish observations that included – mostly rudimentary – ethnographies of childhood (see e.g. Childs 1949; but also Raum 1940).

In his seminal article on the history of ethnographic studies of childhood, Robert A. LeVine (2007: 249) identifies Franz Boas as the "precursor to ethnographic research on childhood in U.S. anthropology". In connection with his "anthropomorphic work on child growth among European immigrants to the United States Boas [1912: 217f.]... formulated the perspective suggesting not only that human growth is influenced by environmental factors but also that ... the child's 'mental makeup' must also be affected by 'the social and geographical environment'" (LeVine 2007: 249). Boas himself did not elaborate on this idea, but his students Edward Sapir, Ruth Benedict and especially Margaret Mead took it up and, relying on bits and pieces of the early reports about children and childhood in non-Western cultures, started to develop it (see e.g. Mead 1930, 1931). Especially Mead's work "helped to make the culture and personality approach popular" (Morton (1996: 277f.); see also Gladwin (1961)). Sapir never did research on childhood himself, but he strongly

proposed research on the child's acquisition of culture to his students... Sapir, prior to 1937, was ... advocating a view of childhood that ...was focused on meanings, patterns, and organization in the child's experience ... [Sapir]

emphasized the subjective experience rather than the behavioral conformity of the child, and assumed the child to be an active and definitive decision maker concerning the meanings of culture patterns (LeVine 2007: 252)

Among the first professional anthropologists who published “ethnographic accounts of childhood based on their own fieldwork in non-Western communities” (LeVine 2007: 249) were Margaret Mead (1928 a&b, 1930, 1942; see also Freeman 1983; Shankman 2013) and Bronislaw Malinowski (1929). Malinowski’s students Raymond Firth, Audrey I. Richards, Ian Hogbin, Camilla H. Wedgwood, Phyllis Kaberry, Edward E. Evans-Pritchard and Margaret Read, but also Meyer Fortes, who was not a student of Malinowski’s but influenced by him, also “published accounts of childhood in various detail” (LeVine 2007: 250). LeVine refers to and lists all these extremely relevant publications and points out that “[t]hese works by a generation of anthropologists leave no doubt that by the 1930s childhood was an established topic of ethnographic description...” (LeVine 2007: 250f.).¹

Influenced by Edward Sapir’s ideas about childhood and the framework he set up for studying the child’s acquisition of culture, and with explicit reference to Malinowski, with whom he had studied at Yale and thus was influenced by his functional theory,² John Whiting, together with the psychologists Irvin L. Child and William Lambert launched in 1954 the famous “Six Cultures Study (SCS)”. LeVine (2007: 253) praises this project as “a unique effort to harness six ethnographic studies in different parts of the world to collect comparable data ... on childhood in social and cultural context”. The aim of this study was “to collect systematic data on child life in a variety of cultures” (Whiting & Whiting 1975: viii) based on a field guide (J. Whiting et al. 1966) that was meant to guarantee that the researchers who studied the children in the six cultures would indeed collect comparable data, for example with respect to the social acts observed in participant observation. The Whitings formulated the leading questions and the explicit aim of their comparative research project as follows:

Are children brought up in societies with different customs, beliefs and values radically different from each other? Do differences attributable to sex, age and birth order override these cultural differences? Does the situation and setting influence a child’s behavior or are his actions similar across environments? Or, to ask these questions in a summary form, if you want to predict the behavior of a preadolescent child, which would be most important to know: his or her sex,

1. For a collection of classic papers by the pioneers Franz Boas, Margaret Mead, Bronislaw Malinowski, Meyer Fortes and Ruth Benedict see LeVine & New (2008).

2. See Whiting & Whiting (1975: 7); LeVine (2010: 515); Edwards & Bloch (2010: 486).

age, birth order, the culture into which he was born, or the situation he was in at the moment you made your prediction? Our study attempts to answer these questions by analyzing in natural settings and in the normal course of living the social behavior of a sample of boys and girls, three to eleven years of age, growing up in six different parts of the world. (Whiting & Whiting 1975: 1)

The following teams did their research for this study in the six “parts of the world” which were chosen for this comparative project (see Whiting & Whiting 1975: 11–25):

- Thomas and Hatsumi Marezki worked in the Japanese and Okinawan speaking community of Taira on the northeast coast of Okinawa.
- William and Corinne Nydegger lived in Tarong in the northwest of the island of Luzon in the Philippines where Ilocano is spoken.
- Leigh Minturn’s and John Hitchcock’s fieldsite was the village of Khalapur in northern India; the languages spoken there are the local vernacular Khalapur and Hindi.
- Robert LeVine and Barbara Lloyd were living in Keumbu studying the Bantu-speaking children of the Nyansongo people of Kenya.
- A. Kimball Romney and Romaine Romney lived in the western highlands of the Mexican state of Oaxaca where they worked with Mixtecan-speaking people in the barrio of Santo Domingo in Juxtahuaca, where Spanish is spoken, too.
- And John and Ann Fisher’s fieldsite was Orchard town in New England.

The sample of the children studied in the six fieldsites consisted of 67 girls and 67 boys each. The project resulted in a bonanza of data and insights which cannot be listed here for the sake of space. Pauline Sears summarized the results presented in the first volume of a series of publications reporting on the SCS, a voluminous book with more than 1000 pages which was edited by Beatrice Whiting in 1963, as follows:

Adult personality is thought to result in large measure from experiences and training, started at infancy and going through the early childhood years.

... [T]he effects of interaction between the cultural beliefs, the constitutional factors of a given child or group, and the particular ways of a given mother still need a great deal of elucidation... Folk tales, religious beliefs, and the theories of disease are given attention as indices of adult personality patterns ... [and] ecology, economics, social and political organization are viewed as setting the parameters for the behavior of the agents of child rearing... The child-rearing practices may then be regarded as arising out of, and designed to carry forward, the culture of the adults. (Sears 1963: 476)

Sears' assessment of B. Whiting's 1963 edited volume is somewhat relativized by LeVine's critical remarks on the final report on the SCS published by the Whitings in 1975. LeVine points out that

[w]hen the Whitings published the final report (1975), they narrowed its analysis to relationships between the socioeconomic environments of the families and the behavior patterns of children assessed through natural observation, from which valid conclusions could be drawn. So in the end the SCS had little to say about the causal influence of child rearing on personality development and cultural expression. (LeVine 2007: 253)

One of the probably most important aspects of the very influential SCS certainly is that this project was based on "a model of psychological anthropology in which human biological potentials interact with culture and society" (D'Andrade 1994: 1), a model which took "a mediating position between the extremes of biological determinism and socio-cultural determinism. In [J.] Whiting's vision, models of the interaction between human biological potentialities and environmental conditions make possible a deeper and more insightful account of the nature of culture and society" (D'Andrade 1994: 13). This bridging function of the SCS is also highlighted by Edwards and Bloch (2010: 491), who point out that the SCS "model served as an important framework during its era for showing how biological and sociocultural factors interact".

We want to emphasize here that the present study is very much indebted to this approach of the Whitings and their "fundamental point of view ... that the local cultural community where a child is born and will grow up is among the most important influences on the life that child will live because it defines the pathways in life that child will have available to follow" (Weisner 2010: 500).

In the second half of the 20th century not only social, linguistic, and biological anthropologists, but also developmental and cross-cultural psychologists as well as linguists took new directions in the ethnography of childhood³ with special attention to play and the acquisition of language and culture. This acquisition research was very much influenced by sociolinguistic, pragmatic and psycholinguistic approaches.

Gunter Senft has pointed out elsewhere (Senft 2003: 106ff) that language, culture and cognition were now understood as interdependent domains of one interdisciplinary. This approach fostered the rise of psycholinguistics and the

3. LeVine (2007: 254f.) provides an excellent selection of and references to these studies. Schwartzman (1976) published an interesting survey article on the anthropological study of children's play. Surveys of anthropological studies of socialization are provided by Harkness (1992), La Fontaine (1986) and LeVine (1980). See also Ritchie & Ritchie (1979).

development of the “cross-cultural psychology” subdiscipline. Representatives of this subdiscipline – mainly followers of Jean Piaget’s and Bärbel Inhelder’s Geneva school, Gustav Jahoda, some of Jerome Bruner’s associates at the Center of Cognitive Studies at Harvard University, such as Patricia Greenfield and Michael Cole, as well as Sylvia Scribner and their coworkers – took the interdependence between language, culture and cognition for granted. They were convinced that psychological hypotheses – especially hypotheses in developmental psychology – proposed in researching populations within one culture and one language community could only claim to be general and universal if they were tested in intercultural research.

In psycholinguistics the interest in this new interdiscipline was made manifest probably most prominently with the “Field Manual for cross-cultural study of the acquisition of communicative competence” edited by Dan Slobin in 1967 and written by Susan Ervin-Tripp, John Gumperz, Dan Slobin, Keith Kernan, Claudia Mitchell and Brian Stross. Although the manual exists in xeroxcopied versions only, it started the field of “The Crosslinguistic Study of Language Acquisition” for which Malinowski made such a strong plea.

In the late 1970s Elinor Ochs, who did field research on Samoa, and Bambi Schieffelin, who studied the Kaluli of Papua New Guinea, developed a more holistic way to deal with the various aspects of the development of communicative competence and language socialization in a unified manner. They refer to their approach as “Developmental Pragmatics” and “Language Socialization Research” (Ochs & Schieffelin 1979; Schieffelin & Ochs 1986). Developmental Pragmatics

tends to focus on children’s competence in constructing discourse ... The relevant features of context utilized in developmental pragmatic research ... include prior and subsequent discourse ..., and interlocutor’s understanding of social identities, knowledge and goals ... These features are linked to specific linguistic structures in order to assess children’s functional competence in language. Language socialization builds on this rich understanding of children’s discourse at the microanalytic level... [L]anguage socialization has as a goal the linking of microanalytic analyses of children’s discourse to more general ethnographic accounts of cultural beliefs and practices of the families, social groups, or communities into which children are socialized. (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986: 168)

To study how the acquisition of language and of culture influence each other, the linguists examined how language is used in the researched speech communities “to express relationships and cultural meanings in interactions involving children and adults” (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986: 183). Their studies show that “conversational activities involving small children vary in ways that systematically relate to cultural beliefs, values, and social order. [...]. What a child says and how he or she says it will be influenced by local cultural processes” (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986: 183).

Other sociolinguists and anthropological linguists⁴ inspired by the “Ethnography of Speaking” paradigm developed by Dell Hymes (1962; republished in 1978) in cooperation with John Gumperz (see Gumperz & Hymes 1964, 1972) have also contributed to understand “the ways in which communicative interaction during childhood helps shape both cultural acquisition and psychological [and linguistic (B. & G. S.)] development” (LeVine 2007: 255).

Although the amount of studies within the field of childhood that were published at the end of the last and the beginning of this century is impressive, LeVine (2007: 256) comes to the conclusion that “despite the global reach of ethnographic research on childhood, there is hardly any area of the world in which coverage could be called adequate and many others to which ethnography of childhood needs to be extended”.⁵

Our study, which contributes to extending the number of the relatively few childhood studies in Papua New Guinea, focusses on the children’s acquisition of culture on the Trobriand Islands.⁶ However, we also use speech data to further illustrate the points about the interrelationship between language and culture made by scholars like Gumperz, Hymes, Ochs and Schieffelin quoted above and to document the Trobriand Islanders’ ideals and ideologies with respect to education, parenting and socialization.

Our study is substantially informed by the following two characterizations of childhood. Catherine A. Salmon and Todd K. Shackleford (2008: 30) define human childhood as follows:

Human childhood is a life-history stage that appears necessary and useful for acquiring the information and practice to build and refine the mental algorithms critical for negotiating the social coalitions that are key to success in our species. Mastering the social environment presents special challenges for the human child. Social competence is difficult because the target is constantly changing

4. Note that William Foley (1997: 29) states that “the boundary between pragmatics and anthropological linguistics or sociolinguistics is impossible to draw at present”.

5. LeVine (2007: 255f.) provides an excellent selection of references to relevant studies; see also Morton’s (1996: 7ff) survey of the relevant literature in the first chapter of her excellent monograph “Becoming Tongan”. A very recent anthology on the topic is Allerton (2016b); see also Allerton (2016a).

6. For childhood studies in Papua New Guinea see Mead (1930); Ross (1936); Wedgwood (1938); Whiting (1941); Hogbin (1943; 1946); Weiss (1981); Fenbury (2009); Sanderson (2016). With the exception of studying the acquisition of the complex system of numeral classifiers (Senft 1996a) and of color terms (Senft 1987a; 2011a; 2012), G. Senft did not do further research on first language acquisition on the Trobriand Islands. For a brief outline of language socialization in Tonga see Morton (1996: 162ff). See also Cook-Gumperz et al. (1986) and Miller & Hoogstra (1992).

and similarly equipped with theory of mind and other cognitive abilities. Here we suggest that family environment, including care from fathers, siblings, and grandparents, is a primary source and mediator of the ontogeny of social competencies.

And Heidi Keller (2010: 570f) provides the following description:

Human childhood is a unique human development phase because it has the longest prolongation compared with all other primates ... [I]n the psychocultural model, childhood is seen as a developmental phase where substantial learning processes are located that eventually influence the individual adult. The social structure of the child's learning environment is crucial ... The childhood context and the child's learning environment are both considered to be dependent on the material and social resources of the social organisms or households in which the child is raised and to derive from measurable features of the child's everyday context and daily routine with familiar people.

Before we go *medias in res*, we first briefly introduce the Trobriand Islands, the Trobriand Islanders and some important aspects of their culture as well as their language, which is called Kilivila.

On his search for the missing ship *La Pérouse*, the French naval officer and explorer Joseph Antoine Bruni D'Entrecasteaux (1739–1793), discovered an island archipelago which he named after one of his officers on his ship “*Espérance*”, Jean François Sylvestre Denis, comte de Trobriand (1729–1810). The indigenous name of the biggest island of this archipelago, which is now called Kiriwina, is *Boyowa*. The Trobriand Islands, a group of about 20 islands and islets, in the Solomon Sea are situated at the 151.04° of Eastern Longitude and 8.38° of Southern Latitude in the Milne Bay Province of Papua New Guinea. Kitava Island is an elevated coral island which rises to about 30 m at a central ridge. The other islands and islets are low-lying flat coral atolls. All islands are coral formations composed of coralline limestone. Most of them are fringed by coral reefs. The islands Kitava, Kiriwina, Vakuta, Kaile'una, Muwa, Kuiuwa, Munuwata, Tuma, and Simsim are populated. The islands are considered to be an important tropical rainforest eco-region (see Maps 1–3). The climate on the Trobriands is tropical. The average temperature is between 28° and 30°, with maximal temperatures of about 35° and minimal temperatures (at night) of about 22°. The humidity is very high throughout the year with an average of more than 90%. The rainy season lasts from November till April with the northwest monsoon as the prevailing wind, the dry season lasts from May till October with a constant southeast trade wind blowing.⁷

7. For information on the climate change that has been affecting the Trobriand Islands over the last years see Senft (2017b).

The Trobriand Islanders have become famous, even outside of anthropology, because of the anthropologist Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski, who did field research there between 1915 and 1918 (see Young 2004; also G. Senft 2006, 2009a). The Islanders belong to the ethnic group called ‘Northern Massim’ (see Haddon 1894: 184; also Liep 2015: 185). They are gardeners, doing slash and burn cultivation of the bush; their most important crop is yams. Moreover, they are also famous for being excellent canoe builders, carvers, and navigators, especially in connection with the ritualized ‘*Kula*’ trade, an exchange of shell valuables that covers the Massim area of the Melanesian part of the Pacific (see Malinowski 1922; Leach & Leach 1983; Persson 1999). Other highly important features of the Trobriand Islanders’ society are that it is matrilineal and follows the rule of patrilocality – or virilocal residence – which means that a newly married couple lives in the village of the husband (see Baldwin 1971: 246, 270ff).

Kilivila, the language of the Trobriand Islanders, is one of 40 Austronesian languages spoken in the Milne Bay Province of PNG. It is an agglutinative language; its word order is rather free; the most frequent word order is SubjectVerbObject, but its general unmarked word order pattern is s-VerbObjectSubject (G. Senft 1986: 6). The Austronesian languages spoken in Milne Bay Province are grouped into 12 language families; one of them is labeled Kilivila. The Kilivila language family encompasses the languages

- Budibud (or Nada, with about 200 speakers living on the Budibud Islands),
- Muyuw (or Murua, with about 4,000 speakers living on Woodlark Island and on the populated islands Gawa, Iwa, Kwaiawata, Egum and Yanaba of the Woodlark Islands group – this group of islands is also called Marshall Bennetts Islands), and
- Kilivila (or Kiriwina, and also Boyowa, with about 40,000 speakers; Kilivila is spoken on the islands Kiriwina, Vakuta, Kitava, Kaile’una, Kuiawa, Munuwata and Simsim).

The languages Muyuw and Kilivila are split into mutually understandable local dialects. Typologically, Kilivila is classified as a Western Melanesian Oceanic language belonging to the Papuan-Tip-Cluster group (G. Senft 1986: 6).

Childhood in Tauwema

... *I sit and watch the children play* ... The Rolling Stones (1964): “*As Tears Go By*”.

Barbara Senft twice accompanied her husband on his fieldtrips to the Trobriand Islands. After Gunter’s first five and a half months field research in 1982 in the village of Tauwema on Kaile’una Island, the couple returned to the field in 1983, six weeks after Gunter had left the Islands; they stayed there till the end of November 1983. Six years later the couple – now together with their four year old daughter Frauke and their two year old son Sebastian – stayed for another four months in Tauwema. The vast bulk of the data, analyses and findings presented in this chapter are based on the observations Barbara made during her participant observations of the daily life and the routines and activities of the children in Tauwema as well as on conversations and interviews she made with their mothers and fathers.⁸

In what follows we first introduce our field-site, the village Tauwema, its structure, its inhabitants and its surroundings.

Then we address the first period of a child’s lifetime, zooming in on the Trobriand Islanders’ ideas about conception and on birth and birth-giving. We then report on the children’s early developmental phase from suckling via toddler to their traumatic experience of abrupt weaning when they can walk – which usually happens in the second year of their lives (see also Bateson 1932: 274; Weiss 1981: 12). This first section of Chapter 2 ends with a brief excursus on adoption.

In the next section of this chapter we concentrate on the next five years or so of the children’s lifetime. We provide a description of the children’s introduction and gradual integration into the children’s group, characterized so aptly by

8. Children’s statements constitute the focal point of Florence Weiss’s 1981 monograph “*Children Narrate Their Daily Life*”. Every day for a week she met seven Iatmul children (of the age of 7 and younger) living in Palimbei, a village on the Sepik River in Papua New Guinea, asked them what they had done and experienced that day and then documented these children’s daily narratives (see Weiss 1981: 375). Barbara’s attempts to collect similar data failed – the children simply did not understand what she wanted them to do. Obviously they were not familiar with this type of text category. There is no genre “report of daily activities” in Kilivila. At the same time Gunter also failed to elicit autobiographical reports in Trobriand adults – out of the same reason: The Trobrianders are not familiar with this genre, either.

Malinowski (1927: 45) as “their own little community”. We report on the size and composition of their playgroups and their forms of play, their relation with their parents and their kinspeople and their overall socialization via play, within the children’s community and by their parents and relatives until they reach the age of seven years. By then their essential socialization process is generally regarded as being completed by the Trobriand Islanders. The chapter ends with a brief outlook on the children’s future development until they marry and thus reach adult status within the Trobriand Islanders’ community.

2.1 The fieldsite: Tauwema village on Kaile’una Island

On the 22nd of January 1983 the two of us landed on the Losuia airstrip on Kiriwina Island, the biggest island of the archipelago, where the Paramount Chief of the islands resides in Omarakana village in the north-east of Kiriwina (see Map 3). Losuia is the name of a village on the west-coast in mid-Kiriwina; this village hosts the Milne Bay Province government station with a post station, the only hospital on the Trobriands and – in 1983 – a branch of the Westpac Bank. In Losuia was also the only store on the island; it was owned by the Frenchman Henry Gardette who had married the daughter of an influential Kiriwinan chief. Henry had a boat with which he regularly made trips to Alotau, the provincial capital, to refresh the stock of his store. There one could buy food like Bikpela-biscuits, jam and peanut-butter, drinks – the inescapable Coca-Cola, but also Milo for making cacao, as well as beer and spirits like Rum, tobacco with old editions of the Sydney Morning Herald for rolling cigarettes but also “real” cigarettes – mostly Benson & Hedges, tools, hooks, fishlines, bushknives, cutlery, pots and cups, buckets, nails, soap, shampoo and baby powder, toothbrushes and toothpaste, colors for dyeing fibre-skirts, Coleman- and Butterfly-lamps, kerosene and methylated spirits necessary to ignite these kerosene lamps, spark plugs, oil and benzene and other things that are necessary for a very basic life on a South Sea island and for getting around in the island archipelago with a dinghy and an outboard engine. Three kilometers south of Losuia was a guesthouse for tourists, the Kiriwina Lodge, owned by the Australian Ray Hargreaves, and another two kilometers further south was the Catholic Mission Station Gusaweta, where we had established contact with Father William Cunningham of the Mission of the Sacred Heart after we had arrived on Kiriwina in 1982. The Kiriwina Lodge and the mission station each had a radio – which was the only way to communicate with officials in Alotau in case of an emergency. In Oiyabia, a neighboring village of Losuia, there was also a Methodist mission station, but the local missionaries there were not really cooperative and obviously not interested in us when we had contacted them after our arrival on Kiriwina in 1982.

After the Fokker Friendship F27 had safely landed at Losuia airstrip, Ray Hargreaves picked us up with the little bus of the Lodge and drove us to the wharf at Losuia. There Ingrid Bell-Krannhals (who left Tauwema in 1982 two weeks before Gunter and came back again two weeks before us), Tomalala and Gerubara, two men from Tauwema, were waiting for us with our dinghy. We loaded the boat with our luggage and other gear that we had bought in Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea, jumped into the dinghy and then we set off for Tauwema, our village of residence at the northern tip of Kaile'una Island. Leaving Losuia meant leaving the last outpost of something like "Western civilization" and immersing ourselves head over heels into the culture and life of the Melanesian Islands world.



Photo 1. Tauwema from the sea (1982)

On our arrival in Tauwema 1½ hours later after a not too wet passage from Kiriwina to Kaile'una, we experienced an exceedingly friendly Melanesian welcome and were accompanied to the house which the people of Tauwema had built for Gunter half a year ago in the village sector called *Va Seda* (see Map 4); this house should be our home for the next 11 months to come. The house was built on the beach, close to the house of Kilagola, the chief of Tauwema, who had "adopted" Gunter and after a few weeks of our joint stay in Tauwema also "adopted" Barbara. Our house – like all the houses in the village – was built on stilts for a better air-circulation. The whole house was made out of bush-materials. The frame was constructed out of trees, the floor was covered with small wooden planks, the side-"walls" consisted of woven leaves of palm trees, and the roof was made of

dried and flattened pandanus leaves. The size of our home was approximately 3.50 m by 7.00 m and the interior was separated into two rooms by a wall-like construction made out of sticks and pandanus leaves. The slightly bigger room with the entrance door served as our living room, as our office and as the garage where the outboard engine was stored and – when necessary – serviced, as well as our guest-room, where in the evenings we were beleaguered by the villagers of Tauwema who wanted to be with us and see what we were doing or who wanted to use the relative bright light of our Coleman-lamp to do some practical things like carving a comb or other things, making flies for their big fish-hooks, restoring some pieces of their clothes and so on. In the smaller room we had our rubber-foam mattresses, a special brand we had bought in Switzerland because they were said to be relatively comfortable and long-lasting (which really turned out to be true); our sleeping place was protected by a big mosquito-net. There was also a plank construction, on which we could put some of our belongings and just enough space for storing our suitcases and our two buckets for and with drinking water which had to be fetched from the drinking water well *Tuyabwau* in the bush near the village (see Map 5). In front of our door was a small veranda and on the side of our house that was facing the sea was a really big veranda where one could sit together with other people and relax or do some work such as learning new Kilivila words and phrases or simply watch and enjoy spectacular sunsets.

Tauwema is the northernmost of 7 villages on Kaile’una Island. The other villages are Koma, Giwa, Kaisiga, Lebola, Bulakwa and Kaduwaga. During our field research in 1983 and 1989 Tauwema was divided into three village sectors (see Map 4); the eastern sector is called *Va Seda* (at the almond tree), the central village part is called *Oluvala* (in the middle) and the western sector is called *Va Yayu* (at the casuarina tree). Every village sector had its own headman, but Kilagola was the chief of the village as a whole.

Contrary to most of the villages on Kiriwina Island, which consist of “two rows of houses, built in concentric rings round a large open space ... [where the] outer ring consists of dwelling houses [and] the inner ring of store-huts [for yams]” (Malinowski 1929: 8), the houses and store-huts of Tauwema are built in a semi-circle around the central open village place with a straight line of houses along the coast just behind a sandy beach. In the west there was a church building, about 30 m away from the western fringe of the village proper. In Tauwema were 66 houses (*bwala*), 30 small yam-houses (*bwema*) and 6 big yam-houses (*liku*) that stood in the central village square in the sectors *Va Seda* and *Oluvala*.⁹

9. For a village plan of Omarakana, the village of the Paramount Chief on Kiriwina Island, see Malinowski 1935 Vol I: 25, Figure 2). Omarakana was Malinowski’s main place of residence on the Trobriands.

Tauwema had 239 inhabitants, of whom 120 were adults and 119 children; 129 of them were males and 110 were females (see also Bell-Krannhals 1990: 51). The Trobriand Islanders' society is hierarchically structured into four clans, with the Malasi clan as the socially highest ranking clan followed by the Lukuba clan, the Lukwasisiga clan, and finally the Lukulabuta clan. These four clans are further subdivided into a number of subclans. As mentioned above, the society is matrilineal, that means that children are born into their mother's subclan (see Malinowski 1929, 1935; Weiner 1976, 1988).¹⁰

Tauwema was the second largest village on Kaile'una, outnumbered only by Kaduwaga, the village where chief Katubai (who was also called Tokumakesa) lived; he had the responsibility and authority (*karewaga*) over all the villages on Kaile'una and over Simsim village on Simsim Island (see also Montague 1974).

In the bush in the south-west of the village about 300 m inland from the shore is a relatively big fresh water grotto called *Bugei* (see Map 5); the fresh water comes directly from the freshwater bulb below the coral island; therefore, the height of the water inside the grotto is dependent on the tides. It is the bathing place of unmarried girls and young and old men, and usually groups of girls and groups of men bathe there together (but not in mixed groups).

Another place for bathing is a freshwater well which a man called *Moyabwau* dug out and – using some pieces of coral – he constructed a kind of natural bathtub around it; he then named the well and the bathing place *Tuyabwau*. In the afternoon the men of Tauwema usually go there to have a bath. The place is at the beach about 200 m south-west of Tauwema (see Map 5).

Married women wash themselves at the water well about 50 m south of the village center (see Map 5); from this well they also collect excellent drinking water that is not brackish at all. This well is called *Boyeva* (see also Senft 2008a: 348f.). About 150 m south-west of the *Boyeva* is the sports ground of Tauwema where young men meet in the afternoon for a game of football (soccer).

The beaches east and west of the village – hidden partly by the bush and by some rocks – serve as toilets for the women (east) and men (west) of Tauwema (see Map 5).

2.2 The first period in the childrens' lifetime

In this subsection we first present the Trobriand Islanders' ideas about conception and on birth and birth-giving. Then we report on the children's early developmental phase from suckling via toddler to their traumatic experience of abrupt

10. We will come back to this issue below.

weaning when they can walk – which usually happens in the second year of their lives. And finally we briefly discuss adoption on the Trobriand Islands. However, before we discuss these topics we first provide Malinowski's concise characterization of the “typical Trobriand household”. Malinowski (1929: 15) pointed out that

[t]he typical Trobriand household is founded on the principles of equality and independence of function: the man is considered to be the master, for he is in his own village and the house belongs to him, but the woman has, in other respects, a considerable influence; she and her family have a great deal to do with the food supply of the household; she is the owner of separate possessions in the house; and she is – next to her brother – the legal head of her family.

And 54 pages later Malinowski adds the important observation to this account that “a household means children, and the Trobriander has a natural longing for these” (Malinowski 1929: 69).

2.2.1 Conception, birth and birth-giving

In his famous essay “Baloma: the spirits of the dead in the Trobriand Islands” (1916 [= 1974: 149–274]) Malinowski points out that the Trobriand Islanders believe in an immortal spirit, the *baloma* who lives in a land of the dead which is an underworld kind of “paradise” located on (or rather under) Tuma Island. The *baloma* enjoy a carefree “life” that is first and foremost characterized by the primacy of sexuality. Malinowski (1929: 361f.) portrays Tuma as follows:

Tuma remains a paradise, and above all an erotic paradise. When a native talks about it, when he grows eloquent ... all other aspects soon fade into the background and sex comes to the fore... In their anticipations, Tuma is thronged with beautiful women, all ready to work hard by day and dance by night: The spirits enjoy a perpetual scented bacchanal and dancing and chanting on spacious village-places or on beaches of soft sand amid a profusion of betel and of green coco-nut drinks, of aromatic leaves and magically potent decorations of wealth and insignia of honor.

However, the Trobrianders also take it for granted that a *baloma* sooner or later gets bored of his/her life in their Tuma underworld.¹¹ The *baloma* then have three possibilities.

A *baloma* who has decided to be reborn, goes to the sea and takes a bath in saltwater. In this “final rejuvenation” (Malinowski 1929: 137) the *baloma* throws off his/her skin and changes into a spirit child. These spirit children are called *waiwaia* – like children *in utero* – or *pwapwawa* – like children immediately after

11. This subsection draws heavily on Senft (2011b: 31ff)

their birth (see Malinowski 1929: 51, 1974: 216 [=1916]). The spirit child which is invisible like the *baloma* then either swims to the beaches of the Trobriand Islands by itself or floats around Tuma Island on drift logs, leaves, dead seaweed or even sea-scum and waits to catch the attention of another spirit. Malinowski (1929: 147ff) reports that after a while these children are taken up by such another *baloma*, put into a basket and transported to the Trobriands. There the spirit of the mother or father of the woman who will be pregnant inserts the *waiwaia* into the head of their daughter. The *waiwaia* must belong to the subclan of its future mother. This woman will suffer a headache, vomits and will have an ache in the belly. The child is transported by the blood that rushes towards the head down to the belly and then settles in the womb. Then the woman is pregnant. She does not have her menses anymore, because the blood is needed to nourish the baby. The most important aspect of this version of the myth is that “children are ‘given by a *baloma*’, that ‘a *baloma* is the real cause of childbirth’ ” (Malinowski 1929: 148).

Another version of how the spirit children are conceived has the child swim or float on its own to the Trobriands, drifting around the shores and waiting for a woman who belongs to its subclan who takes a bath in the sea. If she swims somewhat carelessly, the spirit child will enter her body through her vagina. The woman will feel that something has touched and slightly hurt her and assumes that she was bitten by a fish (see Malinowski 1974: 218 [=1916]).

Yet another way to become pregnant is to have a maternal kinsman (i.e. the brother or the mother’s brother) of a woman who wants to get pregnant fill a wooden bailer with sea-water and leave it overnight in the hut of this woman – hoping that the bailer might have caught a spirit child that belongs to the subclan of the mother to-be. This child will take its chance to slip into the sleeping woman through her vagina (see Malinowski 1929: 149f.).

Malinowski (1929: 152f.; see also p. 145) summarizes the gist of these myths in which a man has nothing to do with procreation as follows:

... in all principal points, the various versions and descriptions agree, overlap and fortify one another; and we are left with a composite picture which, though blurred in some of its details, presents a strong outline when viewed from a distance. Thus all spirits rejuvenate; all children are incarnated spirits; the identity of sub-clan is preserved throughout the cycle, the real cause of childbirth is the spirit initiative from Tuma ...[A]lthough the Trobrianders firmly believe that each spirit becomes a preborn infant, and that this again becomes reincarnated into a human being, yet no consciousness of personal identity is preserved through the process. That is, no one knows whose incarnation the infant is – who he was in his previous existence. There is no remembrance of past life in Tuma or on earth... The only recognized rule which guides these metamorphoses is that the continuity of clan and sub-clan is preserved throughout ... There is no room for any sort of physical paternity.

Malinowski's account of this concept of conception on the Trobriands and his strong claims that the Trobrianders take these myths seriously – thus being completely ignorant of the role of the 'pater' as 'genitor' (Malinowski 1929: 153ff) – resulted in a controversy (see, e.g. Rentoul 1931, 1932; Malinowski 1932) where his ethnographic account has been hotly debated over many years – in the so-called "virgin birth controversy" – despite Edmund Leach's relatively early refutation of Malinowski's accounts as facts in 1966 (see also Senft 1997a, 2009a, 2011b: 31ff and Pulman 2004). However, these myths of conception can still be heard on the Trobriands these days, often as a kind of special 'folklore' provided by some Trobrianders for tourists, especially for those who are familiar with Malinowski's claim.¹²

In 1983 we had no children when we stayed in Tauwema for 11 months. Once Barbara could speak Kilivila, the Trobriand women started to discuss contraception with her. Barbara provided the information she was asked for and the women of Tauwema then told her that they have two means of contraception that are both based on a mixture of herbs which grow in the bush; to this mixture a little bit of water is added. Some women but also some men, for example Weyei and Vapalaguyau, know how to prepare this herbal composition. Once the women had talked with Barbara about this topic, Gunter could easily verify this information with his consultants Weyei and Vapalaguyau. Both men were very proud of their medical expertise which they had inherited from their ancestors; but they did not want to show us how and with which herbs they produce this mixture. Their reservations were respected and we did not urge them for further information about something that is as personal and secret as magic.

Anyhow, there are two modes of application for this contraceptive. Either, before the *coitus*, the woman drips the fluid on a small sponge and then inserts it into her vagina placing it in front of her *os uteri* – the herbal composition is spermaticidal and thus prevents conception. Or the woman drinks the herbal composition in a more hydrous solution. The problem with this second mode of application is that the ratio between the herbal mixture and the water is rather delicate: the contraceptive effect of the drink may either last for a few days only or for years – and if the herbal mixture is too highly concentrated it may even cause sterility. Such a long-term effect of the contraceptive almost endangered the marriage of a loving couple – but when we returned to the Trobriands in 1989 (with our then two and four year old children), the woman

12. An additional and more serious reason is provided below.

who six years ago poured out her troubles to us, especially to Barbara, proudly presented her two children to us.¹³

The fact that the Trobriand Islanders know about natural contraceptives and that this knowledge is traditional is not only a clear and convincing counter-argument, but also conclusive evidence against Malinowski's claim which he first made in his very first publication on the Trobriands in 1916, "Baloma; the Spirits of the dead in the Trobriand Islands" (see Malinowski 1974: 220–237 [=1916]), which he used like the beat of a drum to introduce his "sex book" (as he himself and his first wife called it, see Weiner 1987: xxxii), and which he elaborates in Chapter 7 of "The Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Melanesia", namely that the Trobriand Islanders are ignorant of the role of the 'pater' as 'genitor'.

This claim was also falsified by the gynaecologist Ulrike Pöschl and her husband, the anaesthetist Rupert Pöschl, two German medical doctors who carried out field research on birth and birth-giving on Kiriwina Island in October and November 1980 and from July to October 1983. They observed, described and photo-documented four village deliveries (primipara, multipara and a twin delivery) and questioned "50 informants, ranging in estimated age from 16 to 70 years and living in different villages on Kiriwina island ... about their own birth-givings or those of relatives as well as about Trobriand beliefs and practices concerning motherhood" (Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 138; see also U. Pöschl 1985a&b). The Pöschls point out that "[a]s with most traditional societies, the Trobrianders also regard human reproduction focused on pregnancy and childbirth as an [almost, B. S.] exclusively female matter prohibiting [almost, B. S.] all men from participation" – and then they summarize their findings on the issue as follows:

It is clear that the Trobriand people are fully aware of the biological fact that sexual intercourse creates pregnancy. In addition to this pure physiological knowledge, there coexists the native belief in a spirit world, including the central concept of the reincarnation of spirits, *baloma*, which reflects the matrilineal structure of Trobriand society.

As far as contraception is concerned, we can affirm that traditional healers offer a variety of plants to be taken orally. Besides ourselves, others have collected samples [Holdsworth & Heers 1971] ... Jüptner [1970] reported on small balls

13. Note that the "yam or *Dioscorea*" – the most important part of the Trobriand diet – was long known by certain Mexican Indians to have a contraceptive effect. In 1983 Dr. Russell Marker ... determined the molecular structure of diosgenin, a steroid substance with pro-gesteronic effect derived from the yam root. Based on this information, Organon, a leading producer of contraceptive pills, uses the diosgenin from Mexican yam roots as the raw material for some of its products" (de Revai 1992) – but this is just an aside.

prepared from plant fibres which he found inserted in the vagina. The reliability of indigenous contraceptives has to be questioned as far as in former times a postpartum coitus taboo of one or two years was obligatory in addition to the contraceptives. ... From our own experience, knowledge about indigenous contraceptive plants to be chewed or prepared as a drink is limited to very few healers...

Both men and women express great need for family planning ... Abortion was named by every woman to be the usual practice to terminate pregnancy. As told by our informants, this is most commonly done by chemical means, for example, indigenous plants prepared as a drink, physical methods, such as pounding the abdomen with a stick, or extremely exhaustive activities, are sometimes performed to increase the effectiveness of the drink. Mechanical means, such as the insertion of specific substances in the cervical canal are rarely practiced. (Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 139)

Indeed, it seems that the most important reason for keeping up the myth of the virgin birth on the Trobriands can be found in the order of the Trobriand society. The Trobriand Islanders live in a matrilineal society. This means that children are born into their mothers' subclans where they have certain rights, but also certain responsibilities; they are not related whatsoever to their father and their fathers' subclans. The virgin birth myth – at least these days – seems to serve the function of securing the status of a child born out of wedlock in the Trobriand Islanders' ideological social superstructure: Due to this myth neither children born out of wedlock nor their mothers need to worry about their social status or any kind of sanctions or discrimination within their social environment. We are aware of the fact that this interpretation contradicts Malinowski's (1929: 170) claim that "[f]ecundity in unmarried girls is discreditable", but this interpretation is based on our observations, on the information Barbara collected in her interviews with the women of Tauwema and on our experience with respect to how unmarried mothers and their children were treated by their fellow-villagers in Tauwema 65 years after Malinowski's second and last field trip to the Trobriands.

When asked about the duration of a pregnancy, Barbara's consultants usually referred to the duration of ten moons (see also Mead 1977: 239). Here the length of a phase of a moon corresponds to 28 days. During pregnancy women have to obey clan and subclan specific food taboos which are generally related to fruit (see Malinowski 1929: 192f.). They are freed from hard physical labor like strenuous gardening or carrying water and firewood. Their parents – in the case of a primipara – or their female relatives – in the case of a multipara – take over their duties (see also Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 140).

A few weeks before the expected birth-giving, a primipara – *igavau* – moves into her parents' house, where she will give birth and remain in seclusion for some weeks after the delivery (see below). Pöschl and Pöschl (1985: 140) describe the

situation of a primapara in her parents' house as follows: "Her mother takes care of her and supervises the food taboos and restricted activities ... Her parents supply her with all she needs. She is permitted to go back and forth between her own house and that of her parents to visit her husband who is invited to all the meals at her parents' house". In the fifth moon of a primapara's pregnancy her relatives often provide her with "a plain white fibre petticoat, and a long cloak (*saykeulo*) of the same material ... [which] she will wear ... after she has given birth to the child" (Malinowski 1929: 179f.).

A multipara – *igamugwa* – stays in her own house where she also will give birth. She takes care of her husband and children, but as mentioned above, female relatives take over all the duties that are too arduous for a pregnant woman.

The women of Tauwema pointed out that there are no restrictions whatsoever upon sexual intercourse at any time during gestation; on the contrary, the husband's sperm is believed to promote the growing of the conceived child in its mother's uterus.

The Trobriand Islanders strongly believe in the power of magic (see Senft 2010a: 40ff); they differentiate between various forms of magic, including evil magic and magic which protects against such evil magic. Pöschl & Pöschl describe some practices of how the Trobrianders try to protect pregnant women and their foeti against evil magic as follows:

The bark of the *gau* tree or *leya* (ginger) are chewed alone or together with betelnut and then spat around inside and outside the house. Leaves of the vine *kalala* [stinging nettles, G. S.], are hung above the house's entrance or above the window. Besides this "self-protection", preventive methods are applied by traditional healers, often the same persons who know about contraceptive and abortive plants.

We became acquainted with two male traditional healers who specialized in the field of childbirth. One of them cast spells upon water and *leya*. By drinking the water, chewing and swallowing the *leya*, the pregnant woman incorporates the preventive and protective spells. This procedure is repeated a few times during pregnancy to secure the undisturbed progress and fortunate outcome. In addition to that, water is said to have a cleansing effect upon a mother's inside and *leya* is thought to turn the fetus into the right position at term. The other traditional healer performed his protection against evil spirits only in the last four months of gestation. For each month, a different plant was specially prepared as a drink and given to the pregnant woman once a week. (Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 140)¹⁴

14. Barbara's consultants Kadavaya and Lona (who was pregnant in 1983) confirmed parts of this description of birth magic. Kadavaya referred to Moayeva, an old man who lived in Tauwema until he died, as an expert on birth magic who put a spell on water. Soon after the parturient woman had drunk the water she delivered her baby. Lona's husband also knows a

When labor pains start, the back part of the house is separated for the parturient woman with a bed sheet sized piece of cloth. The woman in labor is supported by female relatives, especially by her mother, but also by her grandmothers, sisters and aunts. Usually also her mother-in-law as well as one or two older women who have expert midwife knowledge are present.¹⁵ Men are not allowed to be present during birth-giving; but it may well be that a traditional healer sits on the veranda of the house ready to be consulted if necessary. These traditional healers usually inherit their knowledge from their mothers.

However, it can also happen that a woman gives birth to her child without any help whatsoever. Barbara's consultant Kaluala, who has no relatives in Tauwema, reported that she gave birth to her eldest daughter without any support by other women – her mother, her sister and other female relatives lived in villages on Kiriwina Island and could not come to Tauwema to help Kaluala. When she gave birth to her younger children her daughter was old enough to support her mother.

Pöschl and Pöschl describe the stages of labor and the actual birth-giving as follows:

It is typical for laboring women to change positions frequently, and vertical postures are preferred. In the first stage of labour walking, standing, leaning forward while clinging onto a roof-beam and swinging the pelvis forward and backward are the movements all our observed parturients had in common. The pregnant women are comforted by a continuing massage of abdomen, thighs, sacrum, back, loins and hips performed by the attending women. In addition to that, emotional support and encouragement given by the female assistants allays anxiety. At the second stage of labour advances, the parturients increasingly

magical formula which he will whisper over water. Lona will drink the water when she is in labor and will then deliver her baby without too much pain. Kadavaya's husband Vapalaguyau, another expert in ethnobiology and birth magic, who also knows how to make the traditional contraceptive potions out a bush plants, uses another form of birth magic. He puts a spell on a specific plant; then a woman who is supporting the woman in labor brushes this plant over the parturient woman's belly; this treatment will make her deliver the baby faster.

15. Pöschl and Pöschl (1985: 140) claim that there are no traditional midwives on Kiriwina; however, this claim is contradicted by a string figure (*ninikula* – see Senft & Senft 1986: 167ff) that is named after a famous midwife called Dania; the verses that accompany this string figure praise her competence. The Pöschls also note “that a young girl from the age of nine or ten onwards is regularly present and participates in the deliveries of her female relatives ... Prior formal instruction by her mother is completed with this practical lesson” (Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 140).

maintain a sitting or half-sitting position¹⁶ which is only occasionally interrupted by standing in between contractions. This position is supported and secured by four women surrounding the parturient in a circle. With close skin-to-skin contact, the labouring woman is able to lean backwards against the one sitting behind her, to hold on and pull the arms of the one in front of her and to concentrate only on the pushing and bearing down without using up energy to hold up her legs, for this task is taken over by the assistant sitting on each side...

...[T]he woman in front of the parturient catches the newborn as it slides outside through the vagina. Mucus is cleaned by hand from nose and mouth. The baby is then laid aside until the afterbirth, *musila*, is expelled. For that the woman assumes a squatting position while she and the woman behind her press their hands upon the fundus of the uterus... After the expulsion of the placenta, the umbilical cord, *pwasona*, is tied once at one measured fingerlength away from the newborn's abdominal wall with a string (in former times with plant fibres) and cut with a razor blade or knife (formerly with *kaniku*, the sharp edge of a shell). This task can be assumed by any of the female relatives without special reference. Mother and child are washed by the assistants while the afterbirth is put into a bag without being checked and handed outside to the young mother's sister-in-law who buries it in the garden. It is believed that this act will assure that the newborn becomes a good gardener... Warm water is given to the newborn before it goes on a demand breast-feeding schedule, starting four or six hours postpartum. (Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 141)¹⁷

After birth-giving the mother sits down on a board over the fire-place; she is still bleeding. To collect the blood she either puts on a *mwaibua*, a kind of loin-“cloth” that is made out of the bark of a betelpalm (such a *mwaibua* was worn by men, before they changed it for the modern loincloth), or she takes a piece of cloth which she fastens under her vagina with a string.

16. The parturient woman usually sits on a special piece of wood called *kaybobo* (B. S.).

17. Barbara's consultant Inadila pointed out that the task of cutting the umbilical cord cannot be performed by just any of the woman's relatives. This is the privilege of the newborn's grandmother. Kadavaya emphasized that after birth-giving the mother does not immediately breastfeed her baby, because the milk in the breasts is too watery. Two days later the “real” milk is coming in. During these 2 days the baby is fed with coconut milk. And Dubiligaga told Barbara that in some cases when the newborn baby is very small, weak or handicapped, the women present at the birth-giving seriously discuss whether this child is capable of surviving. Dubiligaga was once present when the women had such a discussion after the birth of a girl which was very tiny and small, but in the end the women's decision was positive. However, if such a decision is negative, the mother will commit infanticide. Dubiligaga's information clearly contradicts Malinowski's (1929: 25) claim that “the idea of female infanticide would be as absurd as abhorrent to the natives”.

During the first few days after the birth-giving, mother and child remain in the separated back part of the house. Usually there is a small bowl with glowing pieces of charcoal at the mother's side. She warms her hands and then puts them on her baby's face, hands and feet to warm the child. The Pöschls also report that mother and child "are supposed to sit upon a bench under which her own mother keeps a fire going, filling the house with smoke and heat. This is believed to stop further bleeding ... as well as to clean the woman's inside" (Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 142). The Trobrianders also believe that the smoke will tighten the vagina again. The mother takes care of her child, paying special attention to the baby's umbilical cord

upon which coconut oil is applied a few times per day. The oil covers the bad odour and has such a drying effect that the cord remnant will turn dark and fall off completely within three days postpartum. Magic spells cast upon the coconut oil by the traditional healer and applied to the baby's skin protect the newborn against witchcraft and sorcery. (Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 142)

The mother also has to obey certain taboos. During pregnancy women are not allowed to go for a walk all alone or to go to the gardens to work or collect firewood there. They should always be accompanied either by their husbands or by an older child. After the first trimester of pregnancy it is taboo for women to carry heavy loads. As long as a mother breast-feeds her baby, she is only allowed to drink warm water and she is not allowed to eat eggs, pork (the only meat the Trobrianders eat), fish, shellfish, mussels, coconuts, okari-nuts and a number of fruits.¹⁸ In addition, from dawn to dusk and during breast-feeding she has to wear a piece of cloth on her head, the so-called *gwaya* or *gwemata*. In former times women also wore a *doba*-bundle on their head. Because of this precaution evil spirits and ominous black magic in the camouflage of dew cannot get in the mother's hair and on her head from where they can harm the mother and even kill her baby. Most breast-feeding mothers also wear a string above their breasts. This string is called *kwedoga*; it consists of natural fibres and is made by the mother's grandmother or by an aunt who also whispers a magical formula on it which will protect the mother against evil spirits and ominous magic.¹⁹ Bomesa presented Barbara with the following *kwedoga* magic:

18. Mussels and fish, for example, are taboo for pregnant women, because they are believed to cause breech births. Eating them prevents the foetus from getting into the normal birth position in utero.

19. For the role of magic on the Trobriands see Senft (2010a: 40ff; 2010b).

<i>Avela avela mitipwasipwa kwedoga?</i>	Who who will plait the <i>kwedoga</i> -string?
<i>Yegu Kalivabu sogu,</i>	I Kalivabu, my friend,
<i>Kalivabu tabalu.</i>	(for) Kalivabu's grandchild
<i>Katunumanamila o migila –</i>	We will knot it in front of her/his face –
<i>ikali kosi – o kaikela.</i>	it will fence off ghosts – (and) at the feet.
<i>Boine uvegu, bomana manegu</i>	It's beautiful my skin, a taboo for my husband.
<i>Agu sopi, sopi bwena –</i>	My water, it is good the water,
<i>sasegu bolumisa,</i>	my flowing in the seawater cavity,
<i>sarara migigu – bikadauna, bikadauna.</i>	flowing over my face, it will flow, it will flow.
<i>Bikadauna dabala – dauna,</i>	It will flow on her/his head – flow,
<i>bikadauna kabulula tabugu,</i>	it will flow over the nose of my grandchild,
<i>kimwala bikadauna,</i>	over her/his cheeks it will flow,
<i>bikadauna matala,</i>	it will flow over her/his eyes,
<i>la gabula bikadauna.</i>	over her/his chin it will flow.
<i>Bamigai megwa, balukwem,</i>	I will whisper magic, I will tell you,
<i>bamigai megwa kwebakela –</i>	I will whisper magic over her/his feet –
<i>ikali kosi.</i>	It will fence off ghosts.

The mother wears her *kwedoga*-string until her child can walk.

The father of the newborn baby has to obey a food taboo for three days. He is not allowed to eat sweet-potatoes and yams – the real food (*kaula*) for the Trobriand Islanders. However, he may eat bananas, coconuts, pawpaw and other fruits. The husband of a multipara is allowed to see his newborn child a few days after its birth. Officially this waiting period lasts for two weeks; but it is the mother who decides about the actual length of this period.²⁰

The seclusion period of a primipara lasts for about 5 to 6 weeks until the lochia ends. She stays with her child in her parents' house. Male and female relatives – but not her husband – are allowed to visit her, but she is not allowed to leave the house, not even for going to the toilet. She has to wrap her excreta into special leaves which are thrown into the bush by her relatives.²¹ Her returning to

20. Note that the Pöschls report that on Kiriwina the husband of a multipara is allowed to see his wife and his newborn child “immediately after childbirth since she stays in their own house” (Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 142).

21. All our female consultants who had children reported that they experienced this seclusion period as terribly boring and they all felt somehow forlorn and really locked-in during this time. But see Morton (1996: 49) who reports that Tongan mothers view this period of seclusion positively.



Photo 2. Namnabai breastfeeding her baby (1983)

her and her husband's house after this seclusion period has ended is ceremoniously celebrated in a special little feast of presenting the young mother to her fellow-villagers. Before the primapara is presented to her village community and to her husband, she is bathed and decorated by her female relatives. Her face is painted with a red mixture of betelnut and lime – the so-called *soba*, her body is anointed with coconut oil – *bunami*, and her torso is sprinkled with yellow blossom leaves and criss-crossed with betelnuts on strings, which will later be cut off by other women in the village and distributed to their fellow-villagers. She gets wreaths of fragrant flowers – *bweta* – and red hibiscus flowers – *karuwayana* – to wear in her hair and she is adorned with her best necklace made out of red

parts of the *Chama (pacific) imbricata* shell and with turtle shell earrings. The women tie pandanus leaves around her ankles and provide her with new *kwasi*-armlets made of natural fibres, worn by men and women on their upper arms; they emphasize the men's muscles and frame the women's breasts – thus increasing the physical beauty of the person. The women put sweet-smelling herbs in these new *kwasi*-armlets which engulf the primapara in odorous fragrance. In addition she gets an especially colorful new so-called “grass”-skirt – the *doba*, a skirt that is actually made out of the fibres of banana-leaves.²² She also wears the above mentioned *seke'ula* (also: *saykeulo*) cloak which was treated for this occasion with sweet smelling herbs and special perfumes also made out of herbs. This pregnancy robe has special protective powers because expert magicians have been casting magical spells upon it ever since the primapara received this cloak (see Malinowski 1929: 181ff). It is also worn to cover the mother's breasts while she is breast-feeding her child.

Having finished decorating the primapara in this way, the women now decorate themselves accordingly. Then they help the young mother to get out of the house and support her while she is walking “in a procession like ceremony” (Pöschl & Pöschl 1985: 142) from her parents' house to her and her husband's house where she keeps standing for a while to give her fellow villagers and also her husband the time to admire her extensively. Because of the seclusion, her skin has become relatively white and thus equals the Trobrianders' ideal of a “desirable skin [which] is compared with white flowers” (Malinowski 1929: 255). All these ceremonies and rituals, including the seclusion period, only take place after a woman's first pregnancy. They celebrate the primapara, her giving birth to a child, and mark the husband's and wife's rite of passage from a married couple to a fully-fledged family.

After the birth of a child the parents have to obey yet another taboo valid throughout the period of breast-feeding, which usually ends after when the child can walk. This taboo, the so-called post-partum sex taboo prohibits a lactating mother from having sexual intercourse till after weaning (see Malinowski 1929: 197; see also Weiss 1981: 12; for a cross-cultural survey see Murdock 1967). The Trobrianders believe that the male ejaculate harms and even damages the mother's milk which may make the mother sick and even result in the suckling's death. However, this taboo seems to have first of all a birth controlling function; in addition it also guarantees that a baby is optimally provided and nourished with breast milk.

22. This is the reason why we refer to these skirts as fibre-skirts.



Photo 3. Kadarai is presented to the village after the end of her prima para seclusion. The women from left to right are: Isilena, Bwetagawa, Kadarai, Vadamna and Igiowa (1983)

2.2.2 The suckling

During the first 18 to 20 months of their life, the children receive the utmost loving care and attention imaginable – not only from their parents, but also from all their relatives. As already pointed out by Malinowski (1929: 25), “girls are quite as welcome at birth as boys, and no difference is made between them by the parents in interest, enthusiasm, or affection”. The few weeks old sucklings spend most of the day on their mothers’ lap or in their arms. As soon as the child starts to whimper its mother gives the baby the breast and nurses it. Grandmothers who take care of their grandchildren sometimes also give the babies their – dried – breast to quieten it down. The fathers tenderly deal with their babies very often, too; they cradle them in their arms, play with them and sing songs for them. As soon as the babies can hold their head by themselves, they are carried around by their elder brothers and sisters, male and female cousins and other children of the neighborhood. Especially 6 to 7 year-old girls do this with great pleasure.

Both adults and the older children are very much interested in the baby’s learning to talk (see also Mead 1977: 36). In their cross-cultural study Heidi Keller, Axel Schölmerich and Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1988) compared communication patterns in adult-infant interactions that were documented on video and film in



Photo 4. Toybokwatauya with his youngest son in his arms (1983)

Western (West-Germany, Greece) and non-Western (Yanomami, Trobriand) societies. They found probably universal cultural interaction structures. Newborns already display a “differentiated vocal repertoire” the patterns of which “develop over the first four months of life to a more differentiated and efficient communication system” (Keller et al. 1988: 427). These communication patterns are very important for parents. The infants’ gazes and smiles are taken as indications of positive affect to which the parents react with various forms of attachment behavior. Parents also interpret the early vocalizations of their babies as signals which express their children’s behavioral states and needs and then respond to these signals in an adequate way. The researchers characterize positive and negative vocalizations produced by the babies as follows:

Positive vocalizations ... are uttered with low to moderate intensity and [they] are formed in the process of gentle exhalation. They are commonly thought to express positive emotions and include a-sounds, happiness sounds, babbling, cooing, blurring, consonant-vowel groups, laughing r-strings, and repetition sounds ...

Negative vocalizations ... are loud and of high frequency, often produced deep in the throat. Global crying has been labeled one of the first communicative behaviors... This type covers whining, fussing, crying, sighing and other sounds of discomfort. (Keller et al. 1988: 433)

While adults are talking, babies only produce a few such vocalizations, and adults do not talk when their infants vocalize. This dialogue structure of early adult-child interaction observed by the researchers is interpreted as “a general human program of communication” (Keller et al. 1988: 441). Keller and her collaborators elaborate on this communication program as follows:

Adults in general respond to positive and negative infant vocalizations differently. Behaviors that produce a strong body stimulation (vestibular) and are used to comfort babies in distress occur almost exclusively after negative vocalizations. Tactile reactions are equally likely after positive and negative vocalizations, indicating a double function of tactile stimulation: It can decrease arousal after a negative vocalization or be part of a stimulating vocal-tactile form of play. This means that adults from different cultural backgrounds interpret positive and negative vocalizations as indicators of different affective states that require different interventions ... The data validate the assumption of intuitive parenting programs (Papousek & Papousek 1981), which seem to be inborn characteristics regulating the behavior exchange between adults and young children, with the goal of maximizing optimal socialization conditions for following generations. (Keller et al. 1988: 442)

After having established eye-contact, the Trobriand Islanders interact with their babies using elements of “baby talk” (see Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989: 207) like rhythmical elements of talking, imitations of the baby’s vocalizations, raising the pitch, grimacing with the mouth, smiling, laughing and producing the so-called “greeting face” by raising the eyebrows and opening the mouth (see Keller & Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989: 473). These forms of interactional behavior have strong bonding functions and seem to be found in all cultures (see Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989: 234; also Sbrzesny 1976: 226).

We want to emphasize that despite the many contacts with other adults and children, a Trobriand infant is not brought up collectively. The mother is the most important and significant person for the child and its development (see Keller 2010: 571; Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989: 167f. & 234; see also contributions in Field et al. 1981).

The mother also decides on the name of her child. Some women like Yebwaku give their newborn child a name when the child's navel has healed. Other women, for example Vadomna and Lona, point out that they named their children four to six months after their birth when they were confident that the child would survive. Proper names are clan property; when Massim people are asked by other Massim people for their names, they always transmit with their name their clan-membership. Fathers name their children with a name of their own – a name which is also property of their clan. However, this is not the name Trobrianders will produce when they are asked for their names. Usually, newborn children also get a Christian name when they are baptized. However, even these days the Christian name – like the father's name – only plays a marginal role in the life of a Trobriander.

The father plays a very important role for his child – although he is not related with him or her in this matrilinear society. Our observations fully confirm Malinowski's (1929: 17) remarks on the role of a father on the Trobriands:

[T]he husband fully shares in the care of children. He will fondle and carry a baby, clean and wash it, and give it the mashed vegetable food which it receives in addition to the mother's milk almost from birth. In fact, nursing a baby in the arms or holding it on the knees, which is described by the native word *kopo'i*, is the special role and duty of the father ...

... [I]f anyone inquires why children should have duties towards their father, who is a "stranger" to them, the answer is invariably; "because of the nursing (*pela kopo'i*)", "because his hands have been soiled with the child's excrement and urine" ...

Other relatives as well as older siblings and even other children living in the neighborhood also play a caretaking role during the first months in the life of a suckling, as mentioned above. And – as we have also pointed out already – this is especially true for girls. Here our observations completely agree with those of the Whiting's who report the following results about the role of boys and girls in their families from the famous "Six Cultures Study":

[T]he learning environment of girls in all of the six cultures is different from that of boys. Girls are more frequently in the house and yard with adults and infants, performing chores which require nurturant behavior, responsibility, and obedience. Boys are more frequently ... further from home. They are supervised less by adults and interact more with peers.

(Whiting & Whiting 1975: 150f)

Especially for 5 girls in Tauwema their newborn sibling often meant a burden because they were destined by their parents from their early childhood onwards to help their mothers in their domestic work and support them in caring for their

younger siblings. Bomtula for example, a seven year-old girl, could hardly find some free time for playing, because most of the day she not only had to carry around her younger brother but also look after her three year-old younger sister, making sure that she did not leave the neighborhood of her parents' house on her own.

As soon as the little children can crawl, their urge for independence is supported. While crawling the children explore their immediate vicinity and put almost everything they find into their mouth to scrutinize it. Much to their mothers' regret they often look black as a crow and filthy. During this age, the children burn their hands and feet quite frequently, because during their crawling explorations they often come close to the fire places before or besides the houses in their vicinity. Children of this age gradually join the groups of older children. Almost every afternoon at about four o'clock, when the central village square was in the shade, many mothers put their crawling children down on the fringe of it and soon left the scene – keeping a watchful eye on their children, though.



Photo 5. A little child playing in the sand (2008)

Little Yaurabina usually remained seated quietly, looking around with his big stern eyes, cheering happily now and then when he had spotted one of his brothers. Only once he cried miserably, because one of the village dogs sniffed at him and

licked his face. His mother immediately rushed to him and saved him from the curious dog.

Bwenakesa was not so much amused about her afternoon experience at the village square. After her mother had put her on the ground there and left, she almost immediately started crying penetratingly; usually her six year-old aunt took pity on her, kept company with the little girl and cared for her.

Mogarai was not satisfied with just sitting and watching. He quickly crawled around, found an old canoe and played around with it, clapped the backs of passing pigs, and minutely inspected the scraped banana leaves the women had put there to dry so that they could be used for making fibre-skirts. In this way he kept his mother constantly on the move.

During her participant observation in Tauwema, Barbara could only once observe that parents provided something like toys for their crawling child. Ibotuma's and Tova'ila's five months old son was sitting on the sandy ground in front of his parents' house. Ibotuma was scratching banana-leaves for making a new fibre-skirt and Tova'ula sharpened his bushknife with a stone. To keep her little son busy they had grouped a number of tin cans and small plastic containers around him, which he rolled around, turned upside down, beat one upon the other and threw away. Children of this age usually play with things and objects which they find in their environment, such as shells, coconut shells and coconut husks, leaves, little stones and pieces of wood.²³

At the age of 4 or 5 months the little girls – and sometimes, but much more rarely, also the little boys – get their first earrings, which their mothers make for them. With a red-hot metal rod they burn holes into a piece of turtle shell. Then they cut this piece of turtle shell out so that a small rectangular rim of a few millimeters remains around the burned holes. These small discs are put upon a round piece of wood. With the skin of a stingray – which serves the function of sandpaper – the outer rim of the discs is ground round and even. Each little ring produced in this way is incised. One such incised ring each is then clamped onto the child's earlobes which are gradually pierced by them. In the course of time more such rings – which are called *paya* – are put onto the earlobes which are gradually widened in this way. It is not unusual to see 10 or 12 such *paya* in the earlobes of a two year-old child. At special occasions red flat shell discs – the *kaloma* – are worn, too; they are added to the bottom part of the rings; but this is only the case with girls (see also Weiner 1976: 127).

23. We will come back to the topic of toys in Subsection 2.3.2.2.



Photo 6. A young girl with Malasi earrings (1983)

2.2.3 Weaning the suckling

Usually mothers wean their sucklings from breast-feeding once they can walk. At this time “the child is already independent, can run about, eat practically everything and follow other interests” (Malinowski 1927: 26). The time at which this happens varies greatly. Mogarai, for example, could already walk at the age of 13 months, whereas his cousin Isakapu could only walk when she was almost two years old. The time of weaning marks the beginning of the most arduous and emotionally hardest weeks in the life of a toddler.

Weaning is done in a completely abrupt way – without any preparation for both mother and child (see also Morton 1996: 64). For the mother this way

of weaning results first and foremost in physical pain; her breasts are swollen, cankerous and inflamed for days. However, weaning also marks the end of the parents' post-partum taboo. For the children the time of weaning is essentially characterized by all kinds of bitter and grievous frustrations. Up till this point of their lives, by their faintest whimper children were comforted and appeased by their mothers' offering them their breasts, but now – at a moment's notice – all access to this source of consolation and comfort is denied to them.²⁴ Often the weaning goes hand in hand with a spatial separation of the mother from her child. Either the mother stays with relatives in another village until her breasts run dry while the child remains with its grandparents, or the child is entrusted in the care of relatives who live in another village (see also Malinowski 1929: 199). It is not unusual for the newly-weaned children to piteously cry out their pain, their frustration and their fury for days without being comforted in any way by an adult.

Weaning completely changes a child's further life. Before this traumatic experience (see Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989: 234) children were bathed with warm water every day in a large (wooden or plastic) bowl, but after weaning they are washed in the salty sea with a final rinsing off of their bodies with clear fresh water. This is yet another reason for floods of tears. From a relatively early age on "children are taught to observe strict cleanliness" with respect to sanitary matters (Malinowski 1929: 375f.; see also Subsection 2.3.5.2). Nevertheless, before weaning children could use any spot in the village as their "toilet", but after weaning they are urged to go to the "children's toilet" at a specific part of the beach (see Map 5). For girls weaning also implies that from now on they have to wear fibre-skirts made out of banana leaves;²⁵ with boys nakedness is tolerated until they reach the age of three and a half years.

The most far-reaching consequence of weaning for children is that they have to give up their almost "symbiotic" bond with their mother. Malinowski (1929: 25; see also 1927: 44f.) points out that children on the Trobriand Islands

24. Sbrzesny (1976: 238) reports a comparable cut-off between a !Ko-Bushman mother and child when a new baby is born: "Es ist erschütternd zu beobachten, wie abrupt die Mutter dann ihr intimes Verhältnis zu dem älteren Kind abbricht und wie das abgelöste Kind darunter leidet" (It is shocking to observe how abruptly the mother then aborts her intimate relationship with the elder child and how the ousted child suffers from this experience [our translation, B. & G. Senft). See also Mead (1942: 33) for the effect of weaning on Balinese children.

25. When the little girls come too close to open fires, these fibre-skirts can become quite dangerous for them – not only on the Trobriands but also in the whole Massim area (see Barss & Wallace 1983).

enjoy much freedom and independence and that they emancipate themselves relatively early from their parents' tutelage. But he obviously ignores the fact that the dissociation between mother and child is initiated and fostered by the mother. One of the reasons for the mothers' behavior is that the post-partum sex taboo ends after weaning and many women get pregnant again a few months later; therefore, the weaned children should acquire a good amount of autonomy and independence before their mothers give birth to a younger sibling. However, before the weaned children can really enjoy their freedom, they not only have to overcome their separation from their mothers during emotionally difficult weeks and months full of tears, but also to find their place within their village sector's children's group.

The first two years in the lifetime of a child on the Trobriands seem indeed to be crucial for his or her survival. Vadamna, for example, who gave birth to two sons and three daughters, reported that two of her girls died immediately after birth. Three of Inadila's 9 children also died – two at the age of two and the third one, who was seriously handicapped, at the age of 5. One of Kadavaya's daughters drowned at the age of two when she was playing on the reef during high tide. The adults in the village realized too late that she was in trouble and could not resuscitate the little girl. And Lona's first-born child became ill at the age of 9 months: he suffered a severe cold and died. These facts seem to justify the rationality and the importance of the post-partum sex taboo, because it guarantees the mother's complete care for and concentration on her child and his/her well-being. When children reach the age of two and get older, they seem to be "out of the woods", so to speak (see also Morton 1996: 60ff).

2.2.4 Excursus: Adoption

After weaning, a child can also be adopted in the Trobriand society. There were a few childless couples in Tauwema who used the possibility of adopting a child. In August 1983, 12 adopted children between the ages of two and 14 years lived in Tauwema. Families with many children often release a child for adoption. Usually children are adopted by nearest relatives (see also Malinowski 1929: 21f.). Thus, four of the twelve adopted children were adopted by their grandparents and Kenavasia, the 7th child of Inadila and Tokubiyim, was adopted by Inadila's childless sister Bwetagava and her husband. Inadila pointed out that Bwetagava can have confidence that Kenavasia, who will become a good gardener, will support his adoptive mother in her old age with food. This was the reason for her to present her sister with her little son. Kapudukoya, a young woman who could not become pregnant, also approached her sister-in-law and asked her for one of her children. Nameruba, a mother of five children agreed and presented Kapudukoya with her

daughter Inaway. Kapudukoya and her husband Mocketubasi were extremely happy with Inaway – also because they knew now that there will be someone who will look and care for them when they have become old. Even single persons can adopt a child on the Trobriands; Vasopi, for example, had adopted and reared Imkubul, whose parents had been living for years in Lae, one of the big cities on the mainland of PNG.

Barbara could observe the preparations for an adoption in our nearest neighborhood. Italu und Bwetadou could not get any more children after the death of their first baby who died just a few days after its birth. Their direct neighbors were Toybokwatauya and Bonavana, the parents of four sons. The youngest one, Mogarai, was born in September 1982. Italu and Bwetadou brought their wish of adopting this boy forward to his biological parents in April 1983, and Bonavana and Toybokwatauya fulfilled their neighbors' desire. Now the prospective adoptive parents intensified their contacts with Mogarai and their efforts to create a bond with him. However, their first attempts to put the young boy on their arms, to hug him and to carry him around regularly resulted in Mogarai's quite deafening crying. But after eight weeks or so he let them pick him up and carry him around just like his parents. Mogarai, a very active, cute and vivid boy, could already walk at the age of 13 months – he was especially supported and encouraged by Bwetadou. His future adoptive father, for example, tied a colorful but empty can on a string and pulled it after him, provoking Mogarai's attention. The toddler tried to follow the interesting can scurrying after it on his tottery little legs. While Bwetadou tied a new outrigger to his canoe, Mogarai romped around in the dugout of the canoe for hours. Hand in hand with Bwetadou the toddler also dared for the first time to fondle the bristles of one of the big pigs in the village. Italu and Bonavana often sat together, cooking their meals or scraping banana-leaves for making new fibre-skirts, so that Italu also had ample time to be in the company of, and care for, her adopted child to-be.²⁶

2.3 The following period in the childrens' lifetime until they reach the age of seven

In what follows we concentrate on the next period of the childrens' lifetime until they reach the age of 7. We provide a description of the childrens' introduction and gradual integration into the childrens' group, characterized so aptly by Malinowski

26. Adoption is also common in Tonga. Morton (1996: 56ff) points out that although the Tongans have laws that cover adoption, "most adoption occurs informally" (Morton 1996: 56).

(1927: 45) as “their own little community”. We report on the size and composition of their playgroups and their forms of play, their relationship with their parents and their kinspeople and their overall socialization via play, within the children’s community and by their parents and relatives until they reach the age of 7 years. By then their essential socialization process is generally regarded as being completed by the Trobriand Islanders. The chapter ends with a brief note on the children’s future development until they marry and thus reach the adult status within the Trobriand Islanders’ community.

2.3.1 Life in the children’s group – who plays with whom when and where

As mentioned above, with the weaning of their children the parents – especially the mothers – dramatically reduce the amount of pervasive loving care and attention that their children experienced before this traumatic moment in their lives. To compensate for this deficit in their experience of intimate social bonding, the children have to find a place and position within the children’s group – usually the one of the village sector in which their family lives.

Observing children at play reveals that they often do this in more or less closed groups; obviously there are a number of distinct playgroups. How does a child become a member of such a group?

Children with older siblings can relatively easily find access to and are soon accepted as members of such a group, if their elder brother or sister is already an established and respected group-member.²⁷ Here we have to point out that Malinowski’s (1929: 438) dictum – “[b]rother and sister are definitely forbidden to take part at the same time in ... any form of play ... [This] is a convention rigorously observed by the children themselves” – does no longer hold – at least for the playgroups in Tauwema.

The vast majority of children between the age of two and three years join their elder sibling’s group. They do not always participate in the games played by the older children, but they find and gain a new emotional foothold in this group, and with increasing age they also get recognized as a group member by the older children. It is not rare to recognize one or even two pairs of siblings within one and the same playgroup. In 100 play situations observed between July 27th and September 14th 1983 this constellation was noted 48 times.

The playgroups do not only consist of siblings, of course. There must be another reason why certain children chose a specific group of playmates. A look

27. This agrees with Sbrzesny’s (1976: 238) observation in Botswana with respect to !Kobushman children’s access to their playgroups.

at the village plan (see Map 4) provides the answer to this question. As already mentioned in Subsection 2.1 above, in 1983 there were three village sectors in Tauwema: *Va Seda*, *Oluvala* and *Va Yayu*. Each sector had a headman of its own who was among other things responsible for the cleanliness of his part of the village, for the settlement of minor disputes and for finding dates for carrying out distinct joint working projects. The sense of belonging to a specific village sector manifests itself already in the children's groups – and thus at a very early age in the life of a villager. In the above-mentioned 100 play situations observed it turned out that

- 29 playgroups consisted of children of the village sector *Va Seda* only,
- 3 playgroups consisted of children of the village sector *Oluvala* only, and
- 9 playgroups consisted of children of the village sector *Va Yayu* only.

That is to say that in 41 of the 100 play situations observed all children in the particular playgroups came from one and the same village sector.

For playgroups which consisted of children from different village sectors the following observations were made:

- children from *Va Seda* played with children from *Oluvala* in 12 groups;
- children from *Va Seda* played with children from *Va Yayu* in 13 groups;
- children from *Va Yayu* played with children from *Oluvala* in 12 groups; and
- playgroups which consisted of children from all three village sectors were observed 22 times.

For these mixed groups of children from different village sectors no preferences for the choice of playmates could be detected: *Va Seda* children play almost as often with *Oluvala* children as with *Va Yayu* children, *Va Yayu* children play with *Oluvala* children hardly less than with *Va Seda* children. However, now and then, but especially in July and August it could be observed that boys explicitly emphasized and documented their roots in, and their solidarity with, their village sector: during that time the boys from the three village sectors carried out fighting games at a specific location in the vicinity of Tauwema (see Subsection 2.3.2.5).

The 100 play situations observed also provided insights into the children's strong preference for constituting same-sex playgroups. In 21 play situations the groups of playmates consisted of girls only; groups consisting of boys only were observed in 45 play situations; and 34 games were played by mixed groups of girls and boys. This means that in 66 of 100 play situations the playmates formed

same-sex playgroups.²⁸ Already Malinowski (1929: 50) pointed out that “the separation of the sexes, in many matters, obtains also among children...[T]he small republic falls into two distinct groups which are perhaps to be seen more often apart than together”. The fact that strikingly fewer girls-only groups than boys-only groups were observed can be explained in the following way.

- Girls often stayed in the close array of their parent’s house and helped their mothers; thus they were not as easily available as playmates as boys.²⁹
- Even out of the immediate vicinity of their parent’s house the girls of Tauwema displayed less motivation for actively initiating and playing games than boys; the girls often preferred to be passive spectators while other groups of children were playing their games.

Now that we know that siblings, the locality of the parent’s house and the gender of the child are decisive factors for the formation of playgroups in Tauwema, we can zoom in on the structure of these groups. In what follows we first discuss the various group sizes and then the age structure within these groups.

Different games are fashionable at different times of the year – and these games determine the size of the playgroup. A group of children playing marbles usually consists of three playmates – according to the rules for playing this game. Hopscotch games are generally played by four children. Spinning top games can be played by a random number of children and playing football usually involves an arbitrary number of players as well. To avoid any bias on the playgroup sizes due to the fact that different games are fashionable at different times of the year, Barbara broadened her database for the discussion of this topic. Between July 27th and November 4th 1983 she observed 66 children – 39 boys and 27 girls – in 427 play situations where 180 groups of boys, 86 groups of girls, and 161 mixed groups of children were playing their games.

The result with respect to the gender-specific composition of the playgroups has not changed decisively: 20% of all playgroups consisted of girls, 42% consisted of boys, and 38% were mixed groups.

28. This strong preference for same-sex playgroups is greater than in the findings of the six cultures study (SCS). Whiting and Whiting (1975: 48) point out “that in nearly one-third of the observations ... children were observed associating with children of the same sex”. However, our finding agrees with Sbrzesny’s (1976: 178) observations of !Ko-Bushman children’s playgroups.

29. This observation agrees with the results of the SCS; Whiting and Whiting (1975: 45) emphasize that “in all of the societies girls remain closer to home”.



Photo 7. Children playing in the village yard (2008)

Figure 1 presents the results for the sizes of the 86 groups of girls observed:

Group size of the 86 groups of girls	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Frequency of the constellation	25	24	14	10	5	6	1	1

Figure 1. Sizes of girls' groups only and observation frequency of these group sizes

Obviously girls prefer to play in groups of two;³⁰ but games played by three playmates are also very popular. Games played by four girls are observed less often. Playgroups consisting of five girls come fourth in this scale of popularity. Groups with 6 and 7 girls are rarely observed, and groups with more than 7 girls are extremely rare.

One reason for this result may be that of the 66 children observed, 39 were boys and 27 were girls. Thus, the possibility to constitute bigger groups was considerably hampered for girls. Another reason for this result is certainly the fact that groups consisting of girls only prefer a different repertoire of games than groups

30. This agrees with Sbrzesny's (1976: 180) observation of the !Ko-Bushmen girls' play behavior.

consisting of boys only. For example, girls were never observed playing football, whereas the smallest group of boys playing this game consisted of 6 players.

Figure 2 presents the results for the sizes of the 180 groups of boys observed:

Group size of the 180 groups of boys	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Frequency of the constellation	48	52	19	22	9	9	7	7	3	2	2

Figure 2. Sizes of boys' groups only and observation frequency of these sizes

Boys clearly favor groups of three playmates; this preference is followed by groups consisting of just two players. Games that involve 5 players are almost as popular as games that are played by 4 playmates. Larger playgroups consisting of 6, 7, 8 and even 9 boys are rarer, but they are more often observed than such relatively big groups consisting of girls only. At times, although rather rarely, playgroups that consisted of 10, 11 or even 12 boys could also be observed.

Figure 3 presents the results for the sizes of the 161 mixed groups of boys and girls observed:

Group size of the 161 mixed groups	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Frequency of the constellation	23	42	32	20	9	13	7	9	3	1	2

Figure 3. Sizes of mixed groups and observation frequency of these sizes

When boys and girls play together, they prefer a group of three playmates; 26% of all mixed gender playgroups display this constellation. The next preferred sizes of playgroups consists of 4 playmates and of just one boy and one girl respectively. Groups consisting of 5 and 7 players are somewhat rarer to observe. It is interesting to note that the frequency of groups consisting of five players and more is almost identical to the frequency of these groups consisting of boys only. This result may reveal the fact that boys in Tauwema are the more active children in all kinds of play; it seems that their preferences for group sizes also affect the group sizes in mixed gender playgroups.

Summarizing these findings we can note that the children of Tauwema prefer games played in smaller groups, that is groups which encompass up to 4 players.³¹

31. This finding differs from the results of the six cultures study (SCS) where preferred playgroup sizes were larger; see Whiting & Whiting (1975: 50 Table 12). The difference may be due to the number of children observed in the SCS (67 girls & 67 boys). Barbara observed 66 children between the age of 2 and 7 in Tauwema. Note that Martini (2009: 156) reports as follows

Especially girls prefer these group sizes. Remarkable is the children's tendency to form same-sex playgroups: In 266 of 427 play situations same-sex playgroups were observed; only 161 play situations showed mixed-gender playgroups (see also Malinowski 1929: 50; Whiting & Whiting 1975: 48; Sbreznny 1976: 180ff). This result seems to be due to the children's different interests in different games.

Another important factor for the composition of the children's groups and the playgroups is the age of its members. One can only make guesses with respect to the age of the Trobriand Islanders; there is no registration of births – and thus also no birthday celebrations – in most parts of Papua New Guinea. When Barbara tried to get some information about birth dates, two men in Tauwema who had visited the mission school on Kiriwina Island showed her a kind of birth register for their own children and for children of their relatives. However, it was obvious that both lists were just recently written (or rewritten). Thus it may well be that these men politely tried to satisfy Barbara's interest in these data. It turned out to be a better method to ask the children's mothers when they were pregnant and who else in the village was pregnant at the same time, to compare these data with our own guesses and then to decide on the approximate age of the children.

We pointed out above that playgroups of boys only and playgroups of girls only preferentially consist of two or three playmates. A closer look at these playgroups reveals that the children in these groups are almost always of the same age. In what follows we present three excerpts from Barbara's observer diary to illustrate this point:

At low tide the tree boys Tovaseda, Mokeimeku (both ca. 7 years) and Tokobiyim (ca. 6 years) are sitting on the dry reef flat in front of the village; there is a big flat stone in front of each boy on which the children pound smaller pieces of coral with a bigger shell into a greasy slippery sludge. Then they fill this product of their work into a bowl made of a coconut shell. Before they pound another piece of coral, they carefully clean the coral that serves them as their anvil. Tovaseda pretends to put a handful of the greasy pieces of coral sludge into his mouth, rolls his eyes and smacks with great relish. His two playmates squeal with delight expressing greatest pleasure.

The two girls Vesali and Omnava (both ca. 5 years) balance on a slippery tree trunk lying at the beach, walking forwards and backwards. After a while they gracefully seize the borders of their skirts and wade through the water.

The girls Ilaketukwa and Mayaru (both ca. 3 years) sit together with the boys Kenavasia (ca. 4 years) and Tobwenina (ca. 3 years) at the village square. Kenavasia

for the Marquesas: "Children tend to play in groups of three to six children (75% of the playgroups). In 18% of the behavior records, children play in large groups of seven to ten children."

has a small metal plate with yellow and orange plastic discs which he piles up putting one upon the other. The other three children watch him attentively. Suddenly an older boy comes to them, destroys the little tower of plastic discs and runs away. The four little children scream disgustedly, collect the discs and amble in single file angrily away.

Let us now have a look at playgroups with more than four playmates. The girls Isiawata (ca 3 years) and Kaliboku (ca. 4 years) and the boys Gumasia, Moyadoga Mokeimena (all ca. 4 years), Subisubi and Mokeimeku (both ca. 7 years) wade through the shallow water on the reef flat in front of the village. Mokeimeku finds a colorful leaf, puts it on the surface of the water – and it drifts away in the wind. Now the younger children also search for leaves, put them on the water and cheer on the leaves, thus trying to make them drift off faster and faster.

Similar observations can be made over and over again. Playgroups with more than four children have a heterogeneous age structure. Here we see children who are younger than the core members of the group; these children are usually the younger siblings who try or have already succeeded in making friends with the playgroup members of their elder brothers and/or sisters. Tobwenina (ca. 3 years) for example, could often be found in the company of his elder brothers Mogutaya (ca. 5 years) and Tokobiyim (ca. 6 years) and their playmates. However, Tobwenina participates in the games his brothers play only as an observer at the periphery. He is just sitting where the action is – and busies himself with something else. We also observed that usually an older boy or an older girl belongs to such a bigger group and may even act as the leader of his/her playmates.

With respect to the leading role in the group of older children in the village we have to note the following. According to Papua New Guinean law there is compulsory schooling for a period of five years for children from the age of 7. However, in Tauwema it depends on the attitude and the stance of the children's parents whether or not they urge their children to take it upon themselves to walk every day for an hour to and from the school in the neighboring village Kaduwaga. In 1983 half of all the school-aged children remained in Tauwema. Five girls did not go to school because it was the explicit wish of their parents that they should help their mothers at home. Boys who do not go to school are often the leaders of the groups of the younger children – in general because of their age-related superiority.

One of these boys is Dauya (ca. 9 years). The following observation is quite typical and characteristic for his group behavior. In front of his parents' house Dauya took a small wooden stick and made a circle in the sand. Then he put down some colorful glass marbles besides the circle. In next to no time a group of children gathered around him admiring the marbles glistening in the sun. All of them wanted to play with the marbles, but Dauya just selected three playmates who were

lucky to play with him. The other children sat down around the little playground and waited patiently until Dauya also included them in his play.

Within the children's groups and the playgroups we can differentiate between the young children that seek access to the groups, children whose position within the group is established as a fully-fledged member of the group and the older group leaders. Mary Martini (2009: 158f.) made similar observations with respect to Marquesan children and their playgroups. She observed that the Polynesian children

... occupy one of four roles or positions in this group...

1. the peripheral toddler position ...
2. the initiate member position ...
3. the quiet leader position ...
4. the noisy leader position

...*Peripheral toddlers* ... join the group at about two years of age ... under the wing of a three- or four-year old sibling ... *Initiate members*: children remain peripheral to the group until they can keep up with the play ... Children move on to leadership roles when (a) they master emotional self-control ...; (b) the oldest children in the group leave to attend school, creating a need and openings for leaders; and (c) their own toddler siblings join the group, Children become either "quiet" or "noisy" leaders, dependent on their personalities ...

Martini (2009: 165) summarizes these four roles and the relationship and interaction between the children occupying them as follows:

Noisy leaders introduce activities, direct group play, and keep players on track. Quiet leaders invent new play, monitor the bossiness of noisy leaders, and care for peripheral toddlers. Initiate members follow the leaders and support each other... They also care for peripheral toddlers and generally hold the group together from the inside. Peripheral toddlers are interested observers. Their incompetence highlights the skill of the older children. Older children gain status by helping and teaching dependent toddlers.

Both the children of Tauwema and the Marquesan children take over specific roles and responsibilities within their groups when they gradually grow into these positions.³² We will come back to this important issue in Subsection 2.3.4.4 below.

32. Note that we could not observe a clear distinction between the roles of noisy and quiet leaders in the children's groups of Tauwema. Whether a group leader acted noisily or quietly depended on his or her mood on the day.

Children playing alone are a rather rare sight in Tauwema. Adults experience aloneness as an extremely uncomfortable situation and condition – and this seems to hold for children as well. Nevertheless, wherever groups are being formed there are also outsiders – and this is also valid for the children in Tauwema. They occupy this role – not because of any kind of physical features or because of their specific clan-membership – but because their social behavior deviates from the behavior of the other children.

One of these outsiders is Subisubi (ca. 7 years). He is the second-oldest of four boys in his family. From November 1982 till April 1983 his mother lived with her four boys on Kiriwina Island together with her mother. Coming back to Tauwema she only took Subisubi and her 8 months old son Mogarai back home with her. The other two boys remained in the village of her widowed grandmother and stayed there together with her. At first, Subisubi tried to get reintegrated into his former children's group of *Va Seda* where he had the status of a leader; but because he quickly started to beat, kick, scratch and pinch other children when they did not do what he wanted them to do, he was soon avoided by his former playmates and after a while they all steered clear of him. Then he tried his luck with the boys of the *Va Yayu* children's group, but they only accepted him as a bystander and spectator, but not as a playmate. Thus, Subisubi first reclaimed his status as a leader in his former children's group, but this rank was not granted him just like that. Because he then aggressively tried to regain this position within the group he became an outsider in the children's community of Tauwema.

Igiobibila (ca. 6 years) was the only girl who had difficulties in getting along with the children's group of her village sector *Va Seda*. She is the daughter of Yebwaku and Moakwana, and after her parents' divorce she lived with her mother at her grandmother's place where she grew up together with her uncles and aunts as if they were her siblings. Yebwaku spent a lot of time with her daughter, telling her stories and tales, teaching her songs and showing her how to scrape banana-leaves for making fibre-skirts. Nevertheless, Igiobibila was one of the very few children whom one often encountered alone, because she had yet another argument with other children or with her mother.

For a child who wants to be integrated within a children's group, Igiobibila's behavior was much too egocentric; she always wanted to be the one who dominates a game and the course it should take. This craving for permanent dominance is not tolerated by other children. They usually just left her on her own, moved as a closed group to another playground and started a new game there. In July 1983, Igiobibila came up with a successful strategy to act out her dominant behavior. She first took care of her three year old cousin Pulula and then gradually assembled Pulula's friends – who were of the same age as Igiobibila's cousin – treating all of them in a very charming and lovely way. This group of

three year old children acknowledged Igiobibila's dominant position without any problems.

The third child who was an outsider in Tauwema was Esaya (ca. 4 years), the second-oldest child of Kalavatu and Boketotu. Esaya obviously had not found his position in one of the children's groups of Tauwema. His way of making contacts was usually quite aggressive. He approached other children, eyed them for a moment and then he hit them, pinched them or threw stones at them. He did this not only with younger children, but also with older ones. If an older child fought back, Esaya ran back home as fast as possible. One of the reasons for Esaya's deviant behavior is the fact that he has a very special relationship with his father. Kalavatu is a local missionary, a so-called *misinari*. He is a very caring and loving father for his son with whom he spends a lot of time. However, he often disturbs him when he has managed to play with other children and thus hinders his son from establishing a balanced relationship with his peers who are integrated in the children's groups.

Summing up we can note that children will become outsiders in Tauwema if they constantly try to gain a position within a children's group that is not granted them just like that by the other children or if they do not succeed – for some reason or other – to approach the existing children's groups in an adequate way so that they get integrated into this group.

The geographic position of the Trobriand Islands is responsible for the fact that throughout the whole year day breaks at 6 o'clock in the morning and night falls at 6 o'clock in the evening. This periodical rhythm of day and night has significant consequences for the Trobriand Islanders' daily routine.

About 6 o'clock in the early morning the village slowly awakes and comes to life. Fathers and mothers who carry their two to three year old children piggyback walk towards the bush-toilet. Four to seven year old children and many adolescents are sitting on canoes or trees at the beach and dreamily look out at the sea. Many villagers have wrapped themselves into a piece of cloth; the village is still in the shade of the bush and without any cover the people of Tauwema would shiver in the morning breeze. The school-children meet at the beach, wash themselves and brush their teeth with sand and saltwater. At about 7 o'clock they leave the village and head to their school buildings in Kaduwaga – but not before having munched at least a cold yams-tuber or a few cooked sweet-potatoes, leftovers of their dinner last night. Now younger children can also be seen roaming through the village with a yams-tuber or a sweet potato for their breakfast in hand – and they find each other to form the first play-groups of the new day.

At 7.30 am a larger group of boys regularly meets close to the church building to play football. At this time of the day the girls are usually at the beach

where they clean their mothers' cooking pots, scrubbing them with sand and pieces of pumice stone washed up by the sea or they launder their family members' clothes.

Between 8 and 9 o'clock many groups of children play at the village square or at the beach. The older boys between 7 and 12 years of age roam around the bush or wander along the reef at low tide, when the reef flat is still exposed from the sea.

At about 9.30 am the children are usually found close to their parents' house, because the first warm meal of the day is then ready to be served. In Tauwema there are only a few families who share this meal with each other, eating their food sitting together on the verandas of their houses. Usually the children just take a yam- or a sweet-potato-tuber or a piece of fish and then they stroll around the village square; they come back home to their mothers' cooking pots to get some more food and then they are ready to play again with each other.

Between 10 am and 2 pm the children are usually at the beach. One of the reasons is that especially in the dry season they experience another relatively hot day where the most comfortable places to be are near the sea or in the water. Another reason is the adults' need for some rest; between noon and 2 pm, the hottest period of the day, they often retreat into their houses to have an afternoon nap – and they do not want to be disturbed then by brawly children.

Between 2 and 4.30 pm the children play rather intensively on the village square, at the beach or in the sea. At 4.45 pm the school-children return from Kaduwaga, join the playgroups and play the games their playmates have initiated.

Shortly before 5 pm almost all family members gather at their house – it is time for dinner. For a short period of time it is very silent in the village.

The brief hour that remains before nightfall is intensively used by all villagers of Tauwema. The older boys usually play football at the football field near the village or they join the girls playing in the sea. The women wash their little children at the beach and then – together with their older daughters – they fetch fresh water at the *Boyeva* well. The men intensely look after their youngest children while the 4- to 7-year-old children let off steam once more at the beach or in the village square.

At 6 pm night falls. Now clouds and the moon regulate the further course of the evening. During new-moon time or when the crescent is rather slim or when clouds shade the moon, we observe only older boys and girls promenading in same-sex groups at the village square after 7 pm. The younger children are all back home in their parents' house and soon go to sleep. However, whenever a bright moon illuminates the village, the younger children remain active for a longer time. But at 9 pm at the latest they are ousted by the adolescents who are now ready for the dance.

To answer the question about the locations for play, we have to look once more at the village plan (see Maps 4 & 5). Tauwema is a coastal village. It is situated at a sandy bay with an approximately 50-meter-wide reef flat offshore. The reef flat is divided by a reef channel. Beach and reef flat offer the children unlimited possibilities for all kinds of play. It is interesting to note that the eastern part of this playground is more attractive for the children than the western part. One of the reasons for this may be that the formation of waves is more favorable for surfing (see below). Moreover, fewer shells, clams and stones are washed ashore at this side of the reef; this also means that it is easier to dig holes into the sand and to pile up sand into kinds of sandcastles here than at the western part of the beach.



Photo 8. Children playing at the beach in the late afternoon (1983)

For the children of *Va Seda* the most preferred location for playing is inside of the village in the area between the two big yam-houses – or “*liku*” – B and C and the houses behind them (see Map 4). Here a number of coconut palms also provide a pleasant shade during hot sunny days. The area between the church and the beach at the western end of the village is mostly used by younger boys for playing football. However, sometimes older girls also meet at this area for playing netball – especially in the late afternoon (see also Morton 1996: 150).

The location used for playing competitive games is 10 minutes walking distance away from Tauwema, west of the Tuyabwau bathing place at the beach (see Map 5). There the children can try their strengths and their skills against one another – safeguarded and protected from any adults’ inquisitive and disapproving glances.

During the harvest period in September and the slash and burn cultivation of new gardens till the end of November, the families of Tauwema usually go to the gardens relatively early in the morning and remain there until 4.30 pm. Although there are many possibilities for the children to explore their environment there in a playful way, most children prefer to stay in the village – certainly also because it is much hotter in the inland gardens than in their coastal village.

Of course there are also some locations in Tauwema where the children are not allowed to play. First and foremost these are the beaches behind the rock ledges east and west of the village which are used as toilets. If adults see and surprise children playing there, they vociferously reprimand the malefactors. In addition, parents keep an eye on their very young children to make sure that they do not play alone at the beach. Yebwaku told us that one of her half-brothers drowned at the sea in front of the village at the age of three and Weyei remembered two more incidents where two boys drowned there, too – albeit a long time ago. In general, children up to the age of 8 years should not move away too far from the village. To make sure that the children respect this rule, their parents tell them stories about man-eating ogres – the “*dokonikani*”, black magicians – the “*bwagau*” and nasty spirits of the dead – the “*kosi*”, who lie in wait for foolhardy children to bewitch and even kill them (see Senft 2015a).

2.3.2 The games the children play

...der Mensch spielt nur, wo er in voller Bedeutung des Worts Mensch ist, und er ist nur da ganz Mensch, wo er spielt.

Friedrich Schiller (1795: 2. Stück, 15. Brief, letzter Absatz)

Who would dare to study play?

Jerome Bruner et al. (1976: 13)

This subsection illustrates how important the children’s groups are for the development of a child in Tauwema. It will be shown that the games the children play

together serve a crucial function for this development.³³ However, before we discuss these fundamental functions of these games for, and in, the children's development, we first present the children's groups' inventory of games. Being familiar with the different games the children play is a significant prerequisite for making any kind of statement with respect to their importance for the children's socialization process.

However, first of all we have to define "play". We rely on Johan Huizinga's definition which seems to be the reference point for more or less all studies on this topic. Most of these studies try to explain the motivation and function of the form of behavior which is called "play" – a label which encompasses a broad variety of heterogeneous modes of behavior and behavioral patterns – from different theoretical positions. Huizinga (1956: 37 [=1938]; see also 1976: 675ff) defines play as follows:

Spiel ist eine freiwillige Handlung oder Beschäftigung, die innerhalb gewisser festgesetzten Grenzen von Zeit und Raum nach freiwillig angenommenen, aber unbedingt bindenden Regeln verrichtet wird, ihr Ziel in sich selber hat und begleitet wird von einem Gefühl der Spannung und Freude und einem Bewußtsein des „Andersseins“ als das „gewöhnliche Leben“.³⁴

We are aware of the fact that even this definition is not comprehensive and agree with Bruner et al. (1976: 13) who point out that "the phenomena of play cannot be impeccably framed into a single operational definition". However, despite the fact that this form of behavior is difficult to define, it is obvious that we all can relatively quickly differentiate between what is meant seriously and what is meant playfully. An explanation for this fact is provided by non-human primate research and research in human ethology: Jerome Bruner et al (1976: 14) point out that "play is universally accompanied in subhuman primates by a recognizable form of metasignalling, a 'play face'". Jan van Hooff (1976: 133; see also 1962) describes this form of facial expression as follows:

33. See, for example, Bauzer Medeiros (1978: 22) who points out that "[i]n the early formative years, play is almost synonymous with life. It is second only to being nourished, protected and loved. It is a basic ingredient of physical, intellectual, social and emotional growth".

34. "[P]lay is a voluntary activity or occupation executed within certain fixed limits of time and place, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding, having its aim in itself and accompanied by a feeling of tension, joy and the consciousness that it is "different" from "ordinary life" (Huizinga 1949: 28). The quote from Schiller (1795) translates as follows: "Man only plays when he is in the fullest sense of the word a human being, and he is only fully a human being when he plays" [our translation, B & G. S.].

It can be regarded as a ritualized intention movement of the gnawing which is a characteristic part of the play of many mammals ..., and may function as a meta-communicative signal that the ongoing behavior is not meant seriously, but is to be interpreted as ‘mock-fighting’...

Nicholas Blurton Jones (1967) points out that the play face of non-human primates is almost identical with the so-called “wide-mouth laugh” which is characteristic for children’s play (see also van Hooff 1976: 135f.).³⁵ Thus, the play face and the wide-mouth laugh clearly signal: “This is play!” – and like our non-human primate relatives we also understand this (most probably) innate signal and react to it in an adequate way. Another very important aspect of play is that it always occurs in what Gustav Bally (1945) called “ein entspanntes Feld” – “a relaxed field” (see also Burghardt 2005: 77). Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1989: 593f.) points out that play “takes place in a relaxed emotional state, free of tension, allowing the individual to playfully experiment, investigate and learn and create motivated among others by curiosity”.

After these basic remarks on what we understand by, and categorize as, play and playful behavior, we will now briefly discuss the Trobriand Islanders’ concept of play. In Kilivila we find the word *mwasawa* that can be glossed as “play”. However, the semantics of *mwasawa* are as complex as the semantics of the respective term for play in Indo-European and other languages of the world (see Huizinga 1956: 28ff; = 1949 28ff) and they also find their extension into the realm of sexuality (see Huizinga 1956: 54f. (= 1949: 43f.); also Buytendijk 1932: 95). Huizinga himself refers to the *Kula* of the Trobrianders (Huizinga 1956: 74f.) which he characterizes as “a noble game”. He writes: “Nirgend vielleicht nimmt archaisches Kulturleben so sehr die Form eines edlen Gemeinschaftsspiels an wie bei diesen melanesischen Papuas” (Huizinga 1956: 75).³⁶

In what follows we will concentrate on the games that are played by the children of Tauwema. We first describe the inventory of games that Barbara observed

35. Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1972: 491) refers to the “wide-mouth laugh” with the technical term “Mund-offen-Gesicht” – which literally translates into English as “mouth-open-face”; see also Sbrzesny (1976: 231).

36. “Nowhere else, perhaps, does an archaic community take on the lineaments of a noble game more purely than with these Papuans of Melanesia” (Huizinga 1949: 63). We want to briefly note here that Huizinga’s (1956: 57; = 1949: 46) theory that “culture arises in the form of play, that it is played from the very beginning” can be nicely illustrated and verified with another complex Trobriand ritual, namely the *kayasa* – a harvest competition with the aim to find the best gardener. All the actions accompanying the complex and ritualized *kayasa* ceremonies are also labeled by the Trobriand Islanders as *mwasawa*. See also Subsections 2.3.4.2, 3.1 and 3.4.

during her two stays in Tauwema in 1983 and 1989. Individual games are classified as belonging to comprehensive categories, following the classification made by Sbrzesny (1976) who takes up Piaget's (1962: 108ff) proposal to describe games according to their underlying structures.

2.3.2.1 *Dance, song and rhythmic games*

These "organized games" (Martini 2009: 156) are important elements in the Trobriand Islanders' everyday life (see Senft 2010a: 228ff). Whenever there is a full moon the local guitar bands play for the dance for the young unmarried adolescents.

During the harvest festival – the *milamala* period – people dance special traditional dances that are accompanied by drums and the singing of the *wosi milamala* – the harvest festival songs (see Senft 2011b). During this time of the year the bachelors also dance their phallic *mweki*-dances and sing 'ditties' with rather blunt sexual allusions (see Senft 2010a: 241ff and below).



Photo 9. Topsikauya, Yabilosi and Tomdoya watching the *milamala* harvest festival dances (1982)

Every villager has his/her personal mocking song – and these songs are known by everybody – including the children; especially boys often sing them to make fun of adults especially of those who try to reprimand them.

One game of the boys is to imitate the players of the Tauwema guitar band. They take dried pandanus leaves or fans that are used to stir the fire at the fireplaces,

hold them and play them as if they were guitars. Beating these leaves results in a contact noise – and the boys accompany this noise with all kind of songs that come to their minds – be it a Christian hymn, a schmaltzy village song or even one of the bawdy *mweki*-songs. Now and then the boys also dance to their ‘music’.

In a more refined version of this imitation game the boys use tetragonal pieces of wood as their guitars on which they have put strings made of short pieces of fishing lines. With larger boy groups we also observed that one part of the group sings songs without any guitar imitation while the other part of the group dances to these songs. During a full moon night an impressive performance of this kind was the attraction of the night at the village square of Tauwema. In the shade of one of the big yams-houses 7 boys between the age of 9 and 12 years had come together. They intoned – in a beautifully polyphonic way – village songs, Christian hymns and English songs which they had learned at school. Their songs were accompanied by dances performed by a group of younger boys who displayed their confident feeling for rhythm. After every song and dance performance these young boys rounded the village square running like mad.

Another dance game played by boys is the imitation of the bachelors’ phallic *mweki*-dances. The boys walk in file, swing their hips and pelvises back and forth – like the young men – and intone the bawdy and obscene *mweki*-songs – like, for example, the following one (see also Senft 2010a: 241ff):

<i>Yakamesi kabutumala</i>	We bachelors
<i>layayosa o takekaya Boveyaga</i>	we hold Boveyaga on our table.
<i>Lekakemasi – Boveyaga!</i>	She fucked us – Boveyaga!
<i>Lekakemasi – Boveyaga!</i>	She fucked us – Boveyaga!
<i>He! He! He!</i>	He! He! He!

The boys use this imitation of the *mweki*-songs to deride and mock somebody – especially girls.

Dance games played by the girls are never accompanied by imitating guitar play and guitar music. The girls prefer *sasani* as dance-accompanying instruments; *sasani* are rattles made out of nutshells. They are often used by men when they perform dances which they have seen and learned on other islands of the archipelago. Thus the girls imitate foreign dances displayed by adult men. They stand together in a row and tramp their feet onto the ground, following the rhythm of the *sasani* sounds. We never observed that the girls accompany their dances with songs.

There was one group of girls who not only imitated the dances of the adults but also made the *sasani* rattles themselves by threading clams and pieces of coral on lianas. The sounds of these instruments came close to those of the ‘real’ *sasani*.

Another rhythmical game played by girls between 6 and 14 years is called *sesuya* or *valesia*. The girls usually play this game in the evening at the village square. They form a circle, looking at the centre of it, join hands and start to sing mocking verses which are called “*vinavina*”. In the rhythm of these verses they walk to the left – spinning round faster and faster until they jump and bounce. Then they turn around, take each other by the hand again and run so fast that the circle finally breaks. Malinowski (1929: 203) describes these verses as “rather ribald”. Here are two examples of the *vinavina* which accompany the *sesuya* game (see also Senft 2010a: 2340f.):

<i>Kokoni kutitobogwa,</i>	Rat – start,
<i>kwatuni numwaya ala kasesa!</i>	devour the old woman’s clit!
<i>Yake, yake, yake...</i>	Yake, yake, yake ...

<i>Avela me’ikuiku adumanosi?</i>	Who is shaking our fruits?
<i>Utayagina, utayagina –</i>	It’s the wind, the wind –
<i>me’ikiku kadumanunisi.</i>	that is shaking our fruits.
<i>Ikipatu la kaniku Ibodoga –</i>	Ikipatu closes up her rasp –
<i>kweta mekaniki tobulaku puuu –</i>	one remains inside and collapses peng –
<i>kweta mekaniki tobulaku puuu.</i>	one remains inside and collapses peng.

Now and then girls and boys also have song competitions. The children of Tauwema welcome the small sickle of the moon with vociferous cheers when it gets visible again after the dark nights of a new moon. During these evenings groups of children often meet at the beach and play boisterous games until the crescent disappears again in the sea behind Tuma Island. During these nights we often observed song competitions. Just behind our house the boys usually sat down and started to intone polyphonic songs. The girls had gathered a few meters away, and when the boys made a short pause, they started to sing another song. However, after the girls had finished singing the first stanza of this song, the boys continued singing their song – until at a certain moment both choirs were singing their different songs at the same time. Each group then increased the volume of their singing to disconcert their opponents. Usually the girls were the first to give in, most probably because the group of boys was larger and thus managed to sing louder than the girls.

Taugaga (ca. 5 years) and Yabilosi (ca. 6 years) developed a rather idiosyncratic song game. Shortly before the sun set as a fiery red ball behind Buliwada Island, the two boys sat down at the beach, waved at the setting sun and silently sang again and again “*Kayoni – kayoni – kayoni*” – Bye-bye – bye-bye – bye-bye.

2.3.2.2 *Games with objects and materials*

These games also play an important role for children (see Garvey 1977: 44ff; Sbrzesny 1976: 86f). However, we have to point out that there are almost no toys at all that are made by adults for children. When the little games of skill which we had brought with us from Germany and which we had presented to some of the children could not be located after a few weeks, we got a glimpse of what Maria Montessori might have meant when she pointed out “*Damals begriff ich, daß das Spielzeug im Leben des Kindes zweifellos etwas Untergeordnetes ist, und daß es sich seiner nur bedient, wenn es nichts Besseres hat*” (Montessori, quoted in Chateau 1976: 146f.).³⁷ Things with which the children of Tauwema play are objects and materials that they find in their natural environment – that is in the sea, at the beach, in the bush and in the village. Playing with these things the children learn something about the quality, the property, condition and usability of these different objects and materials and sometimes they also invent their own new ‘toys’ playfully dealing with these things.³⁸

The children of Tauwema spend the major part of a day at the beach; therefore playing with sand is one of the most frequent games with materials. A very popular game with the younger boys and girls (between three and five years of age) is to dig holes into the sand which are as deep as they can reach with their arms. Then the children wait until the rolling waves of the sea fill these holes with water and sand, and once they are filled they quickly bail out the water with their hands. The children play this game until the rising tide drives them away from the beach.

Children that are a bit older often build elaborate sandcastles at the beach, and the 6 to 8 year old boys and girls also try to protect their castles from destruction by the rising tide. While building sandcastles, the children often develop completely new and different games. Two boys had built a sandcastle and ‘crowned’ its peak with one half of a coconut shell. Then they started to jump over their construction and only stopped when one of them landed in the middle of the sandy hill – completely flattening it. Immediately they rebuilt the castle and even decorated it with stripe patterns. In the meantime more children gathered at the beach and soon there were six hills at the beach which were

37. At that time I realized that toys definitely play a subordinate role in the life of a child, and that s/he only makes use of them if s/he does not have something better [our translation, B. & G. Senft].

38. This observation supports Baker (1978: 6) who points out that “a lesson many adults fail to learn is that the toy accurately representing the real thing often has far less educational value than a natural object that can be imaginatively transformed into anything”.



Photo 10. Three children playing in the sand at the beach, digging holes (1983)

built by groups of either two boys or two girls. All the children then jumped over their own hills. Two girls varied this game by digging a tunnel at the basis of their hill so that they could hold each other by their hands. Finally they destroyed their construction by pulling their hands from the tunnel up to the top of their sandcastle.

Another game played with sand is called *baloma* – spirits of the dead. To play this game the children sit down on the sandy beach, dig in their feet and then they start to sing:

Baloma, baloma
kayosisi kaikegu!

Spirits of the dead, spirits of the dead
catch my feet!

After every song the children put more sand on top of their feet – thus mocking the spirits of the dead who cannot ‘find’ the children’s feet under the sand. After some time the children pull their feet out of the sand, dig another hole, lie down on their stomachs and put sand onto their backs. Then they start to sing:

Baloma, baloma
kayosisi lopogu!

Spirits of the dead, spirits of the dead
catch my belly!

The children's experience with the material "sand" also resulted in their invention of a game to which Barbara refers with the verb "to crumb", because the children do not have a name for this game. Boys and girls rampage naked in the sea until they are wet from tip to toe. Then they rush to the beach looking for a spot where the sun has dried the sand. There they roll in the sand until they are completely covered with grains of sand – they even carefully 'crumb' their faces with their hands. Often the children then crawl around on all fours and try to frighten each other with their strange appearance and by shouting at each other.



Photo 11. A group of children rolling their wet bodies in the sand (1983)

Painting in the sand at the beach of Tauwema is a seasonal game, because there is only a brief period during the year when the children find the beach even and heavy with water, and thus very inviting for painting in the sand. We could only observe this game for one week (22nd of May till 28th of May, 1983) at about 6 am in the morning and 3 pm in the afternoon. It is interesting to note that almost all the drawings were made by the school-children – and the drawings were obviously informed by the influence of the school education. Girls rather stereotypically made drawings depicting houses and trees, and boys made drawings depicting a ship with a dinghy in tow.³⁹ However, during this week the boys varied their motifs. One morning we admired the drawing of a *lagim* – an artfully carved canoe washboard – in the sand, and 2 days later Burigesi (ca. 13 years old) first drew a pig with 7 piglets and then a stately boar. Gumsakapu and Busigana drew islands and Tosuelebu finally drew stars in the sand.



Photo 12. The schoolchildren drawing pictures in the sand at the beach (1983)

39. For similar gender specific drawing of motifs observed with the !Ko-bushmen see Sbrzesny (1976: 301f.). Bushman girls preferred to draw houses, trees, and women, while boys preferred to draw cars and airplanes.

Younger children often fill sand into coconut shells, carry or push them away and then empty them again. Then they repeat this “Fill in – empty out game” and continue playing it for a while.

Besides the games with sand the games played in and with the sea are very popular with the children of Tauwema. This element offers a large variety of possibilities to examine and investigate its characteristics, to experiment with it and to try out one’s own skills and capabilities. As already mentioned, the very young children are never all by themselves on the beach or in the sea. We often observed older children carrying their younger siblings on their backs, in their arms or on their hips through the water to make them familiar with the sea. In what follows we look in some detail at the various games played in and with the sea.



Photo 13. Pakarei carrying one of his younger siblings on his hips (1992)

There is a game with the water breaking on the beach which is often played in the late afternoon when the incoming tide has reached the sandy beach. Especially children between 4 and 8 years of age stand in a row side by side, wait for a wave to break on the beach and then kick violently at it. After a while they plunge into the water, box against the waves and let the surf wash over themselves. Afterwards they lie down in parallel with the breaking waves and let the breakers roll them up the sandy beach.

Younger children between the age of three and four years love to play where the water is flat and warmed up by the sun. They fill water into all kinds of containers and then pour it out again into the sea or over each other. Plastic bags offer a new way of varying this “Fill water into something” game. These plastic bags used to contain rice which is sold at Henry Gardette’s store on Kiriwina Island. The children make a few holes into the bags, fill them up with water and then splash each other over greater distances.

In the repertoire of games played by four to seven year old boys and girls the diving game is of special importance. Quite often the children are standing in a circle, then one child dives down – and surfaces after a short while directly in front of another child. This game is monitored with suspense by all children and the popping up of the diver always causes rejoicing that breaks the tension.

A game where the children experiment with water is preferably played by kids between the age of two and three years. After heavy rains there are large ponds all over the village square. The younger children first stand at the edges of these ponds and observe how the watery mud wells up between their toes. Then they sit down and pat with their hands on the water, first slowly, then faster and faster. Finally they run through the ponds so that the water splashes in all directions. If an especially daring child even lies down in the pond, the other children immediately follow his/her example. The children very much enjoy these mud games, but unfortunately their parents do not. The Trobriand adults who like cleanliness have no appreciation whatsoever of this game. Here we have one of the few cases where parents or grandparents interfere in the children’s play. The kids are either severely admonished or they are even dragged away and immediately bathed in the sea.

Another game with a long tradition is surfing (see Malinowski 1929: 209). This game can be observed in Tauwema from the end of September till the end of January. During this time of the year the high tide has its climax in the afternoon – the best time for playing all kinds of games. In Tauwema this game is played almost exclusively by boys; there were only two very energetic girls who displayed their impressive abilities in surfing. At high tide the children stand on the edge of the reef, holding the cut-off tips or parts of the side planks of old canoes which are called *ketataba*. They wait for an especially big wave, lay down on their ‘surf-boards’ as quickly as possible and paddle with hands and feet into the area just before the wave so that they and their *ketataba* are moved by the power

of the incoming wave. The speed with which the children surf towards the beach is sometimes quite impressive. The *ketataba* game is also accompanied by a kind of rap which the children intone while standing on the brink of the reef waiting for a good wave. On the one hand this song provides a nice description of the *ketataba* game, and on the other hand it is yet another demonstration that the songs of the Trobriand children do not shy away from bawdy sexual innuendos:

<i>Gala iveaka, gala ikekita – sigilipaipai!</i>	It does not get big, it does not get small – sigilipaipai!
<i>kumwali makala tabwala kevala, kuseki, asakaula va butuma o butumavelu.</i>	Great wave like in the middle of the <i>kevala</i> -stone, –you build up, I quickly surf towards the bush – into the bush.
<i>Avavai agu bweta dararugu, aseli o u'una gigiku, akatuvi agu ketataba, aseli o u'una gigiku.</i>	I pick my wreath of <i>dararugu</i> -flowers, I sit down at the roots of the <i>gigiku</i> -tree, I break my surf board, I put it down at the roots of the <i>gigiku</i> -tree.
<i>Avanapula – amweki tadokesososu – tamwesi o valu, la valu bubunu – hm hm – ike inala, ikeya la kwava tamala – bikamwata!</i>	I come out again – I see waves like white hair – we two go to the village, to the village of the <i>bubuna</i> -dove – hm hm – he fucks his mother, he fucks the wife of his father – he will shriek!

The cut-off tips of old canoes not only serve as surf boards for the 7 to 12 year old children; they are also used by the children of this age group to give their younger siblings a ride on the water within the reef. The younger children sit within the canoe-tips and their older brother or sister pushes the *ketataba* through the water. Playing this “passenger ship game” the children often imitate the sound of the outboard engine of our dinghy or of the engine of a small trawler which now and then anchors in front of the reef of Tauwema.

Only boys play with self-made boats or canoes, pulling them on a string through the water. The reason for this gender-specific game may well be that almost everything that has to do with canoes, navigation and seafaring is men’s business – the only exception is the fact that sometimes small exclusive female groups of unmarried adolescent girls make short canoe trips to visit neighboring villages or villages on islands in the vicinity, usually during the period of the *milamala* harvest festival. The canoes with which the boys play are made out of various materials. The simplest models just consist of the skin of a papaya cut in halves after the black seeds of the fruit were removed and the pulp of the fruit



Photo 14. Children with their surf boards at the beach of Tauwema; at the centre is Yabilosi lying on his board (1983)

was eaten. Little boats are also made out of coconut shells and proved to be sea-going. The big coconuts are husked and the outer parts of these husks are cut with a bushknife into the form of a canoe. The boys then put in the middle of the husk a stick that serves as the mast and to this mast they attach a pandanus-leaf. One such canoe was a refunctioned wooden bailer used to bail water out of the big canoes. However, boats are not only made out of natural materials. Yabilosi had a boat which was completely built out of rubbish: an old plastic sandal was cut into the hull of the canoe; on top of this plastic hull there was a four-sided powder box fastened to the hull by two nails. All these types of boats and canoes have one thing in common, though. The boys fasten a string made of natural materials to the tip of the prow and they tie a piece of coral to the other end of the string which serves as the anchor of their ship. The canoes are not just pulled through the sea – with the boys imitating the sounds of outboard- or big diesel-engines; loading and unloading the boats with cargo plays an important role in this game. Usually the vessels anchor on or near the beach; there they are loaded with stones, shells or sand. After that they are pulled through the water and finally their freight is discharged again. We could observe these games with boats and canoes also in the village square, especially when the older children played this game together with younger siblings. The children crawled through the sand, pushed the boats in front of them, loaded and unloaded their vessels and also imitated engine sounds.

In this context we would also like to mention a game that was not played by children but by young and partly also by older men of Tauwema. From the 20th of February to the 2nd of March the men arranged “model boat races”. For these races the men had constructed models of small wooden outrigger-canoes with plastic sails. If there was a favorable wind and an adequate water-level on the reef flat in front of the village, between 8 and 25 men stood in line somewhere between the beach and the brink of the reef, put their model canoes on the water, checked the wind, and after a start signal was given by a master of ceremonies they let their canoes sail away. They ran after their boats spurring the canoes on shouting wildly. The rules of the game allowed the players to set up capsized canoes again so that they could continue the race. The finishing line was not clearly defined; but there was a natural barrier of coral rising out of the water on the reef flat. It was interesting to notice that – despite this finishing line and the players’ emotional engagement – this game of the adult men was not really competitive. There were neither cheers nor admiring words for the owner of the fastest canoe, nor did the winners display any signs of triumph over their playmates.



Photo 15. Boys and young men playing with their sailing boat models (1983)

Besides the highly competitive ball games that are played in teams, such as football (soccer), basketball and water polo which found their way to the Trobriands during the time of the Australian mandatory rule over the area that is now the independent state of Papua New Guinea, there are a number of ball games – mostly

played by the younger children – that provide the basis for increasing the degree of perfection in the children’s skillfulness. The balls used in these games are usually made in the following traditional way: already at the age of four or five years, boys and girls can braid leaves of coconut trees into balls the size of a fist. In one of the ball games, which is played by a group of three players – including youngsters who just have learned to walk, the children sit on the ground with legs akimbo and roll the ball towards each other. Three and four year old children can often be seen throwing such a braided ball up into the air, trying to catch it again.



Photo 16. A child playing with a woven ball (2012)

Another game, which seems to be reserved for girls, was noticed by Barbara as a result of a misunderstanding. The children often brought us limes to get biscuits as a counter-gift from us. One day 8 year old Bomlisi was standing in front of our house with two limes in her hand and smiled at Barbara. Barbara told her that we already had so many of these fruits that we did not need any more of them at the moment. Bomlisi replied that she had no intention of bringing us these fruits – she was going to play with them. And having clarified what she was planning to do, she started to juggle with the fruits: she took the two limes in her right hand and threw them one after the other up into the air; while one fruit was at about the height of her head, she caught the other one with her right hand and threw it immediately up into the air again. She skillfully continued juggling the fruits for

a while. However, her attempt to play this game with three fruits unfortunately failed. This game was very *en vogue* with the girls for a week or so. It was played not only with limes but also with bigger, red and very hard fruits the size of an egg – the so-called *polimauna*.

Throwing games are very often played by boys. They are subsumed here under the category of “games with objects and materials” because most of the throwing games played by the children of Tauwema are neither fighting games nor competitive games. They serve the function of experimenting with a number of different materials and objects for exercising one’s own strength and skillfulness.

One of these throwing games reminded us of a game of Boccia. This game seems to be a recent innovation because the boys play it throwing old and empty batteries. They put some of the batteries on the ground in the village square and try to hit them with other batteries which serve them as missiles.

Another such rather recently invented game is a throwing game played with the tops of cans. The top of the tin is taken between thumb and index finger and is then thrown with some verve like a frisbee to fly across the village square.

The children also use natural materials for playing these throwing games, of course. The lightweight but nevertheless firm sheaths which protect the blossoms of a coconut tree are very popular ‘toys’ for boys – especially during windy days. The boys stand with their back to the wind, take the sheaths between thumb and index finger and throw them up into the air. For a while the sheaths glide elegantly through the air before they finally land on the village square.

To exercise their aiming accuracy, the boys make use of an old tree at the western end of the village. For a number of months the tree carries orange blossoms which are in great demand for making wreaths of flowers. The boys throw sticks at this tree trying to hit the branches where many of these blossoms bloom and make them fall down. The boys themselves take care that sticks are thrown only when nobody is under or near this tree who could be hit accidentally by their sticks.

Stones are sometimes used as missiles by younger children to signal possible opponents that they are terribly angry and wrathful; but this is mostly done in a playful and thus peaceful way. Within the village there is no big enough open space where the children could try out how far they can throw stones. To play this game they go to the beach and throw stones as far out into the sea as possible. Again it is stunning to realize that this game is not competitive at all. Even if many boys are standing side by side throwing their stones as far out as possible into the sea, there are neither verbal nor non-verbal signs of admiration for the boy who threw his stone the farthest nor signs of contempt or disrespect for the one who could not really throw his stone far out.

If the water on the reef flat is smooth and shallow, the boys let stones hop over the water surface. They throw flat stones which are difficult to find between the

pronged pieces of coral. However, once a boy finds such a stone, he takes it in his throwing hand and then recites the following formula upon it:

<i>Matauya, kwekwedu</i>	Small stone, like a fingernail
<i>silubebeva – mes – mes – mes.</i>	flat silubebeva-stone – pf – pf – pf

Then the boy throws the stone as flat as possible over the surface of the water so that it will jump a few times when it hits the surface. This game is as popular with Trobriand boys as it is with European boys and with probably many other children in the world.

The children of Tauwema also play a “walking on stilts”-like game. However, their stilts consist of the halves of two coconut shells which are drilled through in their centre. A rope made of lianas goes through this hole and is fastened in the opening of the shell. The rope functions as the handle for the child who wants to walk on these stilts of coconut shells. The child has the liana go through the space between his/her big toe and the next toe so that s/he stands with the toes and the frontal balls of the foot on each of the two coconut shells. S/he takes the liana handles, holds them tightly and then starts his/her walk on these “stilts”. Again, this game was never played in a competitive way.

Especially girls like to play with kinds of balloons which they make out of the white blossoms, which look like trumpets, of a beautiful tree; the tree is called southern catalpa. At the borders of the village there are a number of these trees where the girls find these 15–20 cm long blossoms. The children take away the sepat, the stamen and the ovary from the blossom so that they are left with the calyx only. The edge of the wide open calyx is bound together with a small liana. Then the girls blow air into the small opening at the bottom of the blossom so that the calyx swells and after a while subsides again.

A game that is played all through the year, the leaf sheath of a betel palm tree is used as a sleigh. Usually men use this sheath to make their traditional kind of pubic cover which are called *mwebua*. The sheath is heated to make it smooth and flexible, then it is cut in the form of a pubic cover. The pubic cover is fastened at the hips with a piece of red cloth. These days men and boys carry the *mwebua* only on special festive days. Boys who go to school carry it once a week on the “traditional day” at school. Some of these sheaths are not really suitable for making the *mwebua*. They are the ones the children transform into their sleighs. The part of the sheath that is attached to the trunk of the betelpalm tree is used as the handle for pulling the sheath-sleigh. A child sits down on the broad and flat surface of the leaf-like sheath and another child pulls him or her across the village square. After a while the children change places so that everybody can enjoy the ride. If a



Photo 17. Sose'ula walking on his coconut "stilts" (1983)

passenger turns out to be a nuisance who does not want to change places, the pulling child gets rid of him or her by a suddenly stopping the sleigh and then jerking hard so that the child sitting on the sheath inevitably tumbles in the sand of the village square.

On sunny days many carefully rolled up leaves of pandanus trees lie in the sand of the village square to dry in the sun. These leaves are used to make sails for the big sea-going *masawa* outrigger canoes. How creatively the children use the materials they find in their environment for playing games is illustrated once again by the "rolling hoops" game, which was invented by two boys and a girl. They could get hold of unused pieces of these pandanus leaves. First the boys acted as if they were playing guitars, but after a while Kwelubituma found a small piece of



Photo 18. Yabilosi dragging Yesaya on a leaf through the village (1983)

wood, bent the leaf into a hoop fastening its ends to the little wooden stick. The boys took up this idea immediately: Mokeimeku put his hoop on the ground and set it in motion with his hand – the hoop rolled off and the wind blew it away for quite a distance. The three children played in this way with their hoops and the wind for quite a while.

For almost exactly three months – from the 27th of July to the 26th of October 1983 – the children played “spinning top” games. The beginning and the end of this seasonal game is dependent on natural conditions – the basic component of the top can only be found in the bush during this time of the year. The body of the tops are made out of reddish-green apple-like fruits. Boys between 5 and 12 years of age make early morning expeditions into the bush to search for these *moagivia*. This search requires quite adventurous climbs up into the trees where these fruits grow. The boys hang up the yield of this search in small bundles at the end of a stick which they carry on their shoulders in the way the men carry all loads into the village. Back in the village a large group of children gathers around the boys and the distribution of the *moagivia* which follows is not always done in a quiet and peaceful way. However, in most cases every child receives at least one of the fruits. After the distribution the children look for straight and firm sticks – which they quite often pinch from their mother’s broom – and put it through the middle axis of the *moagivia*. Then they clear the ground with their hand and flatten it – and now they can start playing the game which is called *magi’uya*. They take the

about 5 cm long upper part of the stick between the two palms of their hands, rub their palms against each other and recite the following verses:

<i>Giuyo, giyatoitoya –</i>	Peg top, fast spinning peg top
<i>tovakaveaka tomwayo</i>	the fat old men
<i>isisusi va bwemo –</i>	they sit on the yamshouse –
<i>togisasi – giuyo!</i>	Peeping Toms – peg top!

After the last word they release the top which spins for a while on the flattened ground. The verse quoted above seems to be a censored version which Kalavatu, a father of three children and one of the *misinari* – the local missionaries – recited for us. The children between four and 12 years of age used to accompany their spinning top games with the following verses (see also Senft 2010a: 241):

<i>Nunumwaye, tomwaye</i>	Old woman, old man
<i>kusisusi va bweme –</i>	you sit on the yamshouse –
<i>idoketasi popu.</i>	they fuck shit.

This game is even played when it is raining. The children then sit on the platforms of the small yamshouses with an enamel plate in their laps in which they spin the top. On one such occasion Bomsamesa tried to teach Yabilosi the following trick with the spinning top. She let the top spin on the plate, picked it up, put it on her head and walked with it around the yamshouse. Yabilosi tried to do this as well, but he always failed – most probably because as a boy he was not used to carrying things on his head.

Another seasonal game is constructing “string figures”, that is playing “cat’s cradle”. This game is dependent on the different work-intensive phases for the Trobriand Islanders in the course of a year. From August to the end of September the Trobrianders harvest their gardens, especially their yams. During this time of the year there are almost no idle hours for adults. This also holds for the time between October and December when the Trobrianders have to clear their new gardens. But in March and April there is not much to do, neither in the village nor in the gardens, and this is the time for the adults to also play games. String figures which are called *ninikula* in Kilivila are played quite intensively by all adults in the village. We often saw children sitting beside their father or their mother developing a new figure together with them. For this game one needs a piece of string, the ends of which are knotted together. String figures are then created with hands and feet – and some more complex figures even require the use of the player’s teeth, mouth, knees and feet. All the figures have special names and many of them are



Photo 19. Children playing spinning the top – *magiu'ya* (2012)

accompanied by verses (see Senft & Senft 1986, 1993; also Claassen et al. 2010). The children first learn and master simple figures, many of which are resolved with a trick – which is very satisfying for the youngsters' ambition to be the center of the astonished spectators' attention. At the age of 9 years children can produce an impressive number of different string figures. The string figure *Kaikela baola* – “I will put in my paddle” – is made in such a way that the design consists of a frame which is surrounded by three string diamonds. It is held vertically in front of the player's breast and when reciting the verses that accompany this figure, it is moved rhythmically like a paddle. The following verses go with the *kaikela baola ninikula*:

<i>Mina Kaibola, mina Kaibola,</i>	People from Kaibola, people from Kaibola,
<i>utusa miwega,</i>	raise your steering paddles,
<i>talibita okubununa Taikurasi.</i>	We two are fondling the front of Taikurasi.
<i>Mitaga baivola – kupsi!</i>	But no, I will paddle – kupsi!
<i>Mitaga baivola – kupsi!</i>	But no, I will paddle – kupsi!

The church of Tauwema is constructed on top of posts which are as tall as a man. These posts carry beams that hold the floor of the church. From time to time the children attach strong ropes made of lianas to these beams, which they use as swings. In March 1983 five such swings were in use at one and the same time.



Photo 20. Namilieva making the ninikula “*kapiva*” (1983)

In September the children developed a game which they called *turaki* – truck or car. This game was almost as popular as the surfing game which was played during the same time of the year. *Turaki* was a game imported from Kiriwina Island. Gulavautetu accompanied one of his uncles to Kiriwina for a longer visit. On Kiriwina the 10 year old boy saw a car – for the first time – but also the toy that the boys on Kiriwina call *turaki*. The Kiriwina version of the *turaki* consists of a long stick which ends in a fork. Between the two ends of the crutch the boys fasten a wooden wheel with a wooden axle. With this construction the boys run through the villages and imitate the sounds of a truck. Gulavautetu invented a Tauwema version of this game. At the end of a longer stick he nailed the top of a tin can and used this construction as his *turaki*. Two days later eight boys had followed his example and the boys with their *turaki* were running through Tauwema – just for one week – then the toys disappeared and were never seen again. Note that the Trobrianders never developed indigenous carts or the like.

Another game which involved a “car” was played by two little boys. Each of them had a log of wood in his hand which he pushed over the veranda of his parents’ home through the sand of the village square. They also referred to this toy as *turaki*.

The children of Tauwema also play games with animals. The Trobrianders’ attitude to animals differs substantially from the attitude we have (see also Mead 1942: 25). With the exception of domestic pigs, which are valued as signs of wealth



Photo 21. Children playing with a sophisticated version of a “turaki” (1983)

and are thus treated very carefully, and with the exception of fish and seafood, animals are only of marginal interest in the Trobriand Islanders world view. Nature produces them in abundance. Therefore concepts like “sensation of pain in animals” and “love of animals” are incomprehensible to both Trobriand adults and children. This explains their behavior with respect to playing with animals.

In the gardens and in the bush there is a great variety of butterflies dazzling in phantastic colors. Now and then the children catch butterflies as big as the palm of a hand and use them as living toys. They drill a light liana through the abdomen of the animal. With the free end of the liana in their hands they enjoy the wild flutter of the animal. If the butterfly tries to rest somewhere, the liana is pulled and the animal has to continue its attempts to fly away. After a short period of time the butterfly is absolutely exhausted so that it no longer reacts to the pull of the liana. The child then throws it either into the sea or towards the pigs so that they can eat the insect. In a variant of this game a dragonfly is substituted for the butterfly.

Even birds – especially seagulls – serve the function of “toys” for the children of Tauwema. In Subsection 2.3.2.6 on hunting games we describe how the children catch birds. Here we just want to report that after a bird is caught, the children first tie a piece of string to one of its legs and then break its wings so that the animal cannot escape. The children then tear out the bird’s primal and tail feathers and use them as hair decoration. Then the birds are kicked around, or the kids take the



Photo 22. A big and colorful butterfly-“toy” (1983)

rope with which they have tied the bird and rotate the animal through the air, or they grab the bird by its wings and try to frighten other children with the animal. If the bird stops shrieking and no longer tries frantically to escape, it is thrown into the sea.

The boys and girls meet full-grown dogs with respect, knowing that the attempts of some of their peers to tear the dogs' tails, to kick or to beat them, resulted in nasty bites. However, a litter of four puppies was treated differently. On the one hand the children cuddled and fondled the little dogs, but on the other hand they were also the targets for stones the children threw at them and they

were beaten with sticks or literally kicked around. The puppies' whinings made the children almost die with laughter. This reminded us of Margaret Mead's drastic report that Balinese children were "bouncing puppies as if they were rubber balls" (Mead 1942: 25).

2.3.2.3 *Role-playing games*

These "fantasy" games (Martini 2009: 155) are understood as a form of play in which the children take up aspects of adult life and handle them in a playful way. With these games they anticipate their future life and playfully practise their future roles within Trobriand society (see Whiting & Whiting 1975: 182; Bruner et al. 1976: 259; Schwartzman 1976: 297ff; Garvey 1977: 79ff; Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989: 314; Edwards 2009: 139, 143).

We first look at the girls' role-playing games. We mentioned above that boys and men traditionally wore the *mwebua*, a pubic cover made out of the leaf sheath of a betel palm tree. On special occasions the girls and the women wear their traditional fibre-skirts, the *doba*. To make such a *doba* is quite costly in terms of labor. A woman who possesses many fibre-skirts – most of which she exchanges during ritualized mortuary distribution ceremonies – is highly esteemed not only within the village community, but also and especially within her subclan. Weiner rightly refers to the Trobriand *doba* as "women's wealth" (see Weiner 1976: 92, 1988: 37; see also Senft 1985a, 2011b: 6f.).

The *doba* are made out of banana-leaves. The women take sharpened clams or pieces of metal cans and scrape off the upper cell layer of both sides of the leaf. What remains are the relatively tough and robust leaf veins. With a metal or wooden comb the women then comb these veins into fibres which are dried in the sun. Then the fibres are dyed, tied together and woven into a skirt, which is finally trimmed with pieces of white bleached pandanus leaves. Women rather rarely scrape the banana leaves on their own; usually, a group of women meets before the house of one of the women and scrape their leaves in company, gossiping with each other. Even very young girls who just have learned to walk participate in this scraping activity. They sit at their mother's side and scrape the leaf material which their mothers have put aside as waste, with tools they find in the baskets of their mothers. Older girls prefer to scrape *doba* together with their peers, discussing and commenting on the latest news in the village – like their mothers. At the age of about seven, the girls no longer play around with waste material but start to seriously scrape real banana leaves that will be weaved by their mothers into *doba*. This marks the end of this role-playing game. Whenever one of the girls now makes a wrong move and thus destroys the leaf, her mother will react quite angrily and will not be amused at all (for the importance of *doba* for adult women see Subsection 3.2).



Photo 23. Little Kasina scraping a banana leaf (1983)

Another role-playing game of girls has to do with getting food and cooking it. Every day the women go to their gardens in the bush to fetch yams, taro, sweet potatoes, papaya and other garden products as well as firewood. The food is prepared and cooked either in big aluminium or clay pots standing on three big pieces of coral in front of the houses or in earth-ovens made at the beach of Tauwema. The first role-playing game of two-year old girls consists of their attempts to carry and transport various containers on their heads. Quite often they do this while playing with sand. They fill some sand into coconut shells, then put the shells full of sand on their heads and try to balance this load while walking for some distance.



Photo 24. Pulia's daughter Bansa (at the right) and two other girls playing with sand (1994)

Often they try to stabilize the containers on their heads with their hands, but this is problematic for the little ones whose arms are still rather short. When the girls get older, this game gets more complex. Now the beach is the location of the girls' "gardens" and the place where they search for firewood. They collect little pieces of wood, take a piece of liana and bind them into a bundle. Then they fill empty coconut shells which are lying around with sand or with stones, cover these containers with leaves and put the bundles of wood on top of the shells. Now they take these loads on their heads and march in single file through the village. At a shaded place they put their loads on the ground and start to prepare the "food". Small wooden pieces serve as yam tubers; they are peeled with clams by some girls while other girls of the playgroup go to the sea and fetch some water in coconut shells or in empty tins. When they return with the water, the girls make their fireplace. In a triangle formed by three pieces of coral the girls place the firewood in a stellar configuration and put their "cooking pots" with the yam tubers (represented by stones or pieces of wood) inside on top of the three stones. This action usually marks the end of the game – during the following long cooking time the girls are usually attracted by other activities, forgetting their fireplace and their food.

Role-playing games that stage the actual "meal" usually neglect the getting and the cooking of the food. The game starts with putting a coconut shell full of sand on a fireplace. After a short time of fanning the fire the food is cooked. One



Photo 25. Three young girls making a fire (1992)

of the girls, usually the oldest one, takes two leaves – which are used as pot cloths – and lifts the “hot pot” off from the fire, puts it on the ground, takes a spoon and fills the “food” into other coconut shells which she distributes to her playmates. The girls take a piece of wood, spoon the sand, put it close to their mouths and then dump the food that they pretend to have eaten onto the ground.

If the girls play the earth-oven game, they neglect the preceding activities of fetching the firewood in the bush and collecting the food in the gardens. The game starts with a girl digging with her hands a pit of about 50 cm in diameter in the sand at the beach. Her playmates collect pieces of wood and carefully stack them at the bottom of the pit. Then they put stones on top of the wood. They pretend that they have set the wood on fire – and while the imagined fire heats up the stones, the girls fill sand into green leaves. These parcels of leaves – which are called *yakwesi* – are then put on top of the “heated” stones and then the pit is filled up with sand. During the following cooking time the girls play in the sea. When they come back, they open their earth-oven and take out the leave-parcels with the food inside. After a communal “meal” the girls disperse.

It is striking that the repertoire of the girls’ role-playing games does not include mother and child games that are played with dolls. We never observed a Trobriand girl using, for example, certain fruits or pieces of wood as a doll – as Sbrezny (1976: 123) has reported for !Ko-bushman children. Here, too, Montessori’s observation

is verified that a child only uses toys if s/he does not have something better.⁴⁰ As soon as sucklings in Tauwema can hold their head independently, their siblings and children in their neighborhood hold them in their arms and cradle, fondle and tickle them. The older children carry toddlers and youngsters who have just learned how to walk on their hips or piggyback or in front of their stomachs and walk with them through the village.

Sometimes a group of four to ten year old girls meets at a shady place near the church of Tauwema; all girls are accompanied by their youngest sibling. The girls sit in a circle – mimicking the group of breast-feeding mothers who come together at about 10.30 in the morning – gossip with each other, cradle or louse the sucklings and the toddlers, singing songs for them and drawing figures with their fingers in the sand. Like Balinese girls, these little girls on the Trobriands were playing “with real babies” (Mead 1942: 24). The difference between the role-game “mother and child” on the one hand and the cumbersome obligation to look after one’s youngest brother or sister day after day as a kind of “child nurse” (Mead 1942: 33) on the other can only be perceived after a longer period of observation. Five girls between 7 and 13 years of age were explicitly considered by their mothers as nannies and domestic helpers. They were obliged to carry around their younger siblings every day from dawn to dusk. However, they behaved towards these sucklings and toddlers as friendly and lovingly as their peers who just played with younger children for a while.

Let us now look at the boys’ role-playing games. One of these games the boys play almost every day is paddling a canoe. The three to four year old boys start this game by looking for pieces of wood and tree branches; usually they play together in a small group of up to four boys. In the shallow water close to the beach they stand above their small floating piece of wood, hold the branch like a paddle, dip it into the water at the same time and move their imagined canoe forward with small quick steps.

The older boys are allowed to borrow their fathers’ outrigger canoes for a ride on the reef flat when the high tide comes in and the flat is submerged by the sea. Some men have even carved paddles for their sons; these paddles – smaller and not as heavy as the paddles used by adults – are easier to handle. However, most of these boys usually use the real paddles or long sticks which they find on the beach or in the bush to move the canoes, paddling or punting them. In this role-playing

40. However, we have to note here that Kaluala, a woman in her late 40s, told Barbara that she used a piece of wood as a doll when she was a child. She very much enjoyed playing with this doll in the bush and together with other girls she even made a *seke’ula*-cloak for it (see Subsection 2.2.1).



Photo 26. Kedavakoma, one of Inoma's daughters, with two of her sisters and a friend (1992)

game the boys gain experience in how to handle a canoe which is extremely important for their future lives. Men paddle their canoes over remarkably long distances in the Solomon Sea, a sea which is notorious for its difficult and dangerous currents. The skill of handling a canoe ensures that one can get in contact with people living in other villages on other islands in the vicinity – and with the growing age of the boys this skill becomes more and more important, especially when the young men start to think of dating girls and finally marry one of them.

We can illustrate that these skills of handling a canoe can have existential functions for the boys – in the strict sense of the term – with the example provided by six year old Tolosi and his seven year old friend Towegana. One day these two boys first paddled on the shallow waters over the reef flat. The tide was going out and suddenly the tidal fall sucked their canoe through the reef channel out into the open sea. The currents of the receding tide and the wind drifted the canoe further and further away from the reef flat. Tolosi's mother Tavakaya had observed this incident and she started to wave with her arms and to shout at the boys out at sea. Immediately the beach became crowded with the villagers of Tauwema who vividly and interestingly commented on the boys' efforts to paddle back into the reef channel; they shouted encouragement and cheered for the two young boys. When Tolosi and Towegana finally managed to reach the reef channel and the shallow waters of the reef flat, their responsive audience retired from the scene, laughing cheerfully.



Photo 27. Children playing with a canoe on the reef (1983)



Photo 28. Two young boys pushing a canoe onto the beach (1983)

To make the boys familiar with challenging seas, their fathers, uncles and grandfathers take them with them on canoe trips to neighboring villages on the islands of Kaile'una, Kuiava, Tuma and Kiriwina. The boys are always very proud when they are invited on these trips.



Photo 29. Bia (at the left) and two of his friends playing with an axe and two bushknives (1992)

The bushknife – the *nepa* – is one of the most important and indispensable tools for the men of Tauwema. From a very early age the boys learn and exercise how to handle and use a knife. As soon as they are allowed to borrow their father's *nepa* or their mother's smaller knife, they work on various pieces of wood, following what they have observed adults doing and have learned from them. To split a branch or a plank, they first cut a notch into the upper and lower side of the wooden piece. Then they split the wood with a number of further strikes. Later they can use this technique for chopping off shrubbery and small trees when they slash and burn new gardens and for cutting palm leaves off of coconut palm trees, using these leaves for building a house, for smoking fish, for weaving a basket or a fish-trap, etc. At first we were a bit alarmed seeing little boys handling knives and bushknives that were only marginally smaller than the children themselves, but we hardly ever noticed any injuries the boys of Tauwema sustained when playing around with their parents' knives.



Photo 30. Two young children on the veranda of their house – one is eating a cold yams which is speared on top of a long and sharp knife (1992)

Now and again boys play “working in the garden”. A typically male job during gardening is to loosen the ground between the pieces of coral with the digging stick – the *dema* – and to plant the yam-seedlings there. The boys playfully act out this task by digging holes into the sand on the beach, using small sticks as their *dema*, and by then putting small fallen-off coconuts into these holes, covering them with sand and pressing the sand with their hands around these “seedlings”.

Before the founding of the school in Kaduwaga, the neighboring village of Tauwema, this game was played with great intensity. Pulia (approximately 15 years old) told us the following story.

We were a group of boys. Gayoboda, Tomway and Moyadi, the older boys, were our group leaders, and we younger boys – Kwelava Moromata, Keda'ila and I – we always accompanied them. Already early in the morning we vanished in the bush – to our parents' great annoyance who admonished us to work together with them in the gardens. However, out there in the bush we made our own gardens, planting yams and pineapples and we protected the plants against mice, rats, wallabies and wild pigs with fences. The girls did the same, by the way, but we carefully stayed in hiding from each other. If the girls discovered our gardens, they sneaked into them and used them as their shithouse.

Tobacco – called *kuku* or *tobaki* – is in great demand with Trobriand adults. The *kuku* is carefully crumbled and then rolled in a piece of newspaper into a cigarette. There are only a handful of men and women in Tauwema who do not smoke. Thus it is not astonishing that the children now and then imitate the adults' smoking of these cigarettes. To play this game the boys roll a piece of newspaper – without tobacco, of course – then they approach a fireplace and light their cigarettes. Gesturing wildly, they pretend to inhale the smoke, and some boys do not even forget to imitate the cough the black *kuku* causes when their parents smoke their cigarettes.



Photo 31. A little boy “smoking” (1989)

One of the more modern role-playing games in Tauwema is based on the fact that the children carefully observed the consultation hours of the ethnomedical doctor in our research team who visited Tauwema for two months in 1983. They

were especially impressed by the injections the doctor administered to some of his patients. They imitated this method of treatment by playing the game *ibasi* – he pricks. They took a long thin rod, held it between index- and middle-finger and then chased one of their playmates. Once they caught their victim, they pushed the rod with their thumb through their fingers and pricked the child's arm or its backside.

2.3.2.4 *Construction games*

This subsection presents games that deal with the construction of objects. These games were not as often observed as the games presented in the preceding subsections.

Playing “building a house” seems to be a universal game; it is played by the children of Tauwema, the !Ko-Bushman children, the Inuit and the Bantu who all construct their little houses in ways similar to European children (see Adler 1979; Hagemann 1919; Klepzig 1972; Leacock 1971; Sbrzesny 1976). The simplest version of the “building a house” game in Tauwema just uses a rain cape that is opened and put on the ground like a roof. On the Trobriands a rain shield consists of pandanus leaves that are sewn together into a rectangular mat. This mat has a pleat in the middle so that people can hold it above their head and their back like a roof. Playing the “building a house” game with these rain shields is very popular with little children after a rainy day. The adults put the rain shields on the village square to dry them in the sun – and now the children only need to arrange them into a “village”. When this is done, the children crawl under such a rain shield each and gossip with each other – from house to house, so to speak.

More complex houses are constructed with the so-called “laplaps”, the loin cloths of the children's fathers and with sleeping mats that are spread over the canoes at the beach to air them. The children stretch the loin cloths over the protruding beams of the big yam-houses in such a way that the space between between the ground and bottom of the yam-house which serves to ventilate the stored yam tubers, is turned into a closed space for the children. In a similar way children put the sleeping mats on the outrigger platforms of the canoes at the beach. Then the rectangular openings between the hull of the canoe and the outrigger at both ends of the canoe are covered with the loin cloths – and the “house” is built.

Body decoration plays an important role in the everyday life of both men and women. Even if people leave the village to work in the gardens, they always find the time to put a hibiscus flower into their hair or to thread a wreath of fragrant flowers and wear it on their heads. Children also like to decorate their bodies very much – and it is a daily game to search for blossoms which the children either put into their hair or string on a small liana to make a nice wreath to put on their head. To express special affection, adults and children give their flower decoration away

to friends or to other people for whom they feel sympathy. Necklaces of all kinds are also very popular. The children use seeds of various plants as well as small shells to make necklaces. If they are in the possession of the highly treasured small colored glass beads, they can thread them into necklaces with an amazing variety of patterns and forms.

2.3.2.5 *Fighting and competition games*

Fighting and competition games are characterized by the fact that the children compete with each other to test and compare their strength and their skills – both as individuals and in groups – with the explicit aim to emerge victorious from such a contest (see Edwards 2009: 133). Although the adult Trobriand society is extremely competitive, we could not observe any dominance of fighting and competition games that were played by children – neither with respect to their play frequency nor with respect to their specific forms and varieties. We could differentiate 8 of these fighting and competition games – three of these games can be ascribed to the influence of the Australian colonial period; these three games are playing with marbles, the hopscotch game and football (soccer). The five fighting and competition games that also played a role in the life of children who grew up on the Trobriands before the colonial times are race competitions, playing hide and seek, playing tag, grappling with someone and engaging in ritualized fights with children groups of other village sectors. We will first have a look at these traditional forms of fighting and competition games.

Racing competitions are performed on the village square – it offers the only level ground for miles around. The two big yams-houses opposing each other on the village square mark the starting and finishing lines. Participants in this game were always between three and seven years of age. There are two variants of the game. In one variant pairs of children of the same age race against each other and then the winners of each pair race against each other. In the other variant 5 or 6 children race against each other repeating their contest *ad libitum*, always with the same constellation of children. Usually one child is sitting on one of the protruding beams of a big yams-house and gives the starting command: he or she counts – in English – to three and then the race starts.

Very often the children played tag after one child had teased another one or when one of the children had refused to give something to another child or when it had taken something away from another playmate. These situations also defined who was the chaser and who the chased child. The reason for playing this unorganized game was obviously soon forgotten; most of the time the players laughed and giggled a lot. Usually the game was played in the village square around the big yams-houses – just by two or three children. The fact that in the village square the chaser can change his/her direction without being noticed by the chased gave the

game a special thrill, because it could happen that the children suddenly found themselves standing opposite each other – and this usually resulted in frightened cries of the child chased. The game gets more difficult for the chaser if it is played around a house, because all houses in Tauwema are built on stilts for better ventilation and for at least some protection against insects. Therefore the children can look under the houses to find out where the chaser is.

One organized game of tag with strict rules (see Martini 2009: 156) is played on the village square by the 6 to 10 year old children. This game is called *kabikona kai* – “we touch wood”. It is played by two groups of children – Group A and Group B – who divide the village square between the two dominant big yams-houses (see Map 4, *liku* D and F) into two fields – Field A and Field B (see Figure 4). The borderline between these two fields is marked by two smaller yams-houses (*bwema*) which oppose each other at a distance similar to that of the two *liku*.

First, members of Group A have to transgress the borderline between the two groups and enter the terrain of their opponents without getting caught by one of the members of Group B. If a child is caught on the terrain of Group B it is “dead”. The number of the “dead” children of Group A is marked with a piece of charcoal on the beams of the *liku* in the territory of Group B. However, children can also save themselves, if they reach a *bwema* before the chasers and touch the beam of this *bwema*. In the next round of the game the members of Group B try their luck entering the territory of Group A. Now the members of Group A are the chasers of the children of Group B. The team that has the greatest number of “kills” is the winner.

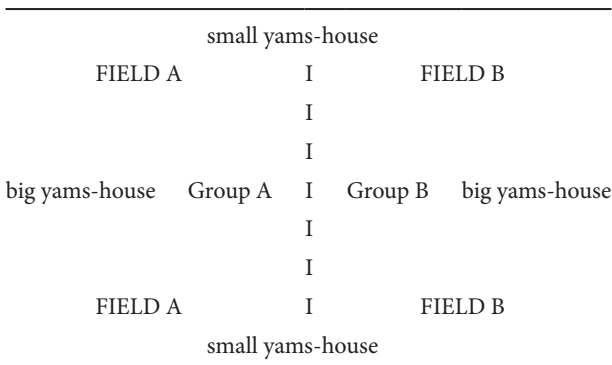


Figure 4. Fields for playing the *kabikona kai* game with their landmarks and borderline (I)

When the children grapple with each other they not only pit their strength against each other – this game also, and probably first and foremost, serves the function to test out and define the individual’s position within the children’s group and

within the group of one's siblings. When two children playfully grapple with each other, there is much giggling and laughing. With this behavior they obviously signal to each other that they are not engaged in a serious fight. Owen Aldis (1975: 178) refers to this form of play with the term "playful wrestling". The opponents try to floor each other – using all kinds of tricks and gimmicks. Usually the game ends when both children have rolled and tumbled over and under each other for some time.

We observed only one instance when such a "playful wrestling" developed into a fight with strong punches and bitter tears; but this brawl followed a ritualized fight between two groups of children at a moment when feelings were already running high. Aldis (1975: 178) refers to this way of fighting as "wrestling for a superior position".

Besides these two forms of brawling, Aldis (1975: 192) differentiates another form which he calls "piling on". He observed this form of brawling among American school children who were watching two children wrestling playfully on the ground. These bystanders suddenly let themselves fall down on the two wrestling children – but without any intention whatsoever to hurt anybody – and this resulted in a pile of children lying on the ground. Barbara could observe games similar to this in Tauwema. Seven boys rolled over the village square, playfully wrestling with each other. Tomolega freed himself from the pile of bodies and ran to one of the yams-houses. The other 6 boys ran after him with much shouting and laughter and pressed him into one of the corners of the yams-house as if they wanted to crush him there. That was a "piling-on" on the vertical instead of on the horizontal axis, so to speak.

As already pointed out in Subsection 2.3.1 above, the children generally play quite peacefully with each other. However, from time to time it seems to be necessary for the children to openly manifest their affiliation to their specific village sector in organized ritualized fights (see Martini 2009: 155f.). These fighting games seem to be linked to seasonal highly competitive forms of adult behavior: the fighting games are played between the beginning of June and mid-October – the beginning and ending of the harvest-period with its many occasions of public competitions of the villagers. In these public competitions every male adult within the village community strives for status and recognition by being acknowledged to be a good gardener. The site for the children's ritualized fights seems to have always been the beach behind the Tuyabwau, the freshwater well at the beach in the west of Tauwema where men bathe in the afternoon, and behind the path that leads from this beach to the Bugei, the fresh water grotto in the bush in the southwest of Tauwema (see Map 5; also Senft 2008a). It is here where the children find their 'weapons', or rather the ammunition for their fights – namely the ball-like seed heads of a plant called *morabau*, the flowers of

which are also used for body decoration. The seed heads of this plant are called *ginopu*. At this site the children are also well protected from too inquisitive looks of adults. For generations the children of Tauwema have been carrying out their village sector group fights at this place – as Inadila, a woman of approximately 40 years of age, and Ibova, a woman in her mid-60s told us, remembering their own childhood. We observed the first ritualized fight there one day early in the morning when we were on our way to the *Bugei* grotto to have a bath there. The boys of the sectors *Va Seda* and *Oluvala* fought against the boys of the sector *Va Yayu*. There were two lines of battle with 6 fighters on one side and 7 fighters on the other. All boys were between the age of four and seven. Four older boys between the age of 8 and 9 fulfilled the official function of arbitrators. They gave the signal for commencing the battle, as soon as both parties had collected enough “ammunition” as well as the signal to cease fighting by raising their hands when one party was forced to retreat in the “hail of bullets” their opponents were throwing at them. This was followed by a short pause during which the boys collected new or used *ginopu*. While they collected their ammunition for the next round of fighting, the boys talked with each other in a quite relaxed and friendly way and compared the quality of their *ginopu*-missiles. Then the arbitrators gave the signal to commence battle again. During these rounds of fighting the *ginopu* hit the boys at various parts of their bodies; these hits were rather painful and often even resulted in swellings. We observed a number of these fights between groups of boys from different village sectors – especially in July and August. Barbara only once observed such a ritualized fight between boys and girls on the way between the church and the sea. The children had thrown their *ginopu*-missiles at each other for a while when the girls who were closer to the village started to retreat. As soon as the boys realized their victory, Tosulebu climbed on the trunk of a felled tree and started to sing mocking songs which he made up on the spot, like, for example the following ones:

Igiobibila gala eyowai!

Igiobibila does not fight (any more)!

Vesali sena navalam!

Vesali is such a cry-baby!

The girls reacted to these verses by throwing sticks which they found on the ground at Tosulebu. Now the boys commenced the fight again and soon all the girls, painfully hit by the *ginopu*, left the arena – the whole lot of them crying.

As soon as adults become aware of such ongoing ritualized fights, they intervene and stop the fighting. Nevertheless all adults, including the parents of the children involved, point out that this is just a game the children play, a kind of exercise for throwing things at moving targets.

Observing these fights required a high degree of discretion – we could either observe the battles from a greater distance, unnoticed by the children, or at a closer distance, but just for a short while to avoid stimulating the children to perform feats in front of an audience.



Photo 32. The children fight at the beach near the path to the Bugei (1983)

The hide and seek games were always played in such a way that the children could startle a playmate or could experience the pleasing titillation of being spotted. Aldis (1975: 261ff) calls this playing habit “play fear enforcement”. One of the earliest forms of this way of playing hide and seek can already be observed with toddlers. If someone hides his/her face behind an object and then suddenly drops the

object and thus appears in front of a child again, the toddler always acclaims this with squeaking laughter. Children who are a bit older play this game actively by hiding their face behind a piece of cloth or behind their hands.

A hide and seek game which was very popular with three to five year old children in Tauwema was played in the following way: two children hid themselves under a big piece of cloth – with the help of a third child. This child then asked other children who were passing by whether they could guess who was hiding under the cloth. Older boys loved to hide in the big canoes on the beach; as soon as other children came along, they stormed out of their hiding place yelling wildly to frighten them.

Now we describe the three fighting and competition games which can be ascribed to the influence of the Australian colonial period in Papua New Guinea. The children in Tauwema refer to the hopscotch game with the noun *kwesigisagina* – which can be glossed as “thing to hop”. This game is played by both boys and girls. It is popular not only with children between the age of four and seven but also with older girls between the age of 8 and 13 years. The preferred season for playing hopscotch seems to be January and February. We could only once observe the game being played at another time, namely in early June. However, this was just a single instance of play and not an almost pervasive game which was *en vogue* with almost every child in the first two months of the year. Usually three children play hopscotch. First the children draw the playing field with one of their feet into the sand. The field consists of six sectors. Figure 5 illustrates the schema of the field for playing the various rounds of the *kwesigisagina* game:

- 4 -	- 3 -
- 5 -	- 2 -
- 6 -	- 1 -
Out	Start

Figure 5. Schema of the field for playing hopscotch

The game is played in seven rounds:

1st round:

The child playing the game throws a stone in sector 1. Then the child hops into sector 1, kicks the stone into sector 2, then hops into sector 2 and kicks the stone into sector 3 – the child continues playing the game in this way until the stone and the child have reached sector 6. Then the child kicks the stone out of the field.

1st round – variant:

In a variant of this first round the child throws the stone into sector 2; then the child hops into sector 1, then into sector 2 and then continues the game as described above. This variant continues with the child starting this variant of

the game again, this time throwing the stone in sector 3, then in sector 4, 5, and 6 – ending this first round of the game just by kicking out the stone after having hopped into all the sectors of the field.

2nd round:

The playing child puts the stone on his/her foot and then hops with the stone on the foot through all 6 sectors of the field. Leaving the last sector the child kicks the stone up into the air so that it can catch the stone with his/her hands.

3rd round:

The playing child puts the stone on his/her head, hops through the six sectors of the field and after having left the last sector bends his/her head so that the stone falls into his/her extended hand.

4th round:

The playing child puts the stone on the back of his/her hand, hops through the six sectors of the field and after having left the last sector the child throws the stone up into the air and catches it with his/her hands.

5th round:

This time the game is played without the stone. The playing child looks up into the air and tries to hop into all six sectors of the field without touching the lines of the field.

6th round:

This round is played like the 5th round, but with closed eyes.

7th round:

The playing child is standing at the starting point with his/her back to the field. The child then throws the stone into the field – trying to not hit any of the lines with it. If the stone hits one of the lines of the field, the child has two more tries. The sector in which the stone is thrown is marked with a cross. Here the child can touch the ground with both feet.

A child who touches the lines of the field has lost the game and bows out of the game. This holds for all seven rounds. The child then has to wait until his/her playmates also make such a mistake. Then the child is allowed to continue playing the game, repeating the round in which s/he had touched the field line.

Playing with marbles was one of the most popular games in Tauwema. Especially from the 8th of September to the 28th of October 1983 it was played on the village square by boys and girls who were five years and older every day from morning to evening. The game is played in a simple and in a more complex, strictly rule-governed variant.⁴¹

41. We agree with Bruner et al. (1976: 259) who point out that “Jean Piaget[’s] ... description of the rules of the game of marbles may be the finest piece of developmental anthropology ever written. See Piaget (1976); see also Morton (1996: 150).



Photo 33. Senubesa playing a hopping game (1983)

The simple version of the game is always played by two children only. They are standing opposite each other and flip a glass marble with their thumb from the curve of their bent index finger towards an imagined middle line on the ground between them. The child who started the game then can try to hit his/her playmate's marble with his/her marble from the place where it came to its halt after the player's first flip. If the child misses the marble, it is his/her playmate's time to try hitting his opponents marble with his/her one. The winner starts the next round of the game.

The more complex version of playing with marbles starts with three players preparing a field for their game. With one of their feet they draw two lines at a distance of about 2,50 m into the sand of the village square. In the middle

between these two lines they then draw a circle with a diameter of about 10 cm; each of the three players puts a number of marbles as his/her stake into this circle. These marbles are small, round, hard and shining black fruits called *silevoakab-waku*, which can be found in the bush in early September. To determine who will start the game, the children line up at one of the field lines and flip a glass marble towards the opposite line. The child whose marble is closest to this line starts playing the game. Again the children line up at one of the field lines and then aim – in the determined order of players – with a glass marble at the staked marbles in the circle. The marbles that get expelled instantly from this circle become the property of the successful player. The glass marbles remain where they have come to a halt at the ground. From there the players continue their game, flipping the glass marble towards the staked marbles that have remained in the circle. If a glass marble comes to a halt within this circle, its owner has won all the staked marbles. However, usually the children flip the glass marbles towards the staked marbles into the circle until the last black marble is expelled from it.

The children play this game not only as active players with great enthusiasm, they also observe others playing the game with the same exaltation, usually sitting on the ground at the sidelines of a playing field. It is remarkable that this game is always played with utmost concentration.

The rules of playing football (soccer) in Tauwema are the same as everywhere else in the world – therefore we need not describe them here. We only want to note that referee decisions based on the “FIFA Law 11 – Offside” are as hotly debated on the Trobriands as everywhere else in the world, too.⁴² There were two leather soccer balls in Tauwema and boys of every age played football with much zeal all over the year. Younger teams play the game on the village square, using the big yams-houses as their goals. The older boys between 7 and 12 years of age who have more shooting power play football at the site in front of the church of Tauwema, and the adolescents and young men of Tauwema play at the playing field with proper goals near the bush in the southeast of the village.

2.3.2.6 *Hunting games*

We now describe games where children hunt animals with different kinds of equipment. With the exception of fishing, these hunting games are not imitation games, because hunting practically never played any role whatsoever in the life of adult Trobriand Islanders.

42. See: <http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afdeveloping/refereeing/law_11_offside_en_47383.pdf>



Photo 34. Children playing with marbles (1983)

Boys and girls play catching the larvae of wasps in February and March with great eagerness. At this time there are bunches of wasp larvae inside the crowns of young coconut palm trees that grow in and near the village. With long sticks the children carefully hit at the axils of the palm trees so that the larvae fall down onto the ground. They are quickly collected and thrown into a container that is filled with water. When the booty is big enough the children eat the fidgeting larvae with great appetite. Adults do not seem to like this ‘delicacy’ too much, though.

Later in the year – in August – the children play for a short time bow and arrow games. Only boys between 5 and 12 years of age make and play with these “weapons”. They take flexible and elastic branches of trees to make 30 to 40 cm

long bows. Pieces of a liana fibre or plastic cords from their fathers' fish lines serve as their bowstrings. Thin straight branches from trees with hard wood are barked and used as arrows. The boys notch one end of the branch so that it fits well onto the bowstring and sharpen the other end. With these bows and arrows the boys go insect hunting. Preferred targets are colorful butterflies in the vicinity of the village which are as big as the palm of a hand.



Photo 35. Tomdoya (in the middle) and his friends with bows and arrows (1983)

Another rather short-lived hunting game is played with a blowpipe. The weapon is made out of a hollow leave stipe of a papaya tree. This hollow leave stipe also serves a few men in Tauwema as a flute – the so-called *roroni*. Making the “ammunition”

for the blowpipe requires some effort. A bundle of dyed banana leaf bundles are tied around the thick end of the spikes of lime trees. These missiles are inserted into the blowpipes and expelled from the pipe by the boys with a strong blow. Again, this hunting game is only played by boys. Here, too, the preferred prey is big butterflies.

Throughout the year boys and girls between the age of 7 and 14 years love to fish at the reef edge. They not only need a fish line made of plastic which is rolled onto a piece of wood and a fishhook, which they fasten at the end of the line, but also good and sufficient bait. The children collect a number of shells at the beach which are populated by hermit crabs and put them into coconut shells. Then they destroy the shells with pieces of coral or big shells, take the crabs out of the shells and kill them with a quick shirk at their head and abdomen. Then they put their bait into another coconut shell. The girls transport their shells with the bait on their head, and the boys often ask younger siblings to act as their bait carrier to make sure that they have both hands free for handling and controlling the fish line. Most children fish at the reef edge near the reef channel – the fish-grounds seem to be quite good there. The children put the bait on the fishhook and then throw their line out into the sea. Carefully and slowly they roll up the line and quite often they catch smaller reef fish in this way. The bait is either collected in a small pot which is connected with the fisherman or fisherwoman by a cord, or the children thread their catch on a small string which is put through the gills and the mouth of the fish. When they have caught a number of fish like that, the children go back to their mothers' fireplaces, roast their fishes on the hot stones and eat them between meals. Now and then the children's catch adds to the meal of the whole family. Fishing at the reef edge is an exclusive children's matter. The adults' fishing expeditions are – quite decidedly – an exclusive men's matter; note that the men fish in a completely different way than the children, with sometimes quite sophisticated methods.

The reef is also the place for hunting seagulls. The hunters are usually 8 to 10 year old boys and their prey is first used as a kind of toy for their younger siblings and then as the supplier of feathered headdresses for the village youth. Hunting seagulls is a seasonal matter which depends on the early onset of the high tide and the arrival of huge swarms of sardines which attract the seagulls in the first place to the vicinity of villages. The seagull hunt lasts for the first three weeks of August. For this hunting game the children have to build a trap. This is done in the following way: Below water the children put four sharpened wooden sticks that form a small rectangle into the sandy parts of the reef flat. Then they put a noose made out of a fishline or out of natural fibres around these sticks; at the free end of the noose the children tie a piece of coral. Then they put the bait – a pierced sardine – into the middle of the rectangular construction. A seagull that tries to catch this

bait bounces with its head under water. When it moves up again the noose wraps and tightens around its neck. The weight of piece of coral prevents the bird from flying away – and the boys can now catch their prey.⁴³

2.3.3 Two basic functions of the games

On the basis of this inventory of games the children of Tauwema play and in agreement with Whiting and Whiting (1975: 48) who point out that “the child’s dominant activity [is] play”, we will discuss the various functions of these games for both the individual child and for the children within the playgroups. We differentiate the following three main functions of games:

- testing and developing motor skills and physical abilities;
- getting acquainted and familiar with various materials; and
- preparing children for their future roles in their social world.

The first two functions are rather basic and will be briefly discussed in this subsection. Given the importance and the complexity of the third function of play – preparing children for their future roles in their social world – we have decided to treat this topic in a more complex subsection of its own, i.e., in Subsection 2.3.4. The following subsections will support Donald Baker’s (1978: 4f.) claim that

[t]wo elements, spontaneity and structure, are evident in all play activities. We play as we *experiment* and *ritualize*, improvising when we meet new environmental experiences and establishing behavior patterns from the responses we make to them. In play, we become persons, as the numerous personae, masks or roles we adopt in different social contexts are fused into that intangible something called a ‘personality’. In play we discover how to live in a particular society and on what terms (with what conventions, morals and mores) society will accept us.

2.3.3.1 *Testing and developing motor skills and physical abilities*

How children test, develop and refine their own motor skills and physical abilities becomes obvious when they play with water and in the sea. Younger children up to the age of three years explore the element water first with a variety of games that involve filling water in a container and pouring it out again. They bail water with coconut shells, pour the water from there into other containers, over their bodies, over stones or just on the ground. In this way they practice and train their

43. We only observed boys playing this hunting game. However, there is a fairy tale in which girls play this game, too (see Senft 2015a: 80ff).

handling of vessels and their accuracy in pouring liquids over from one vessel into another.

At the age of four years the children play with the surf. They kick the waves and let the waves roll them up the beach. In this way they experience the power of the element and learn at the same time not only to assess their own strength but also to make use of the force of the sea by moving deftly and dexterously within the water.

Soon after, at the age between 4½ to 5 years, the children learn how to swim and dive – and thus master moving adequately within the sea. And with about seven years of age the children have learned to coordinate movements of their hands and their feet in such a way that they can surf with their *ketataba* boards.

The development of the children's physical and mental skills is also easy to observe when they play with balls. The children exercise and acquire specific abilities which are necessary for playing these games at different developmental levels. Toddlers and young children simply roll their ball on the ground; three to five year old boys start playing football (soccer) and at the age of seven years girls can juggle with balls.

Quickness, nimbleness and persistence is practiced in races and playing tag. Smartness and aiming accuracy are trained for example by playing marbles and during hunting games with the blowpipe and with bow and arrow. And balancing is exercised on fallen trees, by walking on stilts and playing hopscotch.

We would like to emphasize explicitly that the children acquire all these physical abilities and motor skills just by playing games. The games that exercise and develop their body control go hand in hand with experiences that are full of relish for the children. These abilities and skills are not deliberately trained as being essential for the individual's survival but playfully acquired, tested out, and refined.

2.3.3.2 *Getting acquainted and becoming familiar with various objects and materials*

To get acquainted and become familiar with various materials and experimenting with them to learn how to adequately handle them plays an important role in the games of the younger children. The experience they gain in playing these games provides an important basis for their interaction with and their relationship to their environment in their later years.

The games the children play with sand provide illustrative examples for these experiences with materials. The children dig holes into the sand, they pile it up making sand hills, towers and castles, they draw pictures into the sand – if it is wet enough, they 'crumb' their wet bodies with sand, they throw sand at opponents, they slide on sand sitting on a sheath-sleigh, they fill sand into containers

and empty them again, and they pretend that sand is food which they eat with coconut spoons.

Water also offers the children a multitude of possibilities to experience this element. They learn to differentiate sweet water – *sopi* – from salt water – *yona* –, experiencing their different taste; they learn that water can cool down their bodies if they stay too long in the sea, that it carries swimmers, surfers and canoes, that it can destroy sand castles, that it can be used to splash playmates, that water is used to wash oneself and one's clothes, and so on and so forth...

When they play throwing games, the children make physical experiences with light and heavy objects. When they roll hoops, spin the top, or play the *turaki*-game they learn that an object must be round to revolve evenly. And when they play the game with the flower balloon they realize that air is not a non-entity, but something that can even be “locked up” in a container.

The threading of beads and flowers for making necklaces and wreaths, the construction of ‘houses’ and playing various *ninikula* string-figures are games which also convey experience with different materials.

The two functions of play that we have discussed so far – the testing and developing of motor skills and physical abilities and becoming familiar with objects and materials – are important for the life of every child: they enable the child to meet his/her environment with its manifold phenomena without fear and reservation and to act in this environment in a way that is adequate with respect to its specific conditions.⁴⁴

2.3.4 The children's socialization into the Trobriand community

“Play among humans inevitably reflects the culture in which it occurs” (Bruner et al. 1976: 21). In the previous sections we have demonstrated that in play children take over specific roles which they gradually internalize and thus secure the continuity of norms that are accessible by appearance alone. In the various playgroups and in their children's group the children also learn that they have to obey and follow certain norms which as implicit social rules govern social life and interaction within their community. Norms which affect the understanding of gender roles and sex differences or the social affiliation to a specific village sector are directly experienced by children when they are playing together. However, norms that define the *weltanschauung* of an ethnical group – like the one which is valid for the Trobriand Islanders – and that regulate which forms of behavior are

44. That the Trobriand children also acquire knowledge about basic physics concepts by playing their games is nicely illustrated in Bödeker (2006).

acceptable and which are unacceptable and taboo within this community can only be learned in the course of the children's guided socialization into the adult society and by their experiencing of reactions to their behavior not only by their peers within their children's groups but also by their parents and other adults within their village community. Thus, although the children's groups certainly play the most important role in the everyday socialization of children after the age of two, the parents who – with their way of living – provide the example for their children of how to live their lives as socially estimated and acknowledged Trobriand adults are also indispensable in the socialization process of their children.

In this subsection we first briefly zoom in once more on the social roles which are conveyed and transmitted to the children in the various forms of gender and sex-specific role-play which we described in Subsection 2.3.4.1 above. Then we describe how norms that regulate societal and communal life on the Trobriand Islands are passed on and how they are controlled. Here we first look at how a child is socialized with respect to its emotional behavior and then present how it learns to deal with individual material possessions and with forms of behavior that control and regulate acts of requesting, giving and taking within the Trobriand society. Although we have just pointed out that the parents also play an important role in the socialization of their children which must not be ignored, we will finish this subsection with some summarizing remarks on the overall importance of the children's "small republic" (Malinowski 1929: 45) for their socialization.

2.3.4.1 *Gender and sex-specific role-play*

In our presentation and discussion of role-playing games we have shown that these games come with a clear assignment of roles that are played by boys on the one hand and by girls on the other. In their role-playing games girls take over the activities of adult Trobriand women: they play scraping *doba*-leaves for making fibre-skirts, they re-enact the gathering and the preparation of food, they mother their young siblings or the sucklings and toddlers of relatives or neighbors.

In many of their games boys imitate the activities reserved for men in the adult Trobriand society, such as handling bush-knives, paddling canoes, doing specific kinds of work in the gardens and playing the guitar or dancing the bachelors' dances. Note that neither the role-games played by girls nor the ones played by boys are initiated by adults.⁴⁵

45. See also Meyer Fortes (1976: 479ff) who reports on similar gender-specific games of the Tale (or Talensi) of Ghana; see also Sbrzesny (1976: 183ff); Whiting et al. (1975: 181ff).



Photo 36. Three boys singing and dancing at the beach – at the left is Toyogima, at the right Mokalayoyu (1983)

Obviously the Trobriand Islanders' division of roles and work which is mirrored in the children's play has proven reasonable and therefore it is not questioned at all – not least because of the fact that in this matrilineal society women, their work and their social status are respected in exactly the same way as men.

A role-playing game which documents the affiliation of a children's group to a village sector is the traditional ritualized fight with the *ginopu* seed heads. This game not only strengthens the bond between the children of a village sector – which is important in adult life because village sector membership plays a role in communal work in the garden, in fishing expeditions and in all distribution ceremonies, but it is also a preliminary practice which tests out the group solidarity

in and during a fight – this aspect gets important when the children have grown up. Bachelors of Tauwema, for example – like bachelors living in any other village on the Trobriand Islands – use to fight with their peers from the neighboring villages at the borders of their gardens now and then, without exception because of amorous adventures. In both cases it is good to know that – from childhood onwards – the young men can rely on each other.

The Trobriand Islanders – like any other ethnical group – have been developing their culture-specific construction of their social reality (see Berger & Luckmann 1966) which regulates their lives. And this construction encompasses much more than just gender roles. In the following subsections we will discuss how children learn and internalize some of the highly important aspects of sociality which have been governing the Trobrianders' life for generations and which still secure the social cohesion of their communities.

2.3.4.2 *Tradition and control of norms with respect to the expression of emotions*

When a child is especially fond of another child, it can express its affection in a number of ways. We often observed that a child shared special goodies with one of its siblings or with good friends, offering a banana, or a piece of coconut or papaya or the like with the prompt: *Kukwam!* – “Eat!” Human ethologists like Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt have pointed out that offering and sharing food is a friendly gesture in contact situations; it has a bonding function helping to establish and continue good relationships with others (see Senft 2014: 97).

Another sign of sympathy and friendship is presenting another child with an especially beautiful and fragrant blossom or a wreath of flowers. This present is not accompanied by verbose explanations or ceremonial gestures, either. The child who makes the present offers his/her friend the wreath of flowers in his extended hand, just stating: *M bweta!* – “Your wreath of flowers!”

Familiarity with someone can also be expressed in quite a different way – namely by directly requesting something from a friend. In such a case the requester just states *Agu bweta!* – “My wreath of flowers!” – pointing at the decoration which is worn by the other child. To refute this request would be severely impolite and could result in the end of the mutual friendship.

Other forms of expressing sympathy like embracing, kissing or caressing someone can only be observed in interactions of older children with sucklings; in the contact situation with peers within the playgroups these forms of friendly behavior do not occur. Possibilities for older children to get in bodily contact with each other can arise during body care situations, for example during mutual lousing, or during rubbing ones hair or ones skin with dessicated coconut, the fat of which helps preventing the skin to dry out in the sun and saltwater, or during bathing when especially the girls wash each other's backs.



Photo 37. A little girl lousing her sister, sitting on the veranda of a small yamhouse – *bwema* (1983)

With adolescents we observed yet another form of expressing friendship, but only in same-sex groups. In moonlit nights groups of boys or groups of girls promenade giggling through the village, holding hands or wrapping their arms around each other's shoulders.

This norm to express affection to someone else mainly with gifts and – rather rarely though – with severely restricted bodily contacts – which is the valid norm on the Trobriand Islands – is learned by the children within their children's group. The older children pass on this norm to the younger ones just by their behavior. The behavior of adults with respect to the exchange of tender caresses in public is

certainly of high importance for this early acquired reluctance in children to have bodily contacts with each other.

In public life the interaction between husband and wife on the Trobriands is rather controlled as well. Loving married couples do not exchange any signs of tenderness like holding hands, kissing in public, or embracing each other, not even after some time of having been parted from one another. The relationship between a wife and her husband seems to be rather detached and sometimes even looks like avoidance behavior, at least in our eyes (see Senft 1995: 220). Already Malinowski (1929: 95) pointed out that

[t]here is an interesting and, indeed, startling contrast between the free and easy manner which normally obtains between husband and wife, and their rigid propriety in matters of sex, their restraint of any gesture which might suggest the tender relation between them. When they walk, they never take hands or put their arms about each other in the way, called *kaypapa*, which is permitted to lovers and to friends of the same sex ... Ordinarily a married couple walk one behind the other in single file. On public and festival occasions they usually separate, the wife joining a group of other women, the husband going with the men. You will never surprise an exchange of tender looks, loving smiles, or amorous banter between a husband and a wife in the Trobriands.

To quote a terse statement of the case made by one of my informants: “A man who puts his arm round his wife on the *baku* (central place of the village, i.e. in public); a man who lies down beside his wife on this yam-house platform – he is a fool. If we take hold of our wife by the hand – we act as fools...”

The only emotional gesture of tenderness and mutual commitment allowed in public is “lousing each other and eating the catch” which is known as “a tender occupation of lovers” (Malinowski: 1929: 387; see also p. 275). This ‘occupation’ is documented on plate 25 in Malinowski’s 1929 volume; the photograph depicts Orayayse lousing her husband Mitakata, and the caption to this plate runs “She is lousing him, one of the few intimate attentions allowed in public between husband and wife”. Why this exception is granted – and why married people no longer display but also do not especially hide erotic scratches, the so called *kimali*, on their backs which are “so characteristic of native love-making” (Malinowski 1929: 387; also 217, 280f.) is not explained by Malinowski – and we could not get any information about this issue from our consultants, either (see also Senft: 2017a: 68f.).⁴⁶

46. That this cultural rule of proper public behavior between husband and wife is extremely important for the Trobriand Islanders was something we learned while being together in the field in 1983 and in 1989 (see Senft 1995: 220f.). We did not accept this kind of behavior for ourselves. Not only did we walk hand in hand and even kissed and embraced each other in

The Trobriand Islanders' strict norm of emotion control is also in extreme contrast with the many sexual allusions in songs, in ditties that accompany games played both by children and adults, and even in lullabies, and in the rather blunt bawdy and obscene jokes that permeate everyday interactions on the Trobriands (as we have seen in the game-accompanying ditties we have documented in Subsection 2.3.2; see also Baldwin 1971: 98f.; Senft 2010a: 183, 232f., 237–243).

Thus, we can only speculate about why the expression of tender feelings is so severely restricted in this society. The Trobriand society is an extremely public one. The major part of an individual's life takes place in front of the eyes of the village community. The Trobrianders only retreat into their houses when they go to sleep or when they are ill. But even within the houses there is hardly anything that resembles our idea of privacy – all members of a family sleep densely packed in the relatively small houses. If the major part of one's life takes place in public, the community needs to set standards that are compulsory for everybody but not too demanding for the individuals within this community. If the Trobriand Islanders would tolerate married couples to exchange signs of tenderness in public, people could quickly differentiate between good, middle-rate and bad marriages. By banning these signs of tender feelings into the strictly private sphere of a couple, all married couples are respected equally within their social community. This supports the stability and the solidarity of this community. On the basis of this consideration it seems sensible that within the Trobriand Islanders' construction of their social reality an individual has to learn to suppress feelings that are – at least for this community – too spontaneous and therefore possibly destructive.

Summing up we can establish that children learn at a very early age to express their feelings of sympathy and affection for others only in the ways that comply

public, we also swam together in the sea and went together to the fresh water grotto where we had our baths together. Trobriand husbands and their wives just do not do this. All this was quite shocking for the villagers, and they even told us that this was something that violated their feeling of *mwasila* – which can be glossed as “shame”. However, when some of our friends and consultants hinted to us that we should not do this, we told them that the people of the Trobriand Islands have their customs, which we wanted to study together with their language, and that we had our customs, which we did not want to give up at all – just as they would not like to give up their customs. This explanation was accepted. However, whenever we broke their taboos with respect to the Trobrianders' idea of the proper behavior of a married couple, the villagers could hardly suppress a smile or a giggle. Nevertheless, there are situations, we presume, where field researchers may decide to ‘misbehave’ in the eyes of their hosts, if they do not want to sacrifice important features of their own identity and personality. And if field researchers present themselves to their hosts as straightforward people of principle, it can be hoped that the hosts will appreciate the consistency, and thus the predictability, of their behavior – even if it may sometimes violate prevailing local rules.

with the Trobrianders' norms of behavior. We could not observe that the children violated these norms.

The children of Tauwema express feelings of animosity and antipathy with respect to another person usually in forms of aggressive behavior, like beating, biting, kicking, poking or pinching someone. In what follows we will try to answer the questions

- why children behave aggressively in certain situations,
- against whom they direct their aggression, and
- how their social environment reacts to these forms of aggressive behavior.

Between July 27th and November 4th in 1983, Barbara observed 424 situations in which children played games with each other. 67 of these interactions could not be interpreted as bantering or teasing but had to be classified as being aggressive. In most of these cases there were just two children who quarreled with each other. It was rather rare that a third child interfered during this fight. The reasons for this mutual aggressive behavior were

- differences with respect to the immediate access to and use of an object (21x),
- fighting for status and rank within a children's group (19x),
- exaggerated teasing and/or disturbing the play of other children (13x), and
- fighting between siblings because of jealousy (2x).

No obvious reason could be found for 5 instances of aggressive behavior and 7 acts of aggression were initiated by a boy named Mark. We will deal with this boy and his forms of behavior in more detail below, but first we will illustrate the reasons for and the frequency of the other acts of aggression just mentioned.

Discussing the individual games we pointed out that children spontaneously invent some kinds of toys out of various materials which are usually short-lived. The fighting of children for objects in the 21 instances observed were motivated by their instantaneous use but not by claims of their respective possession. Six year-old Keyeba and three-year old Sulumada, for example had such a fight for a spinning top. Keyeba tried to scrounge Sulumada's top because he was too lazy to make one himself and his little brother defended his toy by beating him.

The 19 instances of aggression that were based on fighting for status and rank within a children's group usually started when a younger child poked or beat an older member of the group or tried to cut in line improperly. The older child reacted verbally or with physical punishment to show the youngster his/her limits. Pulula (3 years of age), for example, walked around a group of girls who were playing marbles and then sat down besides 8 year-old Gaboweya, watching the girls' game. Suddenly Pulula shoved Gaboweya aside to have a better view. Thereupon

Gaboweya took a handful of sand and wordlessly threw it at Pulula's head. The young girl ran away screaming the place down.

The 13 fights that originated in exaggerated teasing or in the disturbing of other children's play were usually initiated by older children. Baigaëga (8 years of age) for example was strolling around the village when he met Kenavasia, Ivoaka (both 4 years of age), Tobwenina and Ilaketukwa (both 3 years of age) who had built a tower on the ground with yellow and red plastic discs. Baigaëga looked derisively down on the group, destroyed the tower with his foot and wore off. The four little ones looked after him angrily, collected their discs and went to the house of Kenavasia's parents.

Fights between siblings because of jealousy were only observed twice. Two siblings were sitting near their mother; suddenly the older child pinched and beat its younger sibling because of jealousy. In one of these cases seven year-old Subisubi and 13 months old Mogarai were sitting with their mother on the veranda of their house looking at the pictures of a calendar. Both children pointed to and slapped on the pictures until Subisubi pushed his younger brother with his elbow aside. As quick as a flash Mogarai grabbed Subisubi's arm and bit his older brother. Subisubi reacted by pinching his younger sibling whereupon their mother Bonavana encouraged her youngster exclaiming: *Kuyowai!* – "Fight! Continue fighting!"

The five instances of aggressive behavior with no obvious reason were all initiated by Esaya. We reported on this boy's behavior in Subsection 2.3.1 above, when we discussed outsiders in the children's groups of Tauwema.

The 7 acts of aggression initiated by Mark require a more detailed discussion. Six year-old Mark came to Tauwema in August 1983 together with his mother and his significantly older siblings. Mark's mother was born in Tauwema. She had married a man from the Sepik area in the north of Papua New Guinea and had been living there ever since their marriage. She was visiting her parents and relatives in Tauwema. Mark was born in his parents' village in the Sepik region. He spoke Tok Pisin, the Melanesian Pidgin which is – besides English – an official national language of Papua New Guinea (see Mihalic 1971) – but he did not speak Kilivila, the language of the Trobriand Islanders. Therefore his possibilities to communicate with the other children and the people of Tauwema were severely restricted. A few days after his arrival Mark became the horror of the three to seven year-old children of Tauwema. Wherever he showed up he did not hesitate too long to demonstrate his way of getting contact: he beat boys and girls, kicked at them and pulled their hair. Surprisingly the children of Tauwema tolerated all forms of Mark's aggressive behavior. We will explain this below, but we first want to answer the question against whom the children directed their aggressive acts.

As mentioned above, younger children direct forms of aggression to older children and vice versa. However, in most of the cases of aggression observed

(44 of 67) the aggressor is older than the aggressee. Thus, it is more likely that children act out aggressive behavior when they are confident to be physically superior to their opponent and therefore need not expect too many negative consequences of their behavior from the target of their aggression. Of the 67 cases of observed aggressive forms of the children's behavior, four were targeted at adults. This implies that physical superiority of an opponent need not always inhibit aggression in children. However, here we have to point out that adults do not react at all when children beat, bite or kick them – on the contrary, they often laugh at these aggressive acts by belligerent children.

Given these facts it is interesting to look at how the environment – that is the children attacked on the one hand and the children and the adults observing these acts of aggression on the other – reacts, because these reactions unveil the norms that regulate the handling of aggression within the Trobriand Islanders' social reality. In 20 cases the children who were the targets of aggressive acts started to cry and went home to their parents' house; in most of these cases the attacked children were younger than their aggressors. In 24 cases the attacked children simply tolerated the aggressive acts of the other child; they neither fled from the aggressor nor did they defend themselves. In these cases the attacked children were also younger than the aggressors. And in 23 cases we observed resistance by the child attacked, either verbally or physically. Seven of the children who defended themselves were older than their aggressor, 5 children were of the same age as the child who attacked them and 11 children were younger than their aggressor.

These observations suggest that aggressive behavior directed towards peers or older children often results in resistance, while aggression towards younger children seems to have no consequences whatsoever. However, appearances are deceiving. We already pointed out that usually no third person – neither a child nor an adult observing such forms of aggression – interferes in a fight between peers, but children who attack significantly younger children will face sanctions for their aggressive behavior. One such sanction is that an adult or a child who is older than the aggressor slaps him or her in the face; this may be physically not too painful for the aggressive child, but this sanction is humiliating to the core for the aggressor and usually results in a flood of tears. The other form of sanction for aggressive behavior directed towards significantly younger children can be observed much more often than the physical punishment: This punishment consists of humiliating the aggressor verbally. However, this verbal humiliation is not done in form of a verbose preachment – on the contrary, the punishment just consists of the contemptuously mumbled sentence: *Kugisi avaka kuvagi!* – “Look what you have done!” The child humiliated in this way also always immediately starts to cry as if it was beaten.

During the process of learning to control their aggressive emotions the children often have to severely struggle with themselves. This becomes most obvious

with 6 to 7 year old children who have almost completed this learning process. When they fly into a passion, they often pick up a piece of wood, a stone or a handful of sand, stretch their arm to the back and – exactly at this moment the learned and internalized norm interferes and inhibits the children's urge to throw something at their opponent. Often these children are standing there for seconds with their arm lifted and prepared to throw, staring at their adversary – but after some of these crucial seconds they drop their arm and run away, having won this fight with themselves, according to the valid norm of emotion control.

It is extremely rare to observe spontaneous aggressive behavior in form of brawls with 9 to 16 year old children and adolescents. We take this as the sign that the educational aim to suppress aggressive behavior is reached at a relatively early age.

On the basis of these facts we can explain why the children of Tauwema tolerated Mark's aggression. The boy from the Sepik could not understand this tolerant behavior and remained throughout his visit in Tauwema an outsider whom the village children punished with disdain but not with a proper licking in retaliation of his aggression.

What is the benefit for the Trobriand society when children learn at an early age to suppress aggression? As already mentioned above, it is reasonable to not burden a small village community with problems in the relationships between its individual members. Although the Trobrianders have established with their "council of chiefs" an authority that regulates more or less severe disputes, for example cases of land litigation (see Hutchins 1980), it is sensible if every member of the community learns to restrain him- or herself to prevent the eruption of assaults which could destroy ties between different families and their sophisticated economic networks within this community.

However, there is one form of aggression which is not suppressed on the Trobriand Islands, namely *schadenfreude* which can be acted out without any fear of sanctions. To give just one example: When Weyei, a man in his early 60s, pursuing his grandson at the beach to slap him in the face, stumbled and was rolling in the sand, all spectators of this scene – be it toddler or a venerable old woman – roared with laughter so that good old Weyei had no other choice but to join in their laughter. Some women have developed genuine pantomimic talents to perform such mishaps of others before an audience, making the spectators laugh their heads off. Besides the *schadenfreude*, verbal mocking, teasing, tricking and hoaxing someone are popular and even respected forms of expressing aggressive behavior.⁴⁷

47. Note that the Trobrianders' forms of teasing and mockery are completely different from the forms of teasing and mockery Margaret Mead (1942: 22, 32) reports for the Balinese.

As mentioned above there is jealousy between siblings – usually felt by the older sibling, because the younger child has the privilege to be in close bodily contact with his/her mother, father or other relatives all day long. However, as we have seen, jealousy as a reason for aggressive behavior – expressed by pinching, beating or kicking – is rather rarely observed. One of the reasons for this is that the older siblings, especially the boys, are not at home all day but spend most of their time with their peers in the children's groups. This reduces the reasons for getting jealous to a minimum. The feeling of jealousy violates the norms of the Trobriand society. As we have seen, parents explicitly encourage their youngsters to defend themselves against their siblings' aggressive behavior. Parents also suppress the feeling of jealousy towards younger siblings in girls by delegating many forms of caring for sucklings and other younger siblings to their elder daughters. Thus, the feeling of responsibility for the youngsters suppresses feelings of jealousy. It is of special importance for girls to not display feelings of jealousy, because later in their life as breast-feeding mothers they have to accept that during the period of the post-partum taboo their husbands will have sexual relationships with other women – as discreetly as possible, of course. During this period, the husbands' violation of the generally valid monogamy norm is socially accepted. But young unmarried men are also expected not to show any signs of jealousy, for example when one of their girl-friends has also sexual affairs with other young men (see Senft 2017a: 66ff).

During the first 1½ to 2 years of their lives, children live in constant harmony with their parents, without any frustrations and without being separated from them in any way whatsoever. At this very early stage of their lives, the children acquire a fundamental sense of “basic trust”, the “Urvertrauen” which is – according to Erik Erikson (1950: 247ff) – most important for the psychosocial development of all children. Indeed, this period lays the foundation for a Trobriander's almost unshakeable self-esteem and self-confidence. In addition, early experiences with objects in their environment and the increasing awareness of its own physical abilities contribute to the fact that there are only a few things a child of Tauwema is afraid of. The only animals that send shivers down the children's (and sometimes also the adults') spines are snakes, sharks, barracudas, moray eels and stone fish.

One day Mokivola showed a small dead grass snake to his fellow villagers – both children and adults were shocked, buried their faces in their hands and turned away. In early November 1983 a large python crawled into Mokivola's house; the brave man could kill the snake with his bushknife before it came too close to his youngest daughter who was sleeping in the house. The whole village community gathered at the village ground in front of the church to watch in the light of their kerosene lamps the still twitching body of the snake.

Stone fish live on the reef; their camouflage is excellent and they are difficult to spot. Therefore it can easily happen that people step on them at low tide – and this mishap can be extremely dangerous. These fish have a spike in their dorsal fin which can eject a painful poison; with people feeling poorly this poison can lead to death.

Moray eels also live in the reef in front of Tauwema and parents admonish their children not to poke with their fingers into holes of the reef – a moray may hide there.

Sharks and barracudas are mainly feared by fishermen – the fishing grounds of Buliwada and Tuma are notorious for these dangerous fish who even attack canoes from time to time. These predators can also be found in the sea in front of the village, but they usually remain on the other side of the reef edge, thus the children playing on the reef are quite safe. In the summer of 1983 Vapalaguyau was attacked by a shark while he was fishing; he killed the fish with one aimed thrust with his spear and proudly brought his prey back to the village. However, the Trobrianders do not eat shark; like the meat of wild pig eating shark is taboo for them.

Besides the fear of these animals with which they share the environment in their everyday reality, the Trobrianders are only afraid of supernatural beings and persons with supernatural powers. Among these beings are the *kosi* – malevolent spirits of the dead (see Senft 2011b: 9f.), the *munukwausi* or *yoyova* – the flying witches (see Malinowski 1922: 76, 236ff) and the *bwagau* – the black sorcerers (see Malinowski 1922: 73ff). The Trobrianders believe that they haunt a place usually at night, seeking for possibilities to wreak harm in public.

The *bwagau* are males who can kill people with their black magic; they cause sickness which finally leads to death. In the evening they send out their spies – flying foxes (*magiaveda*) – who study the lifestyle of the sorcerers' victims and then come back to make their reports. A *bwagau* then waits for a favorable opportunity to bewitch his victim. A *bwagau* can use his black magic on children, too.

The conviction to be bewitched plays a central role for the duration of the sickness and the process of convalescence. The 6 year old girls Kwelubituma and Igiobilia, Kadavaya's daughter and granddaughter, came down with a severe bronchitis at the same time. They were feverish for days and lay apathetically in their parents' houses. Igiobibila recovered after a few days, but Kwelupituma lost weight day after day and after a few weeks she was just a shadow of her former self. Her sudden convalescence bordered on the miraculous. Kadavaya explained the reason for the different course of their disease with the influence of the *bwagau*; she had hired a *bwagau* to work against the black magic of the *bwagau* who had caused the sickness of the young children, and the *bwagau* had told her that he had to work harder for Kadavaya's daughter regaining her health. When he was confident

that the girl would recover, the *bwagau* informed Kadavaya who assured her sick daughter that she would soon feel fine again and that she no longer needed to be afraid of the black magic spell that was cast on her.

One day Toybokwatauya returned from the garden early in the afternoon – stricken with fear. Without any explanation he entered his house and did not show up again. We heard from his wife and his father Kilagola, the chief of Tauwema, that Toybokwatauya was convinced that he had become the victim of a *bwagau* and he was sure that he had to die. And indeed, three days later he passed away.⁴⁸

Adults use the supernatural concept of the *kosi* to frighten the children so that they do not dare to roam around the bush far away from their village. Somewhere out there in the bush a *kosi* may lie in wait for foolhardy children to bewitch and even kill them.

The *munukwausi* or *yoyova* can also rob children within a village. One evening at about sunset Asinata and some other women were standing in front of our house together with their babies. Gunter played with Asinata's little daughter Isakapu who was not at all afraid to leave her mother and to be with Gunter. He took the little girl in his arms and then first held her up in the air, and then tossed her in the air and caught her again. All the bystanding mothers witnessing this screamed immediately – Asinata grabbed her baby, scolded Gunter and asked him whether he had not heard anything about the *munukwausi* who become active after sunset and are said to rob or eat the innards of children if they are not protected by their mothers or other adults. They fly invisibly through the air – and if a child is thrown up into the air they take it as a welcomed prey (see Senft 1995: 221f.). In the weeks after this incident we were always relieved to see a healthy and chirpy Isakapu in the arms of her mother.

Another figure which is feared by the children is Namsasela. Two generations ago a woman with this name lived on the Trobriands; she had the ability to cause various forms of sickness and even epidemic plagues; but she could also ward off these plagues and cure sick people. She is said to be immortal and is assumed to live in a fresh water grotto in the vicinity of Tauwema where she does not want to be disturbed. Barbara once took a bath there and soon after she had a feverish infection which lasted for two weeks. Tokobiyim assured her that this was Namsasela's revenge for having bathed at her home. The people of Tauwema try to maintain Namsasela's benevolence by presenting her at every distribution ceremony a plate with yams, betelnuts and sometimes also fish. The plate is put down in the bush – and the next day someone goes there to fetch the then empty plate.

48. These sudden deaths are known in medical circles as “psychogenic deaths”.

Feelings of fear can be openly confessed within the Trobriand society – nobody would even think of deriding a person confessing his fears and anxieties.⁴⁹

There is a lot of laughter in Tauwema – but this is no wonder: The Trobrianders differentiate and metalinguistically name varieties or registers of Kilivila that they use in specific situations with various intentions (see Senft 2010a: 149f.). The default register they use in everyday interactions is called *biga sopa* which can be translated as “the joking language” – but also as “the lying language”. This variety is absolutely characteristic for Trobriand forms of talk. It is based on the fact that Kilivila, like any other natural language, is marked by features that include ‘vagueness’ and ‘ambiguity’. Both these features are used by its speakers as stylistic means to avoid possible distress, confrontation, or too much and – for a Trobriand Islander at least – too aggressive directness of certain speech situations. If hearers signal that they may be insulted by a certain speech act, speakers can always recede from what they have said by labelling it as *sopa*, as a ‘joke’, a ‘jest’, ‘fun’, ‘nonsense’, as ‘something they did not really mean to say’. Thus *sopa* signals the speakers’ “unmarked non-commitment to truth” (Bill Hanks, p.c.). Trobriand etiquette then prescribes that hearers must not be offended at all by those utterances that were explicitly labelled as *sopa*. If they feel offended and display this feeling publicly, then they lose “face” (Goffman 1967).

The Trobriand Islanders employ this variety in everyday conversation, in small talk, in flirtation, in public debates, in admonitory speeches, in songs and stories as a means of rhetoric to avoid possible conflicts and to relax the atmosphere of the speech situation. The *biga sopa* variety also contributes to put forward arguments because it allows speakers to disguise their thoughts verbally and to disagree in a playful way without the danger of too much personal exposure. Moreover, the *biga sopa* variety is used for mocking people. As a means of irony and parody it can be used to criticize certain forms of sociologically deviant behavior, relatively mildly asking for immediate correction.

Finally, the *biga sopa* variety offers the only license for the verbal breaking of taboos and thus for the licensed use of insults and swear words – not only for adults but also for children (see Senft 1985b).

We want to point out here, that the *biga sopa* serves the function of a so-called “safety valve custom” (Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1984: 492 ff; Heymer 1977: 187). This ethological concept needs some explanation: Every society puts some of its realms, domains and spheres under certain specific taboos. However, the stricter the society is in regard to its observance of these taboos, the more these taboos are

49. Contrary to Margaret Mead’s (1942: 47) characterization of the “Balinese character”, the ‘Trobriand character’ is definitely not “based upon fear”.

ignored. But a society can secure its members' observance of certain taboos, especially of taboos that are important for its "social construction of reality" (Berger & Luckmann 1966), by allowing the discussion of its taboos – especially of the sociologically less important ones – as topics of discourse. It may even allow its members to imagine the ignorance of taboos – in a fictitious way, of course. And this is exactly how and why 'safety valve customs' develop. Genres of *biga sopa* – including insults and swear words – are first of all classified as *sopa* – as play, as something fictitious in Trobriand society. The *biga sopa* thus generates a forum where the breaking of taboos is allowed, if it is done verbally! This forum permits a specially marked way of communication about something 'one does not talk about' otherwise.

In sum, the *biga sopa* variety channels emotions, it keeps aggression under control, and it keeps possibilities of contact open. This concept with its tension releasing functions secures harmony in the Trobriand society and contributes to maintaining the Trobriand Islanders' social construction of reality.⁵⁰

Acquiring Kilivila and getting familiar with the concept of the *biga sopa*, the children have to learn to laugh about themselves, even in situations when they feel deeply insulted – because, as pointed out above, the Trobriand norm of verbal interaction requires that hearers of the *biga sopa* must not be offended at all by utterances that were explicitly labelled as *sopa* – otherwise they will be mocked by all and lose face.⁵¹ Like the adults the children cherish *sopa* as a source of amusement. Children at an early age actively practice the use of the *biga sopa* within their children groups. And as just pointed out, the first step in learning how to use *sopa* requires that a child learns to laugh about jokes older children make about her or him. This learning process starts already at the age of three years – as we

50. Similar varieties can also be found in other cultures of Papua New Guinea and probably all over Melanesia and in Australia; see, e.g., Merlan & Rumsey (1991: 88 f.), Parkin (1984), Strathern (1975), and Watson-Gegeo (1986). Eric Venbrux (p.c.) points out that Sansom (1980) describes the same phenomenon for the Aboriginal English of Aboriginal fringe dwellers in Darwin; the expression they use for this variety is "gammon"; the Tiwi in Northern Australia use "gammon" in this way, too. Louise Baird (p.c.) also reports the practice of "tinaak" in Klon, a Papuan language spoken in the Alor Archipelago in southeast Indonesia. "Tinaak" can be translated as "to lie, to trick" – and this language use is also characterized by the fact that speakers knowingly and willingly tell someone something that does not reflect social or physical reality. See also Haiman (1998: 83 f.) and Brown (2002); for more general remarks see also Arndt & Janney (1987: 201).

51. Note that Trobriand *sopa* has nothing in common with the forms and acts of teasing children in Tonga (Morton 1996: 202f, 231ff) and of teasing and hazing younger children on the Marquesas (Martini 2009: 151f., 158, 165ff).

could often observe. Tovaseda and Gioum (both approximately 6 years of age) for example, imitated three year-old Tobwenina's funny style of running. The little boy was sturdily built and his head almost sat on his shoulders. When he raced with the other boys through the village, he shoved his head back towards his neck and paddled through the air with his little arms stretched backwards. The two older boys bubbled over with laughter and then ran through the village like Tobwenina. The young boy first intended to walk away and withdraw feeling hurt, but after the two older boys told him that what they had done was *sopa*, he laughed with them and finally all three of them raced through the village in the 'Tobwenina running style'.

The ability to actively produce jokes and to amuse other children within the peer group develops at about the age of five years. With his seven years of age Towegana had already become a champion of *sopa*; with most serious facial expressions he could, for example, praise the pap which he had made out of small pieces of coral as a delicacy especially suitable for children.

There is another phenomenon which is connected with the experiencing of joy and happiness which we observed with specific games that are played by the children. When we described the throwing games, for example, we pointed out that they are not competitive at all: there are neither verbal nor non-verbal signs of admiration for the boy who threw his stone the farthest nor signs of contempt or disrespect for the one who could not really throw his stone far out. In general, younger children who achieve something remarkable or even extraordinary, experience no positive reinforcement by older members in their group. This behavior secures the social balance within the group and prevents the development of either presumption and conceitedness or envy and malevolence. The even-tempered way to display pride and happiness because of one's accomplishments is an important virtue in the life of an adult Trobriander because this contributes to securing the social balance within the community. However, this balance is periodically strained during highly competitive yams harvests. Usually every other year one of the best gardeners in the village organizes a harvest competition, the so-called *kayasa*. During the *kovesa* ceremony, the results of the *kayasa* are announced. In a highly ritualized way the best gardeners are rewarded by the organizer of the harvest competition. The men who receive their awards – in form of a pig, a cooking pot, heaps of yams and taro, betelnuts, coconuts or sugar cane – act out their emotions and – contrary to their default behavior – loudly boast about their diligence, their indefatigable work in their gardens and their excellent knowledge of their powerful garden-magic. However, during the ritualized *kovesa*, the organizer does not only award the best gardeners. All men in the village are mentioned and named and assessed with respect to their emblems. The worst gardeners are excessively mocked and derided and their laziness and incompetence is denounced publicly

in front of the assembled village community and its guests. However, given the fact that these *kovesa* announcements are clearly framed within the rules of the complex *kayasa* ritual, there are not too many hard feelings with the mocked and the derided gardeners at the end of such a day. As mentioned above (see Subsection 2.3.2, fn 34), the Trobrianders themselves refer to all the *kayasa* ceremonies as *mwasawa* – as games. For an outsider it even seems that the men who were abashed as lazybones can easily get away with it by responding with a quick-witted and funny repartee which makes everybody laugh. Nevertheless, despite the ritualized frame of the *kayasa* and *kovesa* that keeps the public shaming of the lazybones on the *biga sopa* level, the shaming and ridiculing of bad gardeners usually has its desired motivational effects.

Another reason for communal laughter is provided by the *butusi* – the mocking songs which are ritualized as well. The village youth compose catchy melodies and come up with lyrics that caricature someone with a specific vice or virtue. Children join in singing these songs, and sometimes even intoning just the first line of such a mocking song results in roaring laughter.



Photo 38. Tomdoya (second from right) and his friends with ferns in their hair, dancing at the beach with long sticks in their hands (1983)

One of the ways of announcing joy that is reserved for children is a kind of shouting and sheering that comes close to what we call “whooping with glee”. This shouting and sheering is called *katugogova*; it announces that a canoe or a

motor-boat is approaching the beach of Tauwema. Almost all the children have gathered at the beach and signal the adults that visitors are about to arrive. In the same way the children announce the crescent after new moon phases. A much more muted version of this shouting and crying is used by individual children to express their joy and forms of admiration. Seven year old Toyogima, for example, presented Nameruba, a 2½ year old girl, with some flowers and when she had put them in her hair he produced such a muted version of shouting and crying and announced admiringly: *Minana namanabweta!* – “She is beautiful!”

Another way of expressing one’s surprise, joy and happiness is producing the interjection *Agi!* which can be glossed as “Ah, look at this!” or “I don’t believe this”. Especially children produce this expression very often and quite gladly.

Children not only have to learn how to deal with their personal joy all by themselves, they also have to learn how to cope with grief, pain and disappointment all alone. Soon after our arrival in Tauwema we noticed that children often cried heartbreakingly for a relatively long time without taken care of by playmates or adults. And to our great surprise these children completely ignored attempts made by us to comfort them; that is, they could not cope with our ways of consoling. To understand the behavior of these children we have to look at the development of crying in children. Sucklings and toddlers who are breastfed hardly ever cry. If they are with their mother, they are immediately breastfed. Calming words are unnecessary. Fathers react to the crying of their youngest children by taking them into their arms, rocking them and singing a lullaby or another song. The young children who sit on the village ground in the afternoon are comforted by their elder siblings or children who are their relatives when they start to cry. Verbal means are only sparsely used for consoling – the exceptions being *Desi, desi* – “Enough, enough” or the production of the adequate kinship term like, for example *O bwadagu* – “Oh my little brother”. Instead, the older children take the little ones in their arms or put them in their lap and rock and pat them until they stop crying. These attempts to console a child abruptly cease with the weaning of the child. If a weaned child cries, nobody cares: and that’s why we heard children who had just learned to walk properly crying miserably for quite a long time: the reason for their crying and their pain is added up with their frustration of being let alone all by themselves.⁵²

52. Morton (1996: 180ff) reports that Tongans treat crying as a nuisance already in one year old children and sanction it (more or less mildly).

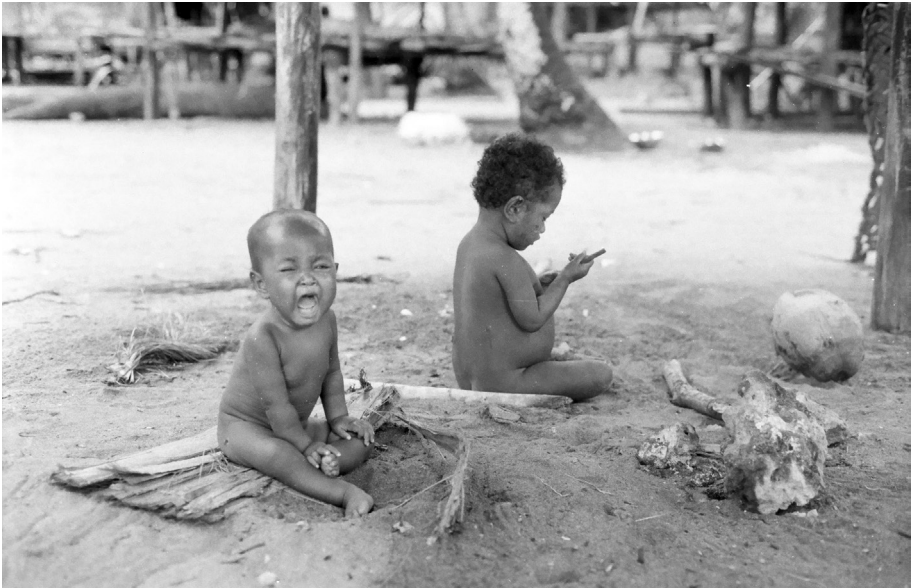


Photo 39. A child is crying while his brother plays with a stick – ignoring the little one (1983)

Why does the crying of these young children no longer function as a comfort appeal to peers and adults? We have pointed out a number of times that self-discipline is important for the Trobriand Islanders' control of emotions because this ability contributes to the social balance within the Trobrianders' community. A child has to acquire this quality – the earlier the better – because the early period of his/her integration into the children's group requests the child's acquisition of this character trait. In crying out their grief, their pain, their outrage and their anger, the children find a temporal outlet for these emotions; but they soon learn that – with the exception of their personal relief – this strategy has no effect whatsoever in their environment and they realize that as soon as their time as a suckling has come to an abrupt involuntary end, crying has lost its function to elicit commiseration and care. Therefore it is no wonder that children at the age of about five years can hardly be observed crying (at least publicly).

When the children become adolescents they have to acquire yet another form of self-discipline with respect to crying – namely a kind of 'crying on demand': Whenever a person in one's village or in a neighboring village dies, the Trobrianders feel obliged to go to the house where the person is lain in state to bewail him or her (see Senft 2017a: 64ff). They refer to this behavior with the expression: *bakalosi bakavalamsi!* – "We will go we will cry!" They walk to where the dead person lies in state – gossiping and joking as usual. However, when

they come close to the place where the corpse is publicly displayed with all his valuables at his or her side, they immediately stop their gossiping and joking and start to literally weep barrels. After a few minutes of loud and uncontrolled crying they retreat to the platforms of small yam-houses in the vicinity, sit down there, dry their tears, start gossiping and joking again and closely observe and comment on newcomers and their public mourning behavior (see Senft 1985a; 2011b: 1ff). This obligation to cry is even stronger in cases where the deceased person is a young man or a young woman. The Trobrianders believe that younger persons cannot die a natural death – they are convinced that in these cases sorcery and black magic has been involved (see Senft 1985a: 490; Malinowski 1929: 387; see also Weiner 1976). The communal crying – displayed in very intensive expressive patterns (see Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1979: 14ff) – has a number of important functions for the Trobrianders' society (see Senft 2011b: 7f.): Trobrianders who cry for a dead person demonstrate that they cannot be blamed for his or her death; there is a kind of general cultural conviction that somebody who comes to bewail a dead person cannot be involved in black magic that caused the death of this person. Thus, in these cases the crying of the people does not only express their sadness but also has self-protective functions in a society that very much believes in sorcery. It is a trivial, though pertinent fact that every case of death implies a loss for the persons left behind. The smaller the group which is affected, the more serious is this loss, because it disturbs and even endangers the relationships between members of the group within its 'social network'. It is obvious that such a situation easily causes conflicts. The loss of a person implies frustration which results not only in grief but also in rage, fury, anger and aggression. These feelings need to be channeled (see Lorenz 1973: 261) to prevent even more harm. This is probably one of the reasons why cultures developed mourning rituals. Public mourning with its various forms of verbal and non-verbal behavior and its different levels of complexity does not only express grief but also channels emotions, especially aggression, and thus contributes decisively to social bonding within the group affected by the loss of one of its members. The mourners are not left alone – "the group steps in" (see Malinowski 1974: 62) – mourning becomes a "shared experience" (Feld 1982: 34) and the danger of destroying the group's social network is warded off. Therefore, mourning not only becomes a social event but also a social duty, an obligation which helps the mourners and the bereaved to finally overcome their loss and their sorrow. Thus, the ability to consciously 'switch on' the expressive behavior of heavy crying (and to 'switch it off' again) reveals that the Trobrianders – probably because of the important cultural functions of mourning behavior – obviously control this most extrovert form of expressing the universal emotion of sadness. However, as mentioned above, children do not participate in this ritualized crying during the bewailing of a dead person.

In this subsection we tried to describe how children between the age of about two and seven years learn to control their emotions in order to behave according to the norms, rules and values that are valid for the Trobrianders' community (see also Morton 1996: 194, 216ff, 246ff). With respect to almost all domains of their emotional lives, children have to acquire first and foremost a relatively strict form of self-discipline, which is necessary to keep the balance between the individuals within their open and very public society. It is often difficult and sometimes even painful for the children to acquire this quality, nevertheless they all manage to cope with the – sometimes traumatic – experience of being socially forced to repress and thus control their emotions. At the age of seven years the children of Tauwema are quite self-confident and self-assured; therefore the early experience of the social repression of uncontrolled display of emotions does not seem to have any negative effects on them. On the contrary, it seems that the children's awareness that they can behave properly and adequately with respect to all situations they experience not only in their everyday life, but also in the ritualized forms of life within their community, provides them with an important emotional security and with a general aplomb. The practicing of the forms of behavior that conform to the Trobrianders' social norms takes place while playing with other children in the playgroups; it is controlled by older members of the children's groups.

2.3.4.3 *Tradition and control of norms with respect to requesting, giving and taking*

In this subsection we discuss what children have to learn in handling tangible goods and items. However, to understand the children's behavior, we first have to focus on the behavior of adults again.

The tangible goods and items owned by adults are not really substantial. A man owns his house, coconut- and betelnut- palms, landrights (via his matrilineal clan), seedlings for yams, taro and other crops, tools for gardening and fishing, a storm lantern, a bush-knife, a smaller knife, an axe, a basket, his loincloth, a relatively simple and easy to build *kemolu*-outrigger canoe, his paddle and his bailer; if he is wealthy he may also own a big seaworthy *masawa*-outrigger canoe with its sail and all other necessary equipment (see Senft 2016), one or more pigs, Amphlett pots (see Lauer 1970; 1971) and personal items of body decoration. A married woman owns a number of self-made *doba*-fibre-skirts and bundles of *doba* material, one or more aluminium pots, a number of enamel plates and cups, a kettle, an axe, a kitchen knife, her personal clothes, Amphlett pots and personal items of body decoration. The purchasing of all other tangible goods is critically monitored by the village community, and when a man has succeeded to accumulate more property than others – for example by selling carvings, fish, yams or betelnuts, he is socially and morally obliged to recirculate and redistribute this surplus, for

example by announcing a *kayasa* harvest competition for which he provides the prizes for the best gardeners. In this way a man can improve his status and political influence within a village community, but the material base of operation remains within a specified frame for every family in the village – with the exception of the chief (see Weiner 1988: 97–110).

On the basis of this background knowledge it is easier to understand the children's handling of tangible goods and items. For an adult, the possibilities to acquire tangible goods are rather restricted by social conventions and norms; but children hardly possess anything else than their clothes. Most toys are short-lived, given the fact that they are made out of natural materials. They are temporarily used by the children, but not retained or 'owned' – in a Western sense. This form of relationship to personal tangible items has resulted in a very specific form of giving and taking. If most of the things in the environment are common property, then everybody is entitled to use them. Therefore it is superfluous to develop specific ways and rites of politeness – such as forms of formalized requesting, because everybody's due can be requested by everybody else. Thus, it conforms with Trobriand etiquette and social norm if a child who is watching a relative chewing betelnuts simply states *Mesta buva!* – "Give me betelnuts!" – or *Agu buva!* – "My betelnuts!" There is no need for Trobrianders, be they adults or children, to cajole someone who is in the possession of a tangible item to make him share it – it is absolutely correct to request one's owing share. Thus it is no wonder that there is no word for "please" in Kilivila. But there is a word for the action of requesting, *-nigada-*. Note, however, that somebody who constantly makes requests is labeled as being a *tonigada* – a "begger", and this is an epitheton ornans that Trobrianders do not really want to be associated with. It is Trobriand etiquette – which is binding upon everyone even across clan boundaries – to pass on something like a betel nut or a cigarette almost immediately to someone who asks for it (see Senft 1995: 218f.). If Trobriand Islanders refuse to do this just by saying *Gala!* – "No!" – something which happens rather rarely – there are only two explanations for this inappropriate behavior. They are either temporarily ill, and do not realize how improperly they behave, this can be excused, if the "illness" does not last too long, or they are just mean. However, meanness is not tolerated in a society that is based on a free and generous exchange of goods, and a mean person – a *tomekita* – has to face being asked to leave the village in which s/he lives. Giving and taking freely and generously is one of the cornerstones of the social construction of Trobriand reality. Thus, this form of requesting, giving, and taking can be described as a form of ritualized communication that serves the function of testing and monitoring in a daily routine whether all the members of the community still adhere to values that are basic for the social construction

of this society's reality. As long as these tests turn out to be positive – according to the standards of the community, of course – the coherence of this society is not endangered and need not be questioned. However, any infringement upon the few items of personal property is sanctioned as a severe offence and the malefactor is publicly scolded to be a *tovelau* – a “thief”.

Giving and sharing with each other is taken for granted in the Trobrianders' society. In adult life actions of distributing goods find their expression in highly ritualized and quite complex ceremonies mainly in connection with mourning rituals and harvest festivities. Requesting does not imply much learning effort for the children; but how to share and distribute personal items has to be learned. This is one of the occasions where adults take an active role in teaching their children these social conventions. Whenever we presented a toddler with a cookie or a banana, an adult took this gift, portioned it and distributed it amongst the child who received the gift and his or her siblings. At the age of two to three years children are expected to share toys or goodies with other children without any forms of interference by adults or older children. If children try to hide their toys jealously from other children or do not allow others to join in their play, then they are publicly shamed – usually with the comment *Sena gudinagova!* – “The child is completely insane!” Children humiliated in this way soon give up their ego-centric behavior. At the age of three to four years the children generously share personal items – like cookies and toys – with their playmates. Thus, at a very early age the children learn the Trobriand maxim that one is not estimated on the basis of one's possessions but on the way of one distributes and shares them. Nancy McDowell (1980: 58) expressed this principle – which is valid not only on the Trobriand Islands, but all over in Melanesia – with the following catchy phrase: “It is not who you are but how you give that counts” (see also Young 1971: 189ff, 207ff). In his recent monograph on the anthropology of sharing Thomas Widlok (2017: 56f.) also points out that “[s]haring ... creates bonds of trust and cooperation that are important ingredients for cooperative social life ...” and emphasizes the “role of sharing in relation to social order, social change, political power, group formation, individual networks, [and] concepts of personhood” (see also Widlok 2017: 49).

The Trobriand Islanders not only possess material property but also ideational values and possessions, like clan-membership and various forms of acquired expert knowledge. In the Trobriand Islanders' matrilineal society a child is born into his/her mother's clan; that means that the child is not related with his/her father. A child's next male relative is his/her mother's brother. For the Trobriand Islanders, humanity is divided into four clans (*kumila*): the *Malasi* clan, the socially highest ranked clan, is followed by the *Lukuba* clan, the *Lukwasisiga* clan, and finally the

Lukulabuta clan.⁵³ This clan hierarchy is strict and has a number of social and political implications. Only members of the first two ranks have political influence, only members of the *Malasi* clan can become chiefs of a village and only members of the *Tabalu*-subclan of the *Malasi* clan can become paramount chief of the Trobriand Islands. A person's clan-membership can never be changed, that is to say, even after a person's death his/her *baloma*, the spirit of the dead, will remain a member of the clan to which the dead person belonged. The four clans are subdivided into a number of subclans (*dala*) and the members of these subclans "regard themselves as real kindred [and] claim the same rank" (see Malinowski 1929: 416ff; Senft 2011b: 4ff). Being a member of a clan implies a number of rights and duties. Thus, a child will inherit landrights, privileges and material goods from his/her mother's line (see Malinowski 1929: 177). An adult man will share a part of his harvest with his sisters and their families, a woman can always go back to her clan-relatives in her home village after a divorce relying upon being welcomed and supported by her relatives. This does not create any problems, because marriage is not allowed within the same clan – the Trobrianders follow the so-called exogamous taboo. Elderly people are also attended to by their relatives whenever they need any care and support. And a man can rely on his clan-members when he can convince them in supporting him to achieve a special and extraordinary ambition which he cannot achieve all by himself, such as building a big seagoing *masawa*-canoe (see Senft 2016: 233).

Having acquired knowledge, expertise and competence in certain social, intellectual and spiritual domains also counts as being in the possession of ideational values. The great majority of these forms of ideational property are based on the knowledge of magical formulae and the magical rites that go with them (see Senft 2010a: 40ff).⁵⁴ However, this kind of knowledge is acquired long after childhood during the late years of adolescence. The Trobrianders differentiate between weather magic, black magic, healing magic, garden magic, fishing magic, dance magic, beauty magic, love magic, sailing and canoe magic, smoke magic, carving

53. The Trobrianders take this division of mankind as being universal. When Gunter first arrived in Tauwema in 1982, he was asked to which clan he belonged, and when he could not answer the question, some old and influential men of the village inspected the lines on the inside of his right hand and assigned him to one of the four clans; and when Barbara arrived in Tauwema in 1983 she was treated in the same way. Fortunately we were classified as belonging to different clans – because marriage within one and the same clan is a taboo on the Trobriands (see below). Already Malinowski (1929: 416f.) reports that the Trobrianders treat Europeans and other foreigners like this.

54. There are only a few experts who can do without magical formulae, for example experts in telling tales and myths (see Senft 2015a).

magic and magic against theft, earthquakes, witches, and sharks. They use magical formulae to reach certain aims with the firm conviction that they can thus influence and control nature and the course of, and events in, their lives. The magical formula is the most important part of the magical rite(s). Besides the knowledge of how to perform the magical rite, the possession of the magical formulae guarantees that the desired effect of the magic will come true. There are specialists for certain kinds of magic. All magic is regarded as personal property. In the matrilineal Trobriand society individuals inherit magic either, and most general, from their matrilineal relatives, or get it from their fathers or from specialists. In general, experts, for example master-carvers, weavers, canoe-builders, sail-makers, healers, etc., accept apprentices and pass their skills on to these apprentices together with the magic that goes or may go with their special skills. Expert magicians perform their rites on request and they expect betelnuts, yams, tobacco, and nowadays money for their services. Usually, magicians have to observe food taboos at least a day before they start with their rites and while they perform them. They get their compensation after they have finished their rituals. The fame of a magician depends on his/her success, of course. And this success is believed to basically depend on the magicians' strict observance of taboos that go with their magic – the magical rites have to follow and obey clearly defined conventions and rules – and on the correct reciting of the respective formula which has to be stereotypically recalled, remembered, and literally reproduced by the acting magicians. The work of magicians, especially when they perform their magical rites for the community or for an individual, are minutely monitored – and status, prestige, and “face” of magicians are solely dependent on their success (see Senft 2009b: 87ff).

In summing up this subsection, we want to point out that children within the Trobriand society learn at an early age that there are only a few things which belong to them, but that they have the right to request things or acts that serve the satisfaction of their immediate needs from their kinspeople. Children particularly learn that the accumulation of material goods does not contribute to increase their status within their community, but that members of their community gain social standing, prestige and reputation by re-distributing the surplus of all kinds of properties which they have accumulated in one way or another. The children acquire this cultural norm with respect to dealing with personal material property within the children's groups where they playfully practice the forms of requesting, giving and taking which are so important for the Trobriand Islanders construction of their social reality.

2.3.4.4 *The role of the children's “small republic”*

We have frequently pointed out so far that Trobriand children indeed “enjoy considerable freedom and independence” which give “scope to the formation of the

children's own little community" to which Malinowski referred as "their small republic" (Malinowski 1929: 44f.; see also Bateson 1932: 274).

In connection with this independence and autonomous behavior of children the human ethologist Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1989: 600f.; see also Sbrzesny 1976: 177, 239ff, 243) points out that in general

[c]hildren learn at an early stage that they are part of a larger community, particularly in the smaller kin-based societies of village and tribal cultures. ... As soon as a child can walk he will participate in the children's playgroup ..., and it is in such playgroups that children are truly raised. The older ones explain the rules of play and will admonish those who do not adhere to them ... Thus the child's socialization occurs mainly within the playgroup ... There is a children's culture, which is transmitted from the older children to the younger ones without adult intervention. Distinct rank order relationships prevail in children's groups ... In the children's group the child grows into the community, learning social competence through the acquisition of social and technical aptitude, and ascending in rank while doing so.

The ethologist also emphasizes the importance of the fact that these children groups are mixed age-groups. He states: "In tribal societies the child grows up in mixed age groups and, with increasing age, experiences a change from being guided to being a guide to the younger child. A child thus experiences (and experiments with) all possible roles" (Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989: 314). These observations agree with Martini's (2009) research results on children groups in the Marquesas which we presented in Subsection 2.3.1. In these hierarchically structured mixed-age groups children pass through a number of different roles which require different forms of rule-governed behavior and imply a number of different responsibilities the children take over for themselves and for the group as a whole. As the Whittings rightly point out, "older children can be expected to practice their newly acquired knowledge of the rules of the culture by making responsible suggestions or reprimanding anyone who deviates from these rules" (Whiting & Whiting 1975: 184). Thus, with growing age the younger children learn from the older children in the group – who socially control it – the culture-specific norms, the rules and the regulations which are fundamental for their society's construction of social reality and govern and control the adequate behavior of the members of their community. Play is decisive for this learning process: Bruner and colleagues emphasize the following: "If the rule structure of human play and games sensitizes the child to the rules of culture, both generally and in preparation for a particular way of life, then surely play must have some special role in nurturing symbolic activity in general. For culture is symbolism in action" (Bruner et al. 1976: 19; see also Huizinga 1956: 29). When the children have finished these phases of social learning in which they have internalized the

norms and rules they are confronted with in their social environment which is constituted by their children's group, they have also gained social safety, because they can now predict the behavior of other members in their group as well as the reactions of these other group member to their own forms of behavior. At this point of their life "... the social behavior of the children ... [is] compatible with adult role acquisitions" as the Whitings observed in their study (Whiting & Whiting 1975: 178). They point out that "[f]ormulas for appropriate adult social behavior dictated by the socioeconomic and family structures are imbedded in the value system of the culture" and note that "[t]hese values are apparently transmitted to the child before the age of six" (Whiting & Whiting 1975: 178f.). This also holds for the Trobriand children and their "small republic" – which provides the most important framework for their socialization into their culture.

2.3.5 The child in the adult world

In the preceding section we pointed out that the children's group in which an individual child spends most of his/her time of the day has a decisive educational influence and impact. We have emphasized that living together within these groups the children experience the tradition of values and norms and the rules and regulations that constitute the basis for acquiring the social conventions for the adequate interaction with their fellow human beings. In this subsection we will discuss the role the adults, the parents and the relatives of the children play in educating the children. The Trobrianders themselves consider their function as parents first of all as a priming one. In Barbara's interviews with Trobriand mothers and fathers, the parents emphasized that they believe in the power of the 'good example', the proper 'role model'. If the parents lead an orderly life – a concept which is expressed in Kilivila as *keda bwena* – "good way" – then their children will lead a decent life as well. However, before we discuss the adults' role in and for the education of children in more detail, we first take a closer look at the relationship between parents, grandparents and children in general within the Trobriand society.

2.3.5.1 *Relationships between parents, grandparents and children*

As we have described in Subsection 2.2, the first phase in the life of a child on the Trobriands starts with birth and ends when the child is weaned. We underlined that during this period of time almost all the parents' activities are directed towards satisfying all the child's needs. There is untroubled harmony between the parents and their child.

After the child is weaned, the phase in which the parents tried their very best to anticipate their baby's every wish and to satisfy all the baby's needs and

demands has come to an end. Now the parents attempt to educate and treat their children in such a way that they can and want to live their lives as autonomously and independently as possible.⁵⁵

However, the interests of the parents on the one hand and the interests of the child on the other first differ from each other, of course, and this inevitably leads to conflicts in their relationship. All the children on the Trobriands react to this change in their relationship with their parents in the same way: First they cry – vehemently and angrily, because they have ceased to be in the center of their parents interests and loving care. However, as we have already mentioned, they quickly realize that this reaction is absolutely ineffective and they start to organize their life more actively by trying to get accepted as a member of one of the children’s groups in their village.

During this time of their children’s life, the parents try to provide them with an elementary education, especially with respect to personal hygiene and moral behavior (see Subsection 2.3.5.2 below). The parents’ educational interventions that can be observed during this period in the life of their child gradually come to an end when the child gets older, not least because children – especially boys – of the age of five years and older spend most of their time with their peers in the children’s group and are only at home during meals and after sunset.

The relationship between father and child remains very cordial. Children may now accompany their fathers on canoe-trips to villages in the neighborhood, boys may help their fathers when they fish on the reef, and it is not unusual at all to see father and child strolling hand in hand through the village to visit friends and relatives. The strength of the emotional bond between father and child was easy to observe. Gerubara, for example, a man of 39 years of age, and his five year old son Topsikauya could usually be found on the veranda of their house after dusk. Topsikauya was lying in his father’s lap, gently drowsing, while his father loused him. There was even a time when Topsikauya insisted that he could only fall asleep if his father was lying by his side. 41 year old Tosulala was the father of five girls; it would never have occurred to him to complain about this fact, because daughters – especially in a matrilinear society – are often the pride of the family.⁵⁶

55. This is completely different with Balinese parents and their children. Margaret Mead (1942: 14) repeatedly points out the passiveness of Balinese children who surrender “all autonomy”.

56. Thus Tosulala confirms Malinowski (1929: 25) who points out that “...girls are quite as welcome at birth as boys, and no difference is made between them by the parents in interest, enthusiasm, or affection” – see Subsection 2.2.2, where we already referred to this observation. Note that Margaret Mead (1942: 38) reports for the Balinese that “the father-child ties, which

Nusai, who was 45 years old, was the father of 9 boys and one girl; he expressed his pride in his daughter Bolubatau especially at village feasts – he insisted on decorating Bolubatau all by himself, trying to make her as lovely and attractive as possible.



Photo 40. Ibonoma with three of her daughters in the doorstep of her house (1989)

Children at the age of 7 experience yet another change in their lives, depending on their parents' attitudes. Some of the children are sent to school which is located in the neighboring village Kaduwaga, and some are asked by their

are the warmest are the father-daughter ties". The Trobriand fathers do not make this kind of differentiation between sons and daughters with respect to their love and affection for them.

parents to help them in the household and in the gardens (we will come back to this point below). The parent-child relationship gets more and more casual. A father and his child have friendly relations with each other, because children have only obligations – for example to help working in the garden – with respect to their mother’s brother, their closest male relative in the matrilinear Trobriand society. This holds especially for boys, because the girls help their mothers doing housework and nursing their siblings – and thus support members of their own clan anyway.



Photo 41. Nusai’s and Sogeya’s children Keyeba, Sulumada (with the red hibiscus), and Kobayasi with Kunta in his lap under a shed in their father’s new garden (1983)

The children’s contacts to adults as attachment figures generally include their grandparents. Weyei, for example, a man in his early 60s, patiently carried his grandchild for days through the village; the little one had a painful tropical ulcer and cried almost incessantly. Weyei’s older brother, chief Kilagola, often cradled his granddaughter for hours and 70 year old Bomesa was usually visited by a bunch of grandchildren whom she instructed in playing string figure games (see Senft & Senft 1986). Grandparents as well as other elderly persons enjoy a certain amount of authority because of their age, but age is no reason for children to respect somebody – if this respect is not earned in a specific way. As already mentioned, the Trobriand Islanders do not vituperate children who deride awkwardly or

unhandily behaving elderly people as displaying bad manners. However, children are expected to at least tolerate the elderly if they do not respect them. Tolagala, for example, one of the oldest men in Tauwema, hardly ever left his house. For a while he was the target of the children's mischief and mockery. They threw stones at his house or beat with wooden sticks at the floor of his house while he took his afternoon nap, thus waking him up with a start. Hidden behind a house in the vicinity they awaited Tolagala's reaction and had a lot of fun when the old man came out of his house grumbling about the disrespectful gang of little rascals and scolding them. After a while the chief stopped the children's harassing of the old man by shaming them in an official admonitory speech which he gave one evening at the village ground of Tauwema.

To sum up, we can state that the relationship between parents, grandparents and children are very intense especially during the first four years in the lifetime of a child. Parents start relatively early to educate their children in such a way that they become autonomous and independent individuals. They respect the personal freedom of their four to five year old children, as long as their behavior agrees with their social conventions. The father-child relationship is distinct and marked in the Trobrianders' matrilinear society, because a father does not enjoy his children's respect and authority due to his role in the family, he gains his children's recognition in and because of his way of interacting with them.



Photo 42. Bulasa with one of his grandchildren, cutting a new axe-handle with an adze (1992)

2.3.5.2 *Domains of education: obedience – personal hygiene – work – tradition of culture – morals*

Parents attempt to provide their children between the age of two and four years with some basic education in a variety of domains of their everyday lives. In this subsection we present five of these domains, namely obedience, personal hygiene, work, tradition of culture and morals.

Isiavata, who is three years old, is playing at the beach; she fills sand into coconut shells, empties them at another place, scoops some sea water and pours it over her head. Her mother Dakevau appears and calls her over. The little girl briefly glances at her, and then continues playing her game. Dakevau now summons her daughter to come to her immediately, but Isiavata unapologetically turns her back to her mother, completely immersed in her game. Her mother calls her once more to come home and have lunch, pointing out that the tide is rising, but Isiavata does not seem to hear her and starts digging in the sand. With a frowned forehead Dakevau murmurs that her daughter is such a terribly stubborn little girl, but she turns away and goes back to her house. Isiavata continues her play in the sand for another quarter of an hour before she runs home.

A few days later Isiavata is playing on the village ground with two other girls of the same age. Dakevau is balancing a bucket on her head and asks her daughter to accompany her to the fresh water well. Isiavata does not react to her mother's request, but this time Dakevau grabs her arm and drags Isiavata with her. Isiavata starts to cry and tries to escape from her mother, but now Dakevau slaps her daughter's bottom a few times. Isiavata increases the pitch and the intensity of her crying, but Dakevau continues to drag her with her, stopping a few times, angrily giving her daughter another beating.

These two observations illustrate quite aptly that a child's obedience is requested from his/her parents with very different insistence and consequence. Reactions to disobedience – especially the reactions of mothers – are very much dependent on the adults' emotions. Usually a child's disobedience is tolerated by parents without any sanctions. Mothers seem to be more inclined to get angry when their children do not obey them and often emphasize their request forcefully by beating their child with their hand or a broom or by slapping the child in the face. Fathers do not beat their children as often as mothers do, and their forms of corporal punishment are usually milder. During Barbara's interviews all women stated that they sometimes beat their children with a stick or a broom. But the men came up with the following statements: "If I beat them with a stick, they get sick" (Nusai). "I do not beat them with a stick because they are so small" (Toybokwatauya). "If I beat my children and they cry I feel sorry for them" (Tokoyumila). Fathers punitively intervene mainly when the children bunk off school, when the children frivolously

and out of wantonness have broken some part of their canoe or when they have stolen something. Tokubiyim, one of the local missionaries of Tauwema, explains why he is convinced that corporal punishment is educational: “If I do not give them a beating after they have seriously misbehaved they will not know the pain and then they will seriously misbehave again”. But with this idea of coercive punishment he represents a very idiosyncratic position with respect to Trobriand ideas of parental education.⁵⁷ We have to note that in demanding obedience from a child the Trobrianders are indeed absolutely inconsequent. Topiesi, for example, dragged his 7 year old son Melavatu out of his bed for a whole week, beat him and sent him to school. However, the following three months Melavatu ditched school and spent his days playing in the village. All in all our research on education on the Trobriands confirms Malinowski’s (1929: 44f.) findings:

Some of ... [the children on the Trobriand Islands] ... obey their parents willingly, but this is entirely a matter of the personal character of both parties: there is no idea of a regular discipline, no system of domestic coercion... People will sometimes grow angry with their children and beat them in an outburst of rage; but I have quite often seen a child rush furiously at his parent and strike him. This attack might be received with a good-natured smile, or the blow might be angrily returned; but the idea of definite retribution, or of coercive punishment is not only foreign, but distinctly repugnant to the native.

This educational stance of the Trobrianders may be the reason for the strong self-confidence that is so characteristic and typical for both young and old Trobriand Islanders. On the one hand, children learn at a relatively young age to publicly control their feelings and emotions for the interests of their community, but on the other hand they are only very rarely confronted with demands which they strictly must obey.

One of the few domains in which parents are consequent and even forceful educators is personal hygiene. Adult Trobrianders spent a lot of time for personal hygiene: They take their daily bath in the sea or in the fresh water wells near the village or they wash their bodies frequently during the day.⁵⁸ They carefully comb their hair and intensively louse each other. In addition, they rub desiccated coconut and coconut-oil onto their skin to prevent it from drying out. They rub lime

57. The Trobriand Islanders’ attitude with respect to punishment in education is in diametrical opposition to the Tongans’ way of punishing children – as reported by Morton (1996: 1, 174ff [= Chapter 7]).

58. This latter behavior is especially observed with breastfeeding women.

juice into their hair to make it shining, and cultivated Trobrianders always carry sweet-smelling herbs in their *kwasi*-armlets. As already mentioned in Section 2.2.1, *kwasi* are armlets made of natural fibres worn by men and women on their upper arms; they emphasize the men's muscles and frame the women's breasts – thus increasing the physical beauty of the persons. The herbs in the *kwasi* engulf the Trobrianders in odorous fragrance. Nothing detracts more from a positive personal appearance on the Trobriand Islands than bad body odor. The people of Tauwema present the people from Simsim Island as a deterrent example with respect to body odor. Allegedly these islanders neither wash themselves nor their clothes and do not know how to comb their hair properly; that's why they are so terribly ugly and smelly and it is rumored that this is also the reason why they have transformed their formally nice island into a desert, ugly and dirty piece of land. To save their children from this terrible 'fate', the parents of Tauwema scrupulously attend to their children's personal hygiene.⁵⁹

While the children are breastfed, they are bathed every afternoon in a big bowl full of preheated water. However, this privilege expires after weaning, too. From then onwards the children take their daily bath in the sea. This is less appreciated by the children – and in the afternoon we often observed mothers dragging their crying little children to the beach, washing them remorselessly in the seawater and then rinse their bodies with sweet-water.

From the age of 3½ to 4 years the children spend so much time playing in the sea that their parents only very rarely explicitly sent them to the beach to wash themselves. Five to seven year old children who roam around in the bush near the village often have a bath and a swim in the fresh water grotto Bugei (see Map 5). Older children enjoy their baths there in same-sex playgroups.

Lice are a big problem for the Trobriand Islanders; they suffer very much from these pests, but with the exception of lime juice which they rub in their hair because it provides some temporary relief, they have not found an effective antidote. Thus, lousing each other is part of every Trobrianders' daily personal hygiene. Fathers and mothers often louse their little children. To keep the pests to a minimum the parents cut their little children's hair as short as possible, because the uncontrolled scratching with which the children want to relieve the permanent itching on their heads often results in huge and painful ulcers.

An important part of personal hygiene is potty training. In the first period of their lives little children need not consider where they relieve themselves; the parents clean their child with the smooth fibres of old coconut-husks or with soft

59. It goes without saying that this picture of the Simsim Islanders is sheer ideology and has nothing to do whatsoever with reality.



Photo 43. Igogosa bathing her child (1989)

leaves and immediately remove the feces with two halves of coconut-shells. After weaning the children are urged to go to the ‘children’s toilet’, a part of the beach which is somewhat apart from the village but which can be easily monitored by the adults (see Map 5). Malinowski (1929: 376) rightly points out that “[c]hildren are taught to observe strict cleanliness in this respect, and a careless child is not unfrequently shamed by his parents or elders”.

Summing up we can note that education with respect to personal hygiene starts at a very early age and that the parents are very consequent in teaching their children to properly look after their bodies and pay attention to cleanliness. Between the age of 5 and 6 years children in Tauwema are completely autonomous



Photo 44. Senubesa is washing her little brother on the reef (1983)

and independent with respect to their personal hygiene and conform with the social norms which are valid for this domain of their lives.

In the subsection on role-playing games we already learned that by playing these games boys and girls learn many techniques and operational procedures which are useful in their later lives. These role-playing games are usually not initiated by adults; they obviously arise from the children's wish to imitate the adults (see Chateau 1976: 48). Especially girls are asked by their mothers at a very early age to help in the household. Cleaning the cooking pots with sand and water at the beach, fetching drinking water and firewood and looking after younger siblings are duties which many girls have to carry out at the age of 8 years.



Photo 45. Girls cleaning pots at the beach (1989)

When parents were asked whether they request their children's help, Inupula (35 years) – the mother of three daughters and two boys – confirmed that she asks her daughters, especially her 7 year old daughter Bomtula, to help her in the kinds of household work just mentioned. Bomtula's 10 year old sister Namilieva regularly goes to school and is thus largely freed from this kind of work. Sogea (43 years) – the mother of one girl and 9 boys – points out that she only asks her daughter Bolubatau for help if work just becomes too much for her. Bolubatau especially helps her mother making *doba*-fibre-skirts and fetching food from the gardens. Sogea explicitly refers to these kinds of work as “women's work”. Inadila, a woman in her mid-40s has a 17 year-old daughter who does the chores together with her mother. Bonavana, the mother of four boys states that her oldest son – 7 year old Subisubi – is still too young and small to help her.

There was a big conflict between Tavakaya (37 years) and her 11 year-old daughter Emi, because the mother asked her daughter to help her in the household and with her garden work. Emi obviously did not feel like working in the garden and fetching drinking water in the evenings. When Tavakaya asked her one day again to go and fetch water, Emi left her parents' house and went to her grandmother in Koma village where she stayed for a few weeks. Again this example illustrates that children can put through their ideas with respect to the organization of their lives in a very independent and self-assured way (see Malinowski 1929: 44f.).

As soon as boys reach the age of 8 years, they are urged by their fathers – and their mother-brothers – to work with them. All the men are aware of the fact that the boys' motivation to do this is still rather low. Toybokwatauya (35 years) pointed out that he himself as a boy of this age was not up for working in the gardens but preferred to play games with his playmates. Nusai claimed that his sons would always help him voluntarily when he had to do hard work. Tomalala also reports that his son Tolosi would help him doing minor jobs. And Tokobiyim said that he would wait until his sons will help him of their own accord.

Our observations confirmed these statements. Boys between 6 and 7 years help cutting off smaller branches and boughs clearing the gardens; they collect them and pile them up so that they can be ignited in the course of the slash-and-burn cultivation of the bush. They help unload the canoes of their fathers and mother-brothers, they carry paddles and bailers back to the men's houses, and they clean the canoe after a fishing expedition with sea-water. When the men fish sardines, the boys are allowed to paddle the canoe following the fishermen who catch the sardines on the reef with their fishing traps or their fishing spears; the canoe then mainly serves the function of a container for the fish caught. However, when the fishermen come back with their catch to the village, only women and girls clean and gut the fish at the beach. During the final smoking of the fish, boys and girls together help to fan flies and other insects away from the fish.

Boys between the age of 8 and 9 years are requested by their parents to climb up coconut palms and to pluck coconuts. To do this the boys have to master a special technique to safely climb the high palm trees. It was always breathtaking for us to see the young boys nimbly heaving themselves up into the tops of the palm trees. However, the dangers of these climbing tours seem to keep within limits. Weyei knew that only Nusai once fell from a palm tree when he was a very young man.

Summing up we can note that the requests for help which mothers address to their daughters are more emphatically formulated than those that fathers address to their sons. If the daughters refuse to help their mothers, the mothers punish their daughters – and they are more consequent than fathers whose sons refuse to help them. A girl who does not want to help her mother is usually beaten by her.

Another important domain in the Trobrianders' education of their children is the passing on of their cultural and especially of their oral tradition which includes cultural assets like songs, myths, tales and magic. This transfer is still predominantly done verbally.

Already sucklings are confronted with traditional texts. Their parents and grandparents cradle them on their laps, and to amuse or to ease them they sing the kind of singsongs which we illustrate below. While singing these kind of raps, the adults also clip the sucklings' hands. We heard these songs for the first time

when Bomesa (60 years) recited them for her 12 months old granddaughter. It is obvious that these songs differ considerably from the Western notion of nursery rhymes – but note that they co-constitute the *biga sopa* variety, the “joking language” register which we have described with its important societal functions in Subsection 2.3.4.2 above. The following four songs illustrate this genre (see also Senft 2010a: 237f., 240):

<i>Yadudubwe – togima togima'ina, yaruboda, yanagitovai – m, yanagitovai – m.</i>	Klatsch klatsch (Händeklatschen) – fuck fuck again, we can do it again, we will do it again – hm, we will do it again – hm.
<i>Bonuleta Bonua'uli – kekeraisi mi talisi talisi, taligogova tole Dubiavana Rosisi ropuvena! Tome'usi tomakeli: keli! Kelibana usi Kitava!</i>	Bonuleta and Bonua'uli their legs we open open (them), we shout we men from the Dubiavana village. Hurry up and jump! Banana-man, digging man: dig! Dig again banana from Kitava!
<i>Keli keli pwanava! Keli keli pwanava! Pe'ula vim! Pe'ula kwim! Kukoma pwanava!</i>	Dig dig yams! Dig dig yams! Strong is your cunt! Strong is your prick! Eat the yams!
<i>Kena kena kena uruaru – kwapu – kwesau, kwerigiri kara kena inam kara kena tamam, bila – itatau – kedoga.</i>	Lime spatula, spatula, spatula clatter clatter – you are licking – you take it out, you are smacking licking his spatula like your mother licking your father's spatula, he will go – he keeps on coming – small crooked stick.

Most of the songs which the children know by heart at the age of five are the *mweki*-songs (see Senft 2010a: 241f.) which we already mentioned describing the dance, song and rhythmic games of the boys in Subsection 2.3.2.1. – these songs are also quite obscene and bawdy. However, the *mweki*-songs that bachelors sing

during the time of the harvest festival are by all means part of the official Trobriand cultural assets.

At the age of five or six years the boys and girls also know and sing the schmaltzy village songs. Whenever there is a full moon, the local guitar bands play for the dance for the young unmarried adolescents. The repertoire of the songs played and sung recurs relatively often and that is why the young audience learns the melody and the lyrics of these songs rather quickly. These songs are called *wosi gugwadi* or *wosi gita* – “songs of the children” or “songs (accompanied by) guitars” and deal with events that happened on the Trobriand Islands or elsewhere in Milne Bay Province, such as the crash of an airplane, a funny incident or the sad end of a romantic love. The following song documents such a sentimental love song (see Senft 1999: 25, 2010a: 229):

<i>Lubaigu, lubaigu,</i>	My friend, my friend,
<i>bigatona bwekwanela,</i>	(the) speech (was) lovely,
<i>ilagoki kwaitala:</i>	but (there is) only one thing:
<i>migim gala agisi.</i>	your face – I do not see (it any more).

<i>Igaisi vili,</i>	She sees (the) place,
<i>igisi vilaigu.</i>	she sees me, indeed.
<i>Adoku yegu,</i>	I think (of) you,
<i>pela yoki lubaigu.</i>	because you are my friend.

<i>Akaulo buki,</i>	I take the book,
<i>aulaim, kekobuda.</i>	I open it, the photo of us.
<i>Adoki – mokwita –</i>	I think – really –
<i>okusividulaigu.</i>	you are staying with me.

<i>Amokaya gala, okwa,</i>	I see nothing, (it is) empty,
<i>amokaya sopaokwa.</i>	I see (the) illusion is gone.
<i>Mavilamla goki,</i>	I cried only,
<i>bwena, bauvalamu.</i>	good, I will keep on crying.

<i>A, ga makwewela.</i>	Ah, nothing (more of) those things.
<i>Vi, goki dosilagi:</i>	Girl, only our hearing (= girl, we only hear):
<i>Lubaigu, dataloi,</i>	My friend, one (has to) say goodbye,
<i>kayoni, kayoni!</i>	farewell, farewell!

A culturally very important subgenre of the Trobriand Islanders' traditional songs is extremely endangered. These songs are called *wosi milamala* – “songs of the harvest festival”. The majority of these songs describe the carefree ‘life’ of the spirits of the dead in their ‘underworld paradise’ on Tuma Island. These songs are sung in an archaic variety of Kilivila which is called *biga baloma* – “the language of the spirits of the dead” and they codify many aspects of Trobriand eschatology. The songs are sung during the harvest festival and during mourning ceremonies. Because of their cultural importance they are still sung these days, but in 1989 there were only five adults in Tauwema who understood the lyrics of these songs (see Senft 2011b). It may well be that some of the children we observed in our study may still have learned to sing the songs, but they certainly do not understand the lyrics of these songs any more (see Senft 2010b).

The children learn rhythmical movements that go together with many of those songs which are still very vital in their culture. We often observed that children who just had learned to walk started to sway with the melodies or moved in a kind of dance following the rhythm of a song. Children learn to dance properly on the threshold of adolescence between the age of 10 and 14 years. There are even two dance masters in Tauwema who teach the adolescents culturally important dance styles.

Children start to tell fairy tales – the so-called *kukwanebu* – at the age of about four years. It is often the fathers of the children who tell them these tales in the evenings after dinner before the children go to bed. The protagonists of these tales are children, adults, animals, and man-eating ogres, and the themes covered by these stories include accidents, violence, the mother-child bond, trust and mistrust and the role of all forms of magic (see Senft 2015a). Thus, it is at this age that the children start to learn about the cultural importance of magicians, various form of magic and the importance of magical formulae.

At the age of about five, children also learn about Trobriand myths. Again, especially their fathers tell their children mythical stories before they go to bed. These stories – the *liliu* – convey for example the origin of the four Trobriand clans or the deeds of culture heroes (see Senft 2010a: 81ff, 2017c).

Another important domain of Trobriand parental education is the domain of morals with all its culture-specific norms, conventions, rules and regulations. These morals also affect the Trobriand “dress code”. Before the children are weaned, they do not wear any clothes (except diapers, at times).

After weaning the girls get their first fibre-skirt, a small skirt which the girl's mother has made out of banana leaves. All adults of the girl's family make sure that the girl is wearing the skirt and that she minds to keep her pudenda covered while she is playing games of all kinds. Up to the age of 7 years girls are allowed to take off their skirts when they take a bath in the sea, but at a later age this is frowned upon. To preserve their everyday clothes, older girls and

women have a special skirt for bathing which is made out of rough and uncolored banana-leaves.



Photo 46. Pulula is wearing her first fibre-skirt – which makes her mother Nameruba feel very proud (1983)

With boys, nakedness is tolerated a bit longer. At the age of 3½ years they usually get their first loincloth. Taking off this loincloth – which is often quite impedimentary in running and in climbing trees – is in general not strictly monitored by adults, with one exception however, namely John Bomyoyewo, a local missionary in his early 40s who is unmarried and without children. Whenever he spotted naked boys playing at the beach or in the village he frightfully yelled at them and

insisted that they immediately tie their loincloth around their hips again. At the age of 6 the boys only take off their loincloth when they play in the sea, but when they get out of the sea they cover their genitals with their hands.

Swearing is not only assessed as a form of bad behavior, it is simply immoral for the Trobriand Islanders. Therefore it is no wonder that all the parents who we asked what they would classify as bad manners and forms of behavior first and foremost mentioned swearing. Malinowski (1929: 407f.) points out that “[s]wearing in anger may lead to serious consequences when the temper of those concerned is not under control. It may lead to a more or less prolonged breach of personal relations, to a fight, or even to a communal feud”. Innuendos in songs and tales told in everyday conversations which may seem bawdy and even obscene to us are quite popular with the Trobrianders and are definitely not considered as being insulting and obnoxious, even if they are produced by children – again, they are just genres that co-constitute the *biga sopa*, the joking language. However it is regarded as a worst insult if a man is prompted to sleep with his mother, his sister or his wife or if a woman is prompted to do the same with her father, her brother or her husband (see Senft 2010a: 19ff). Such a scandalous incident happened in Tauwema on the 30th of August 1983. Inoma, a 12 year old girl and the daughter of Stephen Bulasa, one of the local missionaries, had insulted Menumla with the curse *Kula kweya lumta!* – “Go and fuck your sister!” Menumla is an unmarried man – not least because of his imbecility. He is often the target of more or less good-natured mockery, but he is quite respected as an excellent gardener. Menumla immediately gave a vociferous speech in high dudgeon on the village ground. Soon after Menumla’s speech some of her relatives dragged Inoma to her parent’s house and the girl’s public swearing was punished with a severe beating by her mother. During the following days Inoma avoided to be seen in the village.

Other moral rules and regulations do not play a role in the first 7 years in the life of a child on the Trobriands; these taboos – such as the brother-sister taboo, which minutely regulates the relationship between brother and sister (see Malnowski 1929: 433–451) – become important at a later age only.

Summing up we can establish that the relationship between parents and children grants the young children indeed a very high degree of independence and autonomy after weaning. The attempts of parental education are confined to a minimum and affect mainly personal hygiene, social morals and norms, the leading of the children to do some work in the household and the gardens and the passing on of intellectual cultural assets. Parents only sporadically request strict obedience from their children; they believe and trust in the power of the ‘good example’, the proper ‘role model’: If the parents lead an orderly life, then their children will also do so.

2.4 Children after the age of seven years – a brief outlook

We have repeatedly mentioned that the essential period of the children's socialization on the Trobriand Islands can be regarded as being completed when they reach the age of 7 years. At this age they have learned how to behave properly and situation-adequately in all kinds of social interactions according to the culture-specific norms and conventions, the rules and regulations that are valid in their society. They have internalized the Trobriand Islanders' code of ethics which represents the foundation for their social construction of reality. This early acquisition of this degree of social and personal maturation imparts the independence, the autonomy and the pronounced self-confidence which can be observed with children of this age in all circumstances. These qualities constitute the basis and provide the level of social self-security necessary for the Trobriand children to master and enjoy their future lives.⁶⁰

The Trobriand children who are 7 years of age and older may enjoy their lives either by staying in their village passing their time with collecting shells, fishing, gathering fruits, working in the household of their parents or in the gardens and indulge in their passion of playing games, or they can go to school. There are two schools on Kaile'una Island. One is in Kaisiga which is attended by the children of Kaisiga and Bulakwa, and one is in Kaduwaga and this school is attended by the children of all the other villages on the island (see Map 3). About 50% of the children of Tauwema go to school. Every morning the children leave Tauwema at about 7 o'clock and walk for roughly an hour until they reach the school in Kaduwaga. School begins with the children taking their stand in front of their class-rooms. Then the pupils and the teachers sing the national anthem and two older boys have the privilege to hoist the flags of Papua New Guinea and of Milne Bay Province. Then the headmaster greets the school-children and usually announces a special project of the day, such as cleaning the school-gardens.

60. Eric Venbrux (p.c; e-mail March 16, 2017) pointed out to us that "the age of 7 years ... is also the age of the first Holy Communion of Roman Catholic children, the age when they are supposed to have a moral conscience; before that, they are seen as pure and innocent, that is, lacking knowledge of good and evil". See also: <<https://www.catholic.com/qa/how-did-the-church-decided-that-seven-is-the-age-of-reason-and-the-age-for-first-communion>>; see also: <http://www.30giorni.it/articoli_id_7874_l3.htm>, where Darío Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos in his essay "First communion at seven years old and before..." published on the 8th of January 2005 in the magazine *In the Church and in the world* writes: "On August 8, 1910 [Pope Saint Pius 10] issued the Decree *Quam Singulari*, in which he established that children could receive First Holy Communion at the age of seven." But note that the age of the first Holy Communion varies in different countries; in Germany, for example, it is the age of 9 years.

The pupils then line up and march lock-step into their five class-rooms, and the teachers start giving their lessons. The language of instruction is English. In the morning the disciplines English, arithmetic, religion and social studies are taught. The afternoons are reserved for either sports or for working in the school-gardens, where the pupils grow the food they eat at school for lunch. At about 4 p.m. the school-children go back home to their villages. But if this is the daily routine of children attending school, why can it be assessed as a form of enjoying life? Attending school implies not only a daily two hour march to and from school in temperatures of about 32° C in an environment with a humidity of more than 90%, but also the children's motivation and commitment to learn things that played only a marginal or even no role whatsoever in the traditional life of the Trobrianders. Children who attend school – and parents who allow, support, and sometimes also persuade their children to do this, – know that this implies social rise and advancement in the hierarchical structure of their village. And this completely agrees with the traditional Trobrianders' objective to gain and enhance personal prestige. And helping their children to reach this aim, many parents are prepared to pay school fees for their children's higher school education. Many Trobriand adults have realized that adolescents who speak English and master the national language in reading and writing have an advantage over those Papua New Guineans who have not acquired these language skills.



Photo 47. Schoolchildren working in groups outside of their school building (1983)



Photo 48. Kedavakoma with nice face paintings (1989)

Having finished school, young Trobrianders have the chance to leave the Islands and to find a job in the cities of the mainland. They may also visit secondary schools on Kiriwina Island or at Hagita near the provincial capital Alotau which qualifies them for studying at one of the five universities of Papua New Guinea which are located in Port Moresby, Lae, Madang, Goroka and Rabaul. If they find jobs and positions where they can not only earn their lives but also accumulate a surplus of money, they are expected to live a parsimonious life and use the surplus income for supporting their families back home by providing them with cash and articles documenting wealth and progress such as radios, Coleman kerosene lamps. European clothes and so on (see Section 3.4 below). Besides



Photo 49. Pulula's marriage (1996)

their social rise, school children also gain more personal freedom, because their parents generally recognize their children's efforts at school and therefore only rather rarely request them to help in their household or in the gardens.

With puberty, there are no initiation rites on the Trobriands, neither for boys nor for girls. Pronounced puberty problems as those known in Western cultures seem to not exist in villages with an intact social structure. There is a short period in which the boys and girls obviously have to seek and find their new place within their village community. During this time especially boys who are no longer members of a children's group but have not yet found their position as a new member of the group of bachelors are bored to death. However, they usually solve this problem by first increasing their contributions in helping their relatives working in the garden or fishing at sea and then by starting to build a house of their own with which they document their rite of passage to the bachelors' group. At this moment they have reached the peak of their easy-going, fancy-free life which they enjoy to the full.

Girls have even less problems with puberty. If they do not attend school, they take over more and more duties in the parental household and in the gardens as they get older. However, the amount of these duties is largely dependent on the young girls' current willingness to work. There is still a large part of the day which these girls enjoy with bathing, with gossiping with other girls in their peer-group and with trips to visit other villages on the islands.

The time between puberty and marriage is obviously the most unburdened and untroubled period in the life of a Trobriand Islander. At this age, the adolescents are granted with a maximum of personal freedom and at the same time they are imposed with a minimum of obligations.

Only after marriage a Trobriander is regarded as being an adult. Then the Trobrianders join their community as fully-fledged members and gain all the rights associated with this new status, rights which are mainly of an economic nature. However, they also have to attend to new duties – especially those ones that demand the observance of all the relatively strict social norms which especially apply as soon as a young married couple expects their first child.

CHAPTER 3

Educational ideologies

In the preceding subsections of Chapter 2 we have pointed out that on the Trobriands

- attempts of parental education are confined to a minimum,
- that parents only sporadically request strict obedience from their children, and
- that the Trobrianders consider their function as parents first and foremost as a priming one: they believe and trust in the power of the ‘good example’, the proper ‘role model’: If the parents lead an orderly life, then their children will do so as well.

However, it goes without saying that the Trobrianders also use a number of more subtle educational means to prepare their children for their roles in their social world, trying to make sure that their children will gradually grow into the role of respected members of their society, that they come up with the culture specific expectations of what it requires and means to be a responsible and valuable adult and to thus completely conform with the cultural and social norms that are valid and essential for their construction of reality. These educational aims are based on “a set of beliefs governing conduct”. This last expression can be found with one of the definitions the Oxford English Dictionary provides for the entry “ideology” (see: <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/91016?redirectedFrom=ideology#eid>).⁶¹ In agreement with this definition we understand the set of beliefs that underlie the Trobriand Islanders’ educational aims as culture-specific educational ideologies. This understanding is supported by Jef Verschueren’s discussion of the concept of ideology. In his monograph on *Ideology in Language Use* Verschueren points out that ‘... ideology is associated with *underlying patterns of meaning, frames of interpretation, world views, or forms of everyday thinking and*

61. The full entry (under 4.) runs: “A systematic scheme of ideas, usually relating to politics, economics, or society and forming the basis of action or policy; a set of beliefs governing conduct”.

explanation. (Verschueren 2012: 7). One of the definitions Verschueren (2012: 10) provides for “ideology” runs as follows:

We can define as ideological any basic pattern of meaning or frame of interpretation bearing on or involved in (an) aspect(s) of social ‘reality’ (in particular in the realm of social relations in the public sphere), felt to be commonsensical, and often functioning in a normative way.

Verschueren (2012: 17) then continues: “[One of] the most visible manifestation[s] of ideology is LANGUAGE USE or DISCOURSE, which may reflect, construct and/or maintain ideological patterns”.⁶² And it is in language use, indeed, where we find manifestations of the Trobriand Islanders’ educational ideologies. Contrary to what Margaret Mead (1930: 98f.) reports about the Manus Islanders, the Trobrianders – adults as well as children – are great story-tellers (see Senft 2015a). And it is in different kinds of stories, tales and in specific speeches that we could document on the Trobriand Islands where we find some of the basic concepts that underlie and constitute the Trobrianders educational ideologies. In this chapter we document and analyze four such Kilivila texts:

The first one, a true and thus semi-documentary story, contrasts a good, busy and caring husband, father and villager and his family with a bad, lazy and careless man and his family. Our consultants refer to this story as *livalela valu* – as “village talk”.

The second text is a story or tale about a good and a bad girl. With the exception of the ritualized introduction that indicates the *kukwanebu* type of narratives in the Trobriand Islanders indigenous typology of text-category,⁶³ this text shows all the other features of a typical *kukwanebu* – a “fictive story” or “(fairy)-tale” (for other such tales see Senft 2015a).

The third text, a speech directed to children, is explicitly educational; it tells children how to behave as adults. The Trobriand Islanders metalinguistically label this text as *gugwadi asi guguya* – as a piece of “advice for children” (see also Senft 2015a: 149ff).

And the last text is a speech by Keda’ila, a man in his late thirties, presented to schoolchildren during a meeting called *education pela gugwadi pela*

62. Note that all the quotes from Verschueren (2012) provided here are printed in bold in the original.

63. The ritualized introduction formula of the *kukwanebu* tales consists of the noun *kwanebuyeee* and the nominal reference to the protagonist(s) of the respective tale. The syllable \$yeee\$ (with an elongated final vowel) is suffixed to the shortened variant of the noun *kukwanebu* to emphasize that what follows represents a specific genre of oral literature (see Senft 2015a: 21).

bubunesi bwena valu Tauwema – “educating children in the good customs of Tauwema village”.

These four texts are documented in a morpheme-interlinear transcription. The presentation of each of these texts is followed by an interpretative re-narration, with observations with respect to the rhetorical devices and verbal means the speakers use to transmit the educational ideologies they pursue with the texts and with some final comments on peculiarities and/or culture specific features of the contents of these texts.

3.1 Gerubara’s account of a “village talk” – a *livalela valu*

On the 27th of May 1996 Gunter was working with his good friend and consultant Gerubara – a man of 52 years of age then, a member of the Lukwasisiga clan and one of the sons of the late chief Kilagola – on some lexicographic-semantic problems with respect to Kilivila motion verbs. Gunter was using short animated films for eliciting these verbal expressions – and the film clips had attracted a relatively big crowd of children who were beleaguering Gunter’s house. When Gerubara and Gunter had almost finished their work, Gerubara suddenly came up with the idea that the present situation with all the children around would provide an excellent occasion for telling them an educational story. He referred to this story with the metalinguistic term *livalela valu* which literally translates as “village talk” but comes close to what we refer to as “common talk” or “talk of the town” (in this case rather “talk of the village”). Gerubara interrupted his work with Gunter and told him what he wanted to do, pointing out that this *livalela valu* reports a true story. And then he started to tell the following story:

Gerubara: *Livalela valu*

- (1) *E makala – Imwaga gala buku-bigatona - makala:*
 Yes like Imwaga not 2.FUT-talk like
 Yes, like (this) – Imwaga, you should not talk now – like this:
- (2) *M-to-na tau bi-lola bi-la omatala kabululela*
 DEM-CP.male-DEM man 3.FUT-walk 3.FUT-go in.front.of village.sector
 This man he will walk he will go before the sector of a
- (3) *valu beya e bi-gisi ave vavagi e-kanukwenu,*
 village there and 3.FUT-see what thing 3.-lie.down
 village there and he will look what kind of things are lying there
- (4) *kena ave paisewa e-sisu o kabululela valu.*
 or what work 3.-be LOC sector village
 or what kind of work there is in this sector of the village.

- (5) *E bi-boda bi-la bi-gisi amakala*
 Yes 3.FUT-will.sum.up.to.this 3.FUT-go 3.FUT-see how
 Yes, it will sum up to this, he will go he will see how
- (6) *bi-vigaki. La nanamsa bi-paisau m-kwe-na*
 3.FUT-make his thinking 3.FUT-work DEM-CP.thing-DEM
 he will make this. His thinking is how he will do this
- (7) *paisewa kena bi-youkali m-kwe-na la yo'udila*
 work or 3.FUT-work DEM-CP.thing-DEM his tools
 work or how he will work with these tools of his.
- (8) *E iga bi-ke'ita-vau o valu. M-to-na*
 and then 3.FUT-return-again LOC village. DEM-CP.male-DEM
 And then he will return again to the village. This
- (9) *tommota makala: I-vigaki e-kanukwenu yam, e-sisu*
 person like: 3.-make 3.-lie.down day 3.-be
 person is like this: He makes (this) he lies down during the day, he enjoys himself
- (10) *yam deli bogi, e-masisi. E i-ninamsi paisewa*
 day with night 3.-sleep And 3.-think work
 day and night, he sleeps. And he thinks about
- (11) *m-kwe-na, bi-la bi-paisau. I-ninamsi la bagula,*
 DEM-CP.thing-DEM 3.FUT-go 3.FUT-work 3.-think his garden
 this work, he will go he will do it. He thinks of his garden
- (12) *bi-la bi-buguli, bi-kanobusi pela ala pilasi*
 3.FUT-go 3.FUT-work.in.the.garden 3.FUT-come.out for his help
 he will go to the garden he will work there, he will come out of the garden
 to help
- (13) *deli latu-la kena ave vavagi. Tuvela bi-vagi ala*
 with child-his or what thing again 3.FUT-do his
 with his children or what else is to be done. In addition, he will prepare for his
- (14) *sagali kena avaka. Ave vavagi tuvela bi-vagi, kena lakeboi.*
 feast or what what thing again 3.FUT-do or party
 feast or something else. Whatever has to be done – again he will do it, or he
 makes a party.
- (15) *E bi-bwena ala lumkola makala. M-kwe-si-ta*
 and 3.FUT-good his feeling like DEM-CP.thing-PL-DEM
 And it will be good his feeling if it is like this. These
- (16) *vavagi kumwedona e-sisu olumolela o valu. E*
 thing all 3.-be inside.of LOC village Yes
 things, all of them – he lives inside, in the village. Yes

- (17) *taga tommota yakidasi makala. Kidamwa*
but.of.course people we.INCL like If
but of course our people are like this. If
- (18) *bita-paisau bi-bwena,*
Dual.INCL.FUT-work 3.FUT-good
kidamwa bita-buguli
if Dual.INCL.FUT-work.in.the.garden
one works it will be good, if one works in the garden
- (19) *bi-bwena, kidamwa bita-karewagi bi-bwena.*
3.FUT-good if Dual.INCL.FUT-take.responsibility 3.FUT-good
it will be good, if one takes one's responsibilities it will be good.
- (20) *O e-vivavagi tuvela bi-sunapula deli da-kabomwasawa,*
oh 3.-make again 3.FUT-come.out with our-happiness
Oh he makes it again, he will come out of the garden with one's happiness,
- (21) *deli da-gigila, deli da-sisu bwena. E kidamwa-ga*
with our-laughter with our-being good And if-EMPH
with one's laughter, with one's well-being. And if indeed
- (22) *m-kwe-si-ta vavai gala bita-paisau*
DEM-CP.thing-PL-DEM thing not Dual.INCL.FUT-work
pela adi-taboda,
for our-insufficiency
one cannot work out some of these things because of one's insufficiency,
- (23) *iga tuta oluvi bi-vilobusi bi-mikeya-da e bi-vigaki*
then time after 3.FUT-come.out 3.FUT-come.to-us and 3.-make
then after some time someone will come out of the garden someone will
come to us and solve
- (24) *makala ada-mwau. Kidamwa buku-ninamsi tommota-*
like our-problems if 2.FUT-think people
our problems like this. If you think about the people –
- (25) *te-tala te-tala e-sisu. Te-tala*
CP.male-one CP.male-one 3.-be CP.male-one
one is like this, one is like that. One
- (26) *to-paisewa bwena, te-tala to-paisewa gaga.*
CP.male-work good CP.male-one CP.male-work bad
is a good worker, one is a bad worker.
- (27) *M-to-na to-paisewa bwena bi-ninamsi pela*
DEM-CP.male-DEM CP.male-work good 3.FUT-think for
This good worker he will think about

- (28) *la kaukweda, pela latu-la, pela la nanamsa bwena,*
his veranda for child-his for his thinking good
his house and his family, for his children, for his good mood,
- (29) *bi-pilasi vavagi kumwedona, bi-sunapula m-kwe-si-ta,*
3.FUT-help thing all 3.FUT-come.out DEM-CP.thing-PL-DEM
he will help with everything, he will come out (and solve) these things,
- (30) *kamkwam bi-kam e deli la mwasawa. E*
food 3.FUT-eat yes with his joy and
he will eat his food, yes, with his joy. And
- (31) *m-to-we-na-ga tau gaga kena makala gala*
DEM-CP.male-there-DEM-EMPH man bad or like not
that bad man there, or someone who is not
- (32) *to-paisewa pe'ula iga tuta oluvi bi-sunapula*
CP.male-work hard then time after 3.FUT-come.out
a hard worker, then after some time he will come out of
- (33) *m-kwe-si-ta vavagi deli la kabovalam, deli ala*
DEM-CP.thing-PL-DEM thing with his sadness with his
these things with his sadness, with his
- (34) *mwasila, bi-sisu metoya o la bwala. Gala tuvela*
shame 3.FUT-be with.his.family LOC his house not again
shame, he will stay with his family in his house. Not again
- (35) *gala bi-sunapula bi-gisi ave paka, ave gugua, ave*
not 3.FUT-come.out 3.FUT-see what party what goods what
he will not come out to see what parties are celebrated, what goods are pre-
sented, what
- (36) *paisewa, ave kaula e-subu-si. Ema bi-paisau,*
work what food 3.-come.out 3-come 3.FUT-work
work is done, what food comes out from the garden. He comes he will work
- (37) *tuta kumwedona. Makala ku-nunamsi kidamwa buda-tala*
time all like 2.-think if CP.group-one
all the time. Think like this, when a
- (38) *boda bi-me-si makala totapwaroro kena avaka, e, ku-gisi*
group 3.FUT-come-PL like church or what yes 2.-see
group of people comes for a visit like for a church-meeting or what, yes,
look at
- (39) *m-to-na e-lilola deli vautu'utu, e bigatona pe'ula,*
DEM-CP.male-DEM 3.-walk with pride and speech heavy
this man, he walks around with pride and his speech is important

- (40) *vavagi kumwedona bogwa e-koguguliwa, e-kanukwenu u'ula*
 thing all already 3.-hold.together 3.-lie.down reason
 already all things he holds together, he lies down because
- (41) *beya e-pe'ulaki vovo-la, e-lilola e-va'utu-'utu, e-bigatona*
 here 3-get.strong body-his 3.-walk 3.-be.proud-REDUP 3.-speak
 here he is confident, he proudly walks around, he speaks
- (42) *bwena. E ku-gisi-ga m-to-na tommota, avetuta*
 good And 2.-see-EMPH DEM-CP.male-DEM person when
 well. And now look at this man there, when
- (43) *bi-vilobusi-si, bi-me-si tommota, ituali boda*
 3.FUT-come.out-PL 3.FUT-come-PL people different group
 they come out from the garden they come the people, it's a different group
- (44) *ma-boda-na e. M-to-na tommota gala bi-bigatona*
 DEM-CP.group-DEM yes DEM-CP.male-DEM person not 3.FUT-speak
 this group, yes. This man does not say
- (45) *pe'ula gala bi-vautu'utu, gala, bi-ko'u-si seya-la,*
 heavy not 3.FUT-be.proud-REDUP no 3.FUT-feel.bad-PL relatives-his
 anything of importance, he will not be proud, no, they will feel bad his
 relatives
- (46) *avaka avaka kumwedona. E m-to-na - deli vavagi*
 what what all and DEM-CP.male-DEM with goods
 whatever, all of them. And this man – as to these goods –
- (47) *m-kwe-si-ta - gala e-katubiyasi bwena, gala e-paisau*
 DEM-CP.thing-PL-DEM not 3.-prepare good not 3.-work
 he does not prepare them well, he does not work
- (48) *bwena, e deli ala mwasila bi-sisu tuta kumwedona*
 good and with his shame 3.FUT-be time all
 well, and with his shame he will sit all the time
- (49) *o la kaukweda. E bita-ninamsi makala. E*
 LOC his veranda yes Dual.INCL.FUT-think like yes
 on his veranda. Yes, one should think like this. Yes
- (50) *bita-ninamsi makala. Tuta tokunibogwa tommwaya*
 Dual.INCL.FUT-think like time in.former.times people
 one should think like this. From times of old till now people
- (51) *i-kayasa-si. I-kayasa-si,*
 3.-make.harvest.competition-PL 3.-make.harvest.competition-PL
 have been organizing harvest competitions. They have been organizing
 harvest competitions

- (52) *e-bugu-bagula-si. M-to-we-na*
 3.-garden-REDUP-PL DEM-CP.male-there-DEM
bi-kayasa, bi-kamituli
 3.FUT-prepare 3.FUT-announce
 they gardened and gardened. And this man there he will organize it, he will announce
- (53) *vavagi kumwedona. E igau te-tala makala*
 thing all and then CP.male-one like
 all the prizes. And then a man like (him)
- (54) *bi-kaponai, e bi-la bi-kau olopola valu,*
 3.FUT-take.challenge and 3.FUT-go 3.FUT-take in.the.middle.of village
 he will take the challenge and he will go and take it in the middle of the village,
- (55) *e igaga te-yu-vela, so-la, e-livala bi-livala*
 3. later CP.male-two-again friend-his 3.-say 3.FUT-say
 and later a second man again, his friend, he says, he will (first) speak
- (56) *o nano-la bi-kebiga: “Ku-kwau ku-veya talatova,*
 LOC mind.his 3.FUT-say 2.-take 2.-bring next.year
 to himself (then) he will say: “Take it and bring it next year,
- (57) *mapu’ula yegu bake’ula!” E avetuta bi-kalipola-si*
 first.prize I 1.FUT-carry And when 3.FUT-cut.new.garden-PL
 the first prize I will carry it on my shoulders”. And when they will cut new gardens
- (58) *bi-bagula-si bi-bugu-bagula-si, avetuta bi-vanovasi*
 3.FUT-garden-PL 3.FUT-REDUP-garden-PL when 3.FUT-finish
 they will garden they will garden and garden, and when they have finished gardening,
- (59) *tuta-la e-kebiga-si tommwaya: “Bogwa bita-yoyuva-si”.*
 time-EMPH 3.-say-PL old.men already 1.INCL.FUT-harvest-PL
 at this time they will say the old men: “Already we will harvest”.
- (60) *E bi-la bi-la bi-la-aa, bogwa*
 And 3.-FUT-go 3.-FUT-go 3.-FUT-go-EMPH already
 And he will go he will go he will go indeed, already
- (61) *gulu-vakaveaka bi-vokwa. E*
 CP.heap-enormous 3.FUT-finish And
m-to-na e-kesa
 DEM-CP.male-DEM 3.-be.over.and.above
 an enormous heap (of yams) he will have piled up. And this man is over and above (all)

- (62) *e m-to-na bi-ke'ula mapu. Boda kumwedona makala*
 and DEM-CP.male-DEM 3.-FUT.carry prize group all like
 and this man he will carry the prize on his shoulders. The whole group
- (63) *bi-vigake-si, gala te-tala bi-sisu. E*
 3.FUT-make-PL not CP.male-one 3.FUT-be and
 they will make it like this, and not one will remain (without a prize). And
- (64) *m-to-we-na gala i-ninamsi pela m-kwe-na*
 DEM-CP.male-there-DEM, not 3.-think for DEM-CP.thing-DEM
 this man there, he did not think about this
- (65) *kayasa, i-ninamsi pela-wa bi-lomakava bi-lilola*
 harvest.competition 3.-think for-only 3.FUT-roam.around 3.FUT-walk
 harvest competition, he just thinks about how he will roam around, how he
 will walk
- (66) *va keda, bi-sisu o valu, bi-masisi. Igau ala*
 DIR road 3.FUT-be LOC village 3.FUT-sleep then his
 the roads, he will stay in the village, he will sleep. Then for his
- (67) *mapu tuta oluvi ala mapu tuta oluvi. Bi-vilobusi,*
 prize time behind his prize time behind 3.FUT-come.out
 prize he is behind time, for his prize he is behind time. He will come out of
 the garden
- (68) *m-to-na deli la kabomwasila, deli mwasila, pela*
 DEM-CP.male-DEM with his personal.shame with shame for
 this man with his personal shame and with public shame, and for
- (69) *avaka u'ula? Gala i-ninamsi m-kwe-na kayasa,*
 what reason not 3.-think DEM-CP.thing-DEM harvest.competition
 what reason? He did not think about this harvest competition,
- (70) *bi-bubuli bagula, bi-sapu yagogu, bi-teya*
 3.FUT.set.in.order garden 3.FUT-plant seed.yam 3.FUT-cut
 he did not set his garden in order, he did not plant his yam seedlings, he did
 not cut
- (71) *kavatam, e deli la mwa..., avaka, ala mwasila*
 yam.stake and with his sha... what his shame
 yam stakes, and with his sha..., what, his public shame
- (72) *bi-sisu: gala-wala ala mapu. E bita-ninamsi makala,*
 3.FUT-be nothing-only his prize and Dual.INCL.FUT-think like
 he remains: nothing will be his prize. And one should think like this,
- (73) *e bita-ninamsi makala. Pela la-ninamsi makala:*
 and Dual.INCL.FUT-think like for 1.PAST-think like
 and one should think like this. For I thought like this:

- (74) *Tommota te-yu, te-tala to-bugubagula te-tala*
 people CP.male-two CP.male-one CP.male-gardener CP.male-one
 Two men, one men is a gardener, one man
- (75) *gala i-bugubagula. E tuta oluvi, i-sisu, i-sisu-si-ii, tuta-la*
 not 3.-garden and time then 3.-be 3.-be-PL-EMPH time-its
 he does not garden. And time passes, he is there, they are there, it's the time
 of the
- (76) *yavata i-tokeya, e-vilobusi tubukona, ma-na-na*
yavata-wind 3.-stand.up 3.-come.out moon DEM-CP.MOON-DEM
 North-Westerly, it stands up, there it comes out the moon, this one
- (77) *December January, e e-vilobusi molu kwe-veaka –*
 December January and 3.-comes.out famine CP.thing-big
 the December/January moon, and a big famine hits (them) –
- (78) *gala avaka bita-koma. E m-to-na tommota*
 not what Dual.INCL.FUT-eat and DEM-CP.male-DEM person
 nothing whatsoever to eat. And this man
- (79) *bogwa e-buguli bagula kumwedona, latu-la deli*
 already 3.-work garden all child-his with
 already he works in all the gardens for his children's
- (80) *si si kabomwasawa. E-la e-koke'ula ina-si, i-meya*
 their their happiness 3.-go 3.-carry mother-their 3.-bring
 happiness. She goes (to the garden) she carries food, their mother, she
 brings it
- (81) *i-kam-kwam-si. E te-yu-vela, gala i-bagula*
 3.-eat-REDUP-PL and CP.male-two-again not 3.-garden
 and they eat. And the second man again, he did not garden
- (82) *pela i-nanamsi la kaukweda kena latu-la bi-kam-si.*
 for 3.-think his family or child-his 3.FUT-eat-PL
 and therefore he thinks about his family whether his children will eat
 something.
- (83) *E beya i-sisu. I-sisu, i-sisu, tuta-la yavata e-vilobusi.*
 And there 3.-be 3.-sit 3.-sit time-its *yavata-wind 3.-come.out*
 And there he is. He sits, he sits, the time of the North-Westerly has come.
- (84) *I-ne'i kaula, i-somata, ikatuvi pewaga, i-seki*
 3.-search food 3.-tired 3.-break *pewaga-clam 3.-give*
 He searches for food, he is tired, he breaks *pewaga-clams* and gives them to
- (85) *latu-la i-kipatu-si. I-kipatu-si-ii, i-vokwa.*
 child-his 3.-hold-PL 3.-hold-PL-EMPH 3.-finish
 his children and they hold them. They hold them, that's all.

- (86) *M-to-si-na* *gugwadi asi molu – gala i-kam-si.*
 DEM-CP.human-PL-DEM children their hunger not 3.-eat-PL
 These children's hunger – they do not eat.
- (87) *Bitu-kam* *simwa kaula, gala kaula, bogwa pewaga-la*
 Dual.INCL.FUT-eat without yams no yams already *pewaga-EMPH*
 One will eat but not yams, no yams, it's just *pewaga-clams*
- (88) *i-yayosa-si. I-vokwa i-mum-si sopi i-vokwa, i-kau-si*
 3.-hold-PL 3.-finish 3.-drink-PL water 3.-finish 3.-take-PL
 what they hold in their hands. They finish them they drink water it's
 finished, they take them
- (89) *i-simwe-si m-pa-si-ta* *pewaga. E-yam, e-yam*
 3.-remain-PL DEM-CP.part-PL-DEM *pewaga-clam* 3.-be.day 3.-be.day
 they just remain (for them) these *pewaga-clams*. Day breaks, day breaks
- (90) *tuta kumwedona si paisewa m-to-si-ta tauwau*
 time all their work DEM-CP.male-PL-DEM men
 all the time the work of these men is
- (91) *makala. M-to-na e-buguli la bagula bwena,*
 like DEM-CP.male-DEM 3.-work his garden good
 like this. This man works very well in his garden,
- (92) *e la kwava i-la i-koke'ula kaula i-ma i-kamkwam-si*
 and his wife 3.-go 3.-carry yams 3.-come 3.-eat-PL
 and his wife she goes (to the garden) she carries yams, she comes (home)
 and they eat
- (93) *latu-la. E m-to-na gala i-bagula, la kwava*
 child-his and DEM-CP.male-DEM not 3.-garden his wife
 his children. And this man does not garden, his wife
- (94) *gala i-la i-koke'ula kaula i-meya, bogwa la paisewa.*
 not 3.go 3.-carry yams 3.-bring already-EMPH her work
 she does not go (to the garden) she does not bring yams, as this would be
 her work.
- (95) *E-sisu-si bi-bogi. Bogwa bi-kwaiyai bi-sulu*
 3.-be-PL 3.FUT-be.night already 3.FUT-be.afternoon 3.-FUT-cook
 They are there, night falls. Already in the afternoon she will cook
- (96) *ma-na-na m-to-na tokwebagula la kwava*
 DEM-CP.female-DEM DEM-CP.male-DEM master.gardener his wife
 this one, this mastergardener's wife
- (97) *bi-sulu bi-kam-si latu-la. E m-to-we-na – gala.*
 3.-FUT-cook 3.FUT-eat-PL child-his and DEM-CP.male-here-DEM no
 she will cook and they will eat his children. And this man there – there is nothing.

- (98) *Tobugumata la kwava bi-gidimakai e-vokwa kova olopola*
 lazy.man his wife 3.FUT-make.fire 3.-finish fire inside
 The lazy men's wife she will make a fire, she finished it, there is fire in
- (99) *bwala. Bi-livala bi-kebiga: "A iga a-vigadi kova".*
 house 3.FUT-speak 3.FUT-say ah later 1.-feed fire
 the house. She will speak she will say: "Ah, later I feed the fire".
- (100) *Bi-gisi so-gu pela la sulusulu. E bi-vigadi*
 3.FUT-see friend-her for her cooking and 3.-FUT-feed
 She will see her friend for her cooking. And she will feed
- (101) *ma-kova-na kova bi-kakatala*
 DEM-CP.fire-DEM fire 3.FUT-burn
bi-bobwau-uuu bi-mata.
 3.-FUT-smoke-EMPH 3.FUT-burn.down
 this fire, it will burn it will smoke it will burn down.
- (102) *Avetuta bogwa bi-saliu lilu, e, bi-la bi-kau*
 when already 3.FUT-set sun yes 3.FUT-go 3.FUT-take
 When already the sun sets, yes, she will go she will collect
- (103) *m-pa-si-ta pewaga bi-ma bi-seki latu-la*
 DEM-CP.part-PL-DEM *pewaga*.clam 3.FUT-com 3.FUT-give child-her
 these *pewaga*-clams, she will come she will give (them) to her children
- (104) *bi-kipatu-si. I-valutu makala, si paisewa,*
 3.FUT-hold-PL 3.-continue like their work
 they will hold them. It keeps going on like this, their work,
- (105) *tetu tetu makala si paisewa usola, makala si*
 year year like, their work, friend, like their
 year after year it has been like this, their work, friend, like this, their
- (106) *paisewa, usola. E-sisu-si, kwe-tala tetu i-la i-take'u*
 work friend 3.-be-PL CP.thing-one year 3.-go 3.-cut
 work, friend. They live there, one year he goes he cuts
- (107) *baleku m-to-we-na tokwebagula. I-vokwa i-la*
 new.garden DEM-CP.male-there-DEM master.gardener 3.-finish 3,-go
 a new garden this master-gardener. He finishes it he goes
- (108) *i-gi-gisi so-la e-katupoi: "Avaka pela gala*
 3.-REDUP-see friend-his 3.-ask what for not
 he sees his friend he asks him: "Why don't you
- (109) *sita ku-la ku-bugubagula? Mwoa, ku-la ku-bugubagula!"*
 bit 2.-go 2,-garden chap 2.-go 2.-garden
 go and garden a bit? Chap, go and garden!"

- (110) “*Yegu kaikai vovo-gu ba-sisu-wala o valu*”. *E i-sisu*
I lazy body-my 1.FUT-sit-just LOC village yes 3-be
“As to me, it is lazy my body, I will just sit in the village”. Yes he is there
- (111) *i-sisu-uu. I-tokeya m-to-na tokwebagula i-la*
3.-be-EMPH 3.-stand.up DEM-CP.male-DEM master.gardener 3.-go
he is always there. He stands up this master-gardener he goes
- (112) *i-buguli bagula m-kwe-na i-vinaku. I-tokeya*
3.-work garden DEM-CP.thing-DEM 3.-finish 3.-stand.up
he works in this garden he finishes it. He stands up
- (113) *so-la la bagula i-buguli i-vinau. I-sapu uli,*
friend-his his garden 3.-work 3.-finish 3.-plant taro
his friend in his garden he works and he finishes it. He plants taro,
- (114) *tetu, i-vali uli, tapiokwa, a simsimwai, bisiya.*
yams 3.-plant taro tapioca ah sweet.potatoes *bisiya*-plants
yams, he plants taro, tapioca, ah, sweet potatoes, and *bisiya*-plants.
- (115) *Kasi: yena, tokuluveli, bovada. i-vinaku. Tuta-la*
their.food fish *tokuluveli*-yams pumpkin 3.-finish time-its
Among their food are also fish, *tokuluveli*-yams, pumpkins, that’s it. The
time of
- (116) *yavata. E-tokeya e-ma e-luki mi-na-na vivila*
yavata-wind 3.-stand.up 3.-come 3.-say DEM-CP.female-DEM girl
the North-Westerly comes. She stands up she comes she says this girl:
- (117) “*A-doki buku-lo-si so-m lube-m o buyagu*”.
1.-think 2.FUT-go-PL friend-your friend-your LOC garden
“I think you should go with your friend to the garden”.
- (118) *E i-tokeya-si bi-lo-si o buyagu, i-lilola-si*
And 3.-stand.up-PL 3.FUT-go-PL LOC garden 3.-walk-PL
And they stand up they will go to the garden, they walk
- (119) *i-vanapula-si e e-livala mi-na-na so-la:* “A
3.-appear-PL and 3.-say DEM-CP.female-DEM friend-her ah
they appear at the garden and she says, this girl to her friend: “Ah
- (120) *yakamesi ma-bagula-si deli tama-masi, m-wke-na e*
we our-garden-PL with father-our DEM-CP.thing-DEM and
we were in our garden with our father, in this garden and
- (121) *yokwami deli tama-mi m-kwe-na pili-yu-vela keda*”
you with father-your DEM-CP.thing-DEM CP.part-two-again path
you with your father in this garden on the other side of the path”.

- (122) *E e-livala makala. E e-la i-bugubagula. E-vavagi-ga*
 Yes 3.-speak like And 3.-go 3.-garden 3.-say-EMPH
 Yes she spoke like this. And she goes she works in the garden. She says
- (123) *so-la; "Tama-masi-la e-buguli, e-sake-mi kami*
 friend-her father-our-EMPH 3.-work 3.-give-you your food
 her friend: "Our father worked in the garden, he gives you all your food
- (124) *ku-kwam-si". E mi-na-na vivila deli la valam*
 2.-eat-PL and DEM-CP.female-DEM girl with her sadness
 you eat it". And this girl with her sadness,
- (125) *e-tota i-valam o buyagu. I-valam o buyagu*
 3.-stand 3.-cry LOC garden 3.-cry LOC garden
 she stands there and cries in the garden. She cries in the garden
- (126) *pela tama-si gala e-bugubagula makala, i-lomakava.*
 for father-their not 3.-garden like 3.-roam.around
 because their father does not garden like this, instead he roams around.
- (127) *E i-siva i-lulu beya uli, i-lu-lulu i-vinaku, i-kau usi,*
 yes 3.-be 3.-pull there taro 3.-REDUP-pull 3.-finish 3.-take banana
 Yes, she is there she pulls out taro, she pulls and pulls it is finished, she takes
 bananas
- (128) *i-tapu i-la o la peta i-gabi. I-gabi-si,*
 3.-cut 3.-go LOC her basket 3.-carry.on.head 3.-carry.on.head-PL
 and cuts them it goes into her basket which she carries on her head. They
 carry (the food) on their heads,
- (129) *i-meye-si o kaukweda, i-taya-si i-simwe-si i-sulu-si*
 3.-bring-PL LOC veranda 3.-put.down-PL 3.-stay-PL 3.-cook-PL
 they bring it to the veranda, they put the baskets down they stay and cook.
- (130) *E m-to-na tau gala topaisewa pe'ula, m-to-na*
 And DEM-CP.male-DEM man not worker hard DEM-CP.male-DEM
 And this man who is not a hard worker, this man
- (131) *i-la i-vayali-la. I-vayali e-ma.*
 3.-go 3.-walk.on.beach-only 3.-walk.on.beach 3.-come
 goes and just walks on the beach. He walks on the beach he comes (back).
- (132) *Bi-kwaiyai, i-sulu i-kam-si deli latu-la, i-vinaku-si*
 3.FUT-be.afternoon 3.-cook 3.-eat-PL with child-her 3.-finish-PL
 It will be afternoon, she cooks and they eat she and her child, they
 finish it

- (133) *beya kaula. I-tokeya-si i-vini-si gugua ina-si.*
 here food 3.-stand.up-PL 3.-wash-PL goods mother-their
I-vini gugua,
 3.-wash goods
 here the food. They stand up and wash up the goods of their mother. They wash up the goods,
- (134) *i-vinaku i-sela o kevala. I-kebiga-si: "I-sela o kevala*
 3.-finish 3.-put LOC board 3.-say-PL 3.-put LOC board
 it is finished and she puts them on the board. They say: "She puts them on the board
- (135) *mi-na-na numwaya". E e-ma-ga tama-si,*
 DEM-CP.female-DEM old.woman and 3.-COM-EMPH father-their
 of this old woman". And he comes indeed, their father
- (136) *bogwa e-kwaiyai. E-ma tama-si bogwa*
 already 3.-be.afternoon 3.-come father-their already
 it is already afternoon. He comes their father it is already
- (137) *e-kwaiyai, i-lola e-ma i-doki bi-sili.*
 3.-be.afternoon 3.-walks 3.-come 3.-think 3.FUT-sit.sown
 afternoon, he walks he comes he thinks he will sit down,
- (138) *E-livala la kwava: "Ku-doki we!" E-livala m-to-na:*
 3.-say his wife 2.-think hey 3.-say DEM-CP.male-DEM
 She says his wife: "What do you think, hey!" He says this man there:
- (139) *"Ku-meya sita kaula a-kam". E i-vavagi la kwava:*
 2.-bring bit food 1.-eat and 3.-say his wife
 "Bring some food I eat it". And she says his wife:
- (140) *"Gala-wala, gala-wala kaula. Laka-la*
 No-only no-only food Dul.EXCL.-go
so-gu mi-na-na
 friend-my DEM-CP.female-DEM
 "No way, there is no food (for you). We two went with my friend with this
- (141) *vivila, kala i-kaveya. Ka-mesi ke-yuva gala*
 girl her.food 3.-harvest Dual.EXCL.-bring CP.long-two not
 girl, she harvested her food. We two brought two (taro tubers), not
- (142) *ke-tolu-la, e bogwa laka-sulu-si. Deli*
 CP.long-three-EMPH and already 1.EXCL.PAST-COOK-PL with
 three, and already we cooked them. With the

- (143) *gugwadi laka-koma-si eokwa e bwenigo, ku-sisu*.
children 1.EXCL.PAST-eat-PL finished and good 2.-sit.down
children we ate them it is finished and well, sit down”.
- (144) *I-sisu-si e-yam e-luki: “Bita-la o buyagu*.
3.-be-PL 3.-be.day 3.-say Dual.INCL.-go LOC garden
They are there, day breaks and she says: “We two will go to the garden”.
- (145) *Bi-lo-si o buyagu e-lulu kaula ke-yu. E-meya*
3.FUT-go-PL LOC garden 3.-pull food CP.long-two 3.-come.
They will go to the garden they pull food, two tubers. He comes
- (146) *tama-si i-la i-lola o kwadeva. E i-luki-ga*
father-their 3.-go e.-walk LOC beach and 3.talk-EMPH
their father he goes he walks at the beach. And she reports it
- (147) *latu-la E-kebwani-si i-vinaku-si i-sulu-si i-kam-koma-si.*
child-her 3.-peel(taro)-PL 3.-finish 3.-cook-PL 3.-eat-REDUP-PL
her child. They peel (the taro tubers) they finish it they cook they eat.
- (148) *I-vokwa i-kau-si i-sela-si - i-vini - kwena. I-vinaku*
3.-finish 3.-take-PL 3.-put-PL 3.-wash pot 3.-finish
It is finished they take it they put it – she washes it – in the pot. It is finished and
- (149) *i-sela o kelupilupa mi-na-na vivila, e-ma-ga*
3.-put LOC shelf DEM-CP.female-DEM girl 3.-come-EMPH
she puts it on the shelf this girl, and he comes indeed,
- (150) *tama-si. E-ma-ga tama-si e-luki:*
father-their 3.-come-EMPH father-their 3.-say
“(Ku-)Meye-si (la-)tu-gwa
2.-bring-PL children-my
their father. He comes, indeed their father and he says: “Children bring me
- (151) *sitana a-kam*”. *E-livala-si: “Gala-wala! Kaula ke-yu-wa*
bit 1.-eat 3.-say-PL nothing-only food CP.long-two-only
a bit of food I eat it”. They say: “No way! Just two tubers (of taro)
- (152) *laka-lulu-si laka-meye-si e-sulu*
1.EXCL.PAST-harvest-PL 1.EXCL.PAST-bring-PL 3.-cook
baka... avaka
1.EXCL.FUT... what
we harvested we brought them she cooked, we will... eh...
- (153) *bogwa laka-koma-si deli*”. *E m-to-na tama-si*
already 1.EXCL.PAST-eat-PL with and DEM-CP.male-DEM father-their
already we ate them together”. And this man their father

- (154) *i-nanamsa*: “*Avaka pela makala, yam yam bi-kam-koma-si*
3.-think what for like day day 3.FUT-eat-REDUP-PL
he thinks: “Why is it like this, day after day they will eat
- (155) *kaula bi-vinaku-si yegu agu molu*”. *E i-namsi*
food 3.FUT-finish-PL I my hunger yes 3.-think
food they will finish it and I (am here with) my hunger”. Yes he thinks
- (156) *makala. Tobugumata gala i-lola i-bugubagula. E...*
like lazy.man not 3.-go 3.-garden yes
like this. The lazy man does not go and work in the garden. Yes...
- (157) *i-simwe-si i-sisusi-iii kwe-tolu-la tetu e-bagula-si makala.*
3.-stay-PL 3.-be-EMPH CP.thing-three-EMPH year 3.-garden-PL like
they stay they are there for three years indeed they garden like this.
- (158) *Gala e-bagula m-to-na. E-sisu i-la i-buguli, so-la*
not 3.-garden DEM-CP.male-DEM 3.-be 3.-go 3.-work friend-his
This man did not garden. He is there he goes and works in the garden, the
other one
- (159) *ma-ni-kwa bagula i-buguli. I-vinaku, i-vali*
DEM-DEM-CP.thing garden 3.-work 3.finish 3.-plant
works in this garden. He finishes it, he plants
- (160) *vilaga kumwedona, i-vinaku. Avekaveluva avekaveluva i-vali*
vilaga.taro all 3.-finish all.food all.food 3.-plant
vilaga-taro, he finishes it. All the food all the food he plants and
- (161) *i-vokwa. Tuta-la o yavata i-la i-lulu.*
3.-finish time-EMPH oh *yavata*-wind 3.-go 3.-harvest.
it is finished. At the time of – oh – the North-Westerly he goes he
harvests.
- (162) *Mi-na-na vivila i-ke'ita i-ma e i-supwana-ga*
DEM-CP.female-DEM girl 3.-return 3.-come and 3.-leave-EMPH
This girl comes back she comes and he leaves without a notice, indeed
- (163) *m-to-na tobugumata i-la i-lulu*
DEM-CP.male-DEM lazy.man 3.-go 3.-harvest
ma-ni-kwa bagula.
DEM-DEM-CP.thing garden
this lazy man he goes he harvests this garden.
- (164) *I-lulu i-meya i-kam-si deli latu-la. E-yosi-si*
3.-harvest 3.-bring 3.-eat-PL with child-his 3.-take-PL
He harvests food he brings it and they eat together with his child. They take
(the food)

- (165) *e-yosi-si bogwa e-vinaku-si. Ke-tala vilaga, gala*
 3.-take-PL already 3.-finish-PL CP.long-one *vilaga.taro* not
 they keep on harvesting already it is finished. One *vilaga-taro* they did not
- (166) *i-lulu-si. Bogwa e-vitusi tama-si m-to-na*
 3.-harvest-PL already 3-realize father-their DEM-CP.male-DEM
 harvest. Already their father – this
- (167) *tokwebagula ma-ke-na vilaga bi-tota igau tuta*
 master.gardener DEM-CP.thing-DEM *vilaga.taro* 3.FUT-stand before time
 master-gardener, he realizes that this *vilaga-taro* has been standing there for
 a while
- (168) *makateki e bita-lulu. E e-sisu-si. Kwe-tala*
 presently and Dual.INCL.FUT-harvest and 3.-be-PL CP.thing-one
 and that one will harvest it. And they (the taro-plants) are there (in the
 garden). One
- (169) *tuta i-supwana m-to-na gala tobugubagula makala. I-la*
 time 3.-leave DEM-CP.male-DEM not gardener like 3.-go
 time he leaves without a notice this man who is not a gardener just like this.
 He goes
- (170) *i-velau so-la o la bagula. I-la i-lulu*
 3.-steal friend-his LOC his garden 3.-go 3.-harvest
 and steals in his friends garden. He goes he harvests
- (171) *ma-ke-na vilaga, i-kau i-meya i-kebwani i-vinaku*
 DEM-CP.long-DEM *vilaga.taro* 3.-take 3.bring 3.-peel 3.-finish
 this *vilaga-taro* he takes it he brings it he peels it it is finished and
- (172) *i-simwa. I-sulu la kwava. I-sulu i-vinaku*
 3.-be.there 3.-cook his wife 3.-cook 3.-finish
 it is there. She cooks it his wife. She cooks it is finished
- (173) *e-sewe-si. Bi-koma-si deli latu-la gala i-bwadi.*
 3.-put.there-PL 3.FUT-eat-PL with child-his not 3.-agree.with
 they put it there. They will eat it with his child – it does not agree with
 them.
- (174) *I-tokeya i-gigadi uda-si i-vinaku. i-valam-si latu-la.*
 3.-stand.up 3.-bite mouth-their 3.-finish 3.-cry-PL child-his
 He stands up, it burns their mouths, it is finished, his children cry.
- (175) *I-katupoj so-la: “Mwoa avaka pela gugwadi?” “Ga,*
 3.-ask friend-his chap what for children nothing
 He asks him his friend: “Chap, what’s on with your children?” “Nothing,

- (176) *e-valam-si*”. *E i-ninamsi ma-ke-na vilaga. Bogwa*
3.-cry-PL and 3-think dem-CP.long-DEM *vilaga.taro* already
they are crying”. And he thinks of this *vilaga-taro*. Already
- (177) *e-la i-kau so-la, e-meya e-seki la kwava.*
3.-go 3.-take friend-his 3.-bring 3.-give his wife
he goes he takes it his friend, he brings it and gives it to his wife.
- (178) *E-sulu e-koma-si. Bogwa e-gadi uda-si deli*
3.-cook 3.-eat-PL already 3.-bite mouth-their with
She cooks it and they eat. Already it burns their mouths and those of
- (179) *latu-la. I-tokeya la kwava e-vilugi o vataga*
child-his 3.-stand.up his wife 3.-put.in LOC basket
his children. She stands up his wife and puts in into a basket
- (180) *i-vinaku. I-vabwiya o kwadeva, ka, beya i-la*
3.-finish 3.-walk.carrying LOC beach well there 3.-go
it is finished. She walks carrying it to the beach, well, there she goes and
- (181) *i-le’i o susuna, o la susuna Taidyeli.*
3.-throw LOC rubbish LOC his rubbish Taidyeli
throws it onto the rubbish, onto Taidyeli’s rubbish.
- (182) *E i-le’i ma-ke-na vilaga. E-yam kaukwau*
yes 3.-throw DEM-CP.long-DEM *vilaga.taro* 3.-be.day morning
Yes she throws this *vilaga-taro* away. Day breaks in the morning
- (183) *va koya so-la e-vilobusi, e-va i-veki*
DIR mountain friend-his 3.-come.out 3.-go.to 3.-go.to
from the mountains (and) his friend comes out, he goes he goes to
- (184) *ma-ke-na vilaga pilumwedona e-kanukwenu. E-gi-gisi*
DEM-CP.long-DEM *vilaga.taro* all.entangled 3.-lie 3-REDUP-see
this *vilaga-taro* which lies there all entangled (in the rubbish). He sees it
- (185) *e-ma e-luki tama-si: “Ma-ke-na vilaga bogwa*
3.-come 3.-say father-their DEM-CP.long-DEM *vilaga.taro* already
he comes and he says their father: “This *vilaga-taro* already
- (186) *e-kau-si sidayasi e-koma-si. E-gadi uda-si latu-la -*
3.-take-PL their.relative 3.-eat-PL 3.-bite mouth-PL child-his
they took it their relatives (and) they ate it. It burned the mouths of his
children –
- (187) *kwaiyai e-valam-si, e ma-ke-na vilaga*”. *E*
afternoon 3.-cry-PL yes DEM-CP.long-DEM *vilaga.taro* And
in the afternoon they cried, yes (because of) this *vilaga-taro*”. And

- (188) *i-namsi m-to-na tommota e-kebiga*: “A-doki
3.-think DEM-CP.male-DEM person 3.-say 1.-think
he thinks this man and says: “I think
- (189) *ba-bagula. Ba-bagula, e bi-kam-si latugwa. Mapula*
1.FUT-garden 1.FUT-garden and 3.FUT-eat-PL my.children prize
I will garden. I will garden and they will eat my children. The prize (to pay is)
- (190) *e-gadi molu, e-kipatu-si pewaga, e-gadi uda-si*
3.-bit hunger 3.-hold-PL *pewaga*.clams 3.-bite mouth-their
they are hungry, they hold *pewaga*-clams, it burned their mouths
- (191) *vilaga*”. *I-tokeya i-bagula. I-le’i tetu gula-vaka-veaka,*
vilaga.taro 3.-stand.up 3.-garden 3.-pile.up yams CPheap-REDUP-big
the *vilaga*-taro”. He stands up and he gardens. He piles up big heaps of yams
- (192) *i-keli kuvi e-vanaku, e e-kalisau m-to-we-na*
3.-dig taro 3.-finish and 3.-run.out DEM-CP.male-there-DEM
he digs taro he finishes it, and he outperforms that
- (193) *tobugulabogwa. E-kalisau*
former.master.gardener 3.-run.out
m-to-na tobugulabogwa.
DEM-CP.male-DEM former.master.gardener
former master gardener. He outperforms this former master gardener
- (194) *I-la-ga sena olakeva, pela u’ula sena tobugumata*
3.-go-EMPH very to.the.top for reason very lazy.man
He really goes to the utmost top, because as a very lazy man
- (195) *i-tuvigaki. E mapela e-bani ala panisi makala:*
3.-not.care and therefore 3.-found his punishment like
he did not care. And therefore he found his punishment like this:
- (196) *I-koma-si vilaga deli latu-la, i-gadi uda-si,*
3.-eat-PL *vilaga*.taro with child-his 3.-bite mouth.theirs
They ate *vilaga*-taro with his children and it burned their mouths
- (197) *i-kipatu-si latu-la pewaga.*
3.-hold-PL child-his *pewaga*.clams
and they had to hold *pewaga*-clams, his children.
- (198) *Ma-ni-kwa la-lilivali gala pela ... kena ina-gu kena*
DEM-De,-CP.thing 1.PAST-tell not for or mother-my or
I did not tell this because of my mother or
- (199) *tama-gu o kena tabu-gu, i-lukwe-gu-si, gala. E*
father-my oh or uncle.my 3.-tell-me-PL no yes
my father or oh my uncle, they did not tell me (this story). Yes

- (200) *m-kwe-na la-lilivali bi-boda buku-ninamsi-si.*
DEM-CP.thing-DEM 1.PAST-tell 3.FUT-be.sufficient 2.FUT-think-PL
I told this story and it will be sufficient if you will think about it.
- (201) *O mata-gu a-gisi, e tommota m-to-si-ta*
LOC eye-my 1.see yes person DEM-CP.male-PL-DEM
In front of my eyes I see, yes these men
- (202) *asiteyu. I-bubuli-si m-kwe-na paisewa e-vagi-si*
two.of.them 3.-work-PL DEM-CP.thing-DEM work 3.-make-PL
the two of them. They did this work in the garden they made it
- (203) *makala. So-la tobugubagula, so-la gala i-bugubagula,*
like friend-his gardener friend-his not 3.-garden
like this. His friend the gardener and his friend who did not garden,
- (204) *so-la tovelau sola gala tovelau. E mapela*
friend-his thief friend-his not thief And therefore
his friend the thief and his friend who was not a thief. And therefore
- (205) *la-sake-mi m-kwe-we-na buku-nukwali-si, e*
1.PAST-give-you DEM-CP.there-DEM 2.FUT-know-PL and
I gave you this story so that you will know it, and
- (206) *buku-kwatumiki-si bi-la o nano-mi, e*
2.FUT-understand.meaning-PL 3.-FUT-go LOC mind-your and
that you will understand its meaning that will go into your minds, and
- (207) *buku-ninamsi-si makala. Ku-gise-si mi mwala, ku-gise-si*
2.FUT-think-PL like 2.-look-PL your husband 2.-look-PL
that you will think like this. Look at your husbands, look at
- (208) *mi kukwava, gala bi-bugu-bagula-si, buku-lugwe-si-si kauva-mi:*
your wives not 3.FUT-REDUP-garden 2.FUT-tell-them saying-your
your wives, if they will not garden, tell them and your speech (will be):
- (209) *“Ku-la ku-bagula!” Taga bata-vagi-si makala tommwaya*
2.-go 2.-garden But.indeed 1.INCL.FUT-see-PL like old.people
“Go and garden!” But indeed, we may have seen something like this with
old people
- (210) *tokunibogwa. Gerubara e-livala e-kebiga. Bi-kau-si*
old.times Gerubara 3-speak 3.-say 3.FUT-take-PL
in times of old. Gerubara he spoke about it he said it. They may have
taken
- (211) *pewaga i-kipatu-si, e i-kikau-si i-velau-si vilaga*
pewaga.clam 3.-hold-PL and 3.-take 3.-steal-PL vilaga.taro
pewaga-clams they held them and they took and stole vilaga-taro

- (212) *i-gadi uda-si, e i-le'i-si. E-va so-la i-gisi*
 3.bite mouth-their and 3.-throw-PL 3.-go.to friend-his 3.-see
 it burned their mouths and they threw it away. He goes there, his friend, he
 sees it
- (213) *e-mikayai olopola valu. E ku-nukwali-si, tommota*
 3.-spread inside village and 2.,know-PL people
 it gets publicly known in the village. And you know, the people
- (214) *kumwedona! O gugwadi, vegilavau. tubovau,*
 all oh children young.married young.man
 all of them (knew about it)! Oh children, young married couples,
 young men
- (215) *taga buku-vigake-si makala!*
 do.not 2.FUT-make-PL like
 do not live your lives like this!
- (216) *Agutoki kumwedona bogwa me-sinau.*
 Thanks all already 3.HABIT-finish
 Thank you all, already it is finished.

After reprimanding Imwaga, a girl in the audience, Gerubara starts the story with the simple introductory remark *E makala* – “It’s like this” – which indicates that what follows is not a typical (fairytale) – a *kukwanebu*. The *kukwanebu* are always introduced with the ritualized formula *kwanebuyee* together with the title of the story (see Senft 2015a: 21ff).

He then rather abruptly introduces a man – without providing his name – whom he describes as a caring, responsible and thoughtful villager. He checks whether his village is kept as clean as it should be and whether there is anything that needs to be fixed. If this is the case, he will think about what has to be done, will fetch the necessary tools and then will do the job without much ado in a matter-of-factly way (lines 2–8). However, this man also knows when it is time to take a rest during the day and how to enjoy his life (lines 8–10). At the same time he is fully aware of the fact that he has to work for his and his family’s living and he is eager to do all kinds of work, like working in the gardens, spending time with his children, preparing feasts for, or celebrating a party with, his family, kinspeople and friends within his village. This gives him a feeling of perfect satisfaction being completely integrated within his family and his village community (lines 10–16).

In a kind of aside Gerubara then comes up with the comment that his characterization of this man can be generalized as being valid for all Trobriand Islanders: they highly estimate people who work hard and take up their social responsibilities (lines 16–19).

After this brief digression, the narrator continues with his description of the anonymous responsible and thoughtful villager. This man always returns back home from his often arduous work in his gardens in a good temper with sincere feelings of utter satisfaction, happiness and well-being. He knows that even if he cannot solve a problem because of some kind of insufficiency, sooner or later one of his peers in the village will come and solve the problem for him (lines 20–24).

Again, this description of the model Trobriander is followed by another comment of the narrator. After his previous generalization with respect to the Trobriand Islanders' virtues, Gerubara now concedes that there are not only good workers, but also bad workers (lines 24–26). And based on this comment he now starts to contrast the anonymous good worker with an anonymous bad worker.

A good worker cares for his house, his family and especially his children, he will think positively being always in a good temper, he is cooperative and ready to solve any kind of problems, and he will enjoy his food (lines 24–30).

A bad worker cannot but experience in a sad mood all the things and events that please a good worker; the lazy man's sadness is based on his feeling of shame because of his antisocial attitude and behavior. He does not integrate himself into the social life of his co-villagers. He stays with his family in his house, avoids communal feasts and village celebrations where goods are exchanged and prizes are distributed to honor various achievements of his co-villagers, he does not care about the work that is done in the village and in the gardens and he is not fussed at all about the various types and amounts of garden products, not even about yams (30–36).

The man who is always willing and ready to work is different. Gerubara asks the children in his audience to imagine the following: Trobrianders from other villages will come to visit their village, for example for holding a church-meeting or for arranging a comparable event, for example a *nanamsa bwena* – a village meeting that is called “good thinking” (see Senft 1987b). Observing the good worker they will realize that he meets the visitors with pride and welcomes them and if the occasion involves speeches to be held by both visitors and hosts, he will contribute with a speech of relevance and impact. He is on top of things, he feels confident and safe, he proudly appears in public and his word is always respected (lines 37–42).

But the other man neither socializes with his co-villagers when they come home from their garden work nor with people who visit his village. He has nothing important to say, there is nothing he could be proud of, and his relatives feel ashamed and are embarrassed because of him. He does not care displaying goods in a proper way because he is a lazy and poor worker and therefore he can nothing but sit full of shame on his veranda (lines 42–49).

Gerubara now reminds his audience of the harvest competitions, the *kayasa*, which have been organized every two or three years or so from times of old till now by chiefs and other men of political influence in the villages of the Trobriand Islands. All these organizers had proven to be *tokwebagula* – “excellent gardeners” (see Malinowski 1935II: 124). The good worker, of course, is such a good gardener, too. He cannot only organize such a harvest competition, but also takes the challenge of other gardeners who organize *kayasa* competitions when they announce the prizes they offer for the *tokwebagula* in their village, knowing that he can rely on his friends who will help him and garden for and with him. The hard working man and his supporters will show their excellency in gardening and together they will win the highest prize that was offered to the best gardener (lines 49–63).

However, the other man does not care about such a *kayasa*. He prefers to roam around the islands or to stay in the village and sleep. Because he does not start his work in the garden at the appropriate time, he has no chance at all to win one of the prizes offered by the *kayasa* organizer. He deserves his personal and public shame because he neither engaged in the competition, nor prepared his gardens properly, nor planted the yams seedlings in time, nor cut the poles for the yams tendrils, either. There are no prizes for him but only shame (lines 63–72).⁶⁴

Gerubara points out that this is the result of comparing a good gardener with a man who does not garden (lines 72–75). The narrator now makes a time shift and tells his audience that after some time the two men and their fellow-villagers are confronted with a year of hunger – *molu*. If the rainy season in which the north-west monsoon – the *yavata*-wind – prevails, is too dry, then the newly planted taro and yam-seedlings, which should begin to ripen in December to January, “fail completely” (see Malinowski 1935I: 160ff & 49f.). If the stored yams supplies are exhausted by then, the Trobrianders experience *molu* (lines 75–78).

The good gardener – who worked hard in the gardens together with his wife because of the responsibility for their children – had such a good harvest in the previous season that his yams-house is still filled with yams. Thus, they and their children can fall back on their stored yams in these times of famine (lines 78–81).

But the lazy man who did not garden, is confronted with the fact that he and his family have nothing to eat. He searches for food and when he gets tired he

64. In Subsection 2.3.4.2 we pointed out that during the “*kovesa*”-ceremony, the results of the *kayasa* competition are announced. In a highly ritualized way the best gardeners are rewarded by the organizer of the harvest competition. However, the organizer of the *kayasa* does not only award the best gardeners. All men in the village are mentioned and named and assessed with respect to their emblems. The worst gardeners are excessively mocked and derided and their laziness and incompetence is denounced publicly in front of the assembled village community and its guests.

collects *pewaga*-clams which he gives to his hungry family. These clams are no equivalent for 'real food' – *kaula* – that is yams, but the poor children have to eat them. They finish their poor meal with a drink of water, because they have nothing else to eat (lines 81–89).

The two men stick to their customs. The good caring man works in the gardens and his wife can feed her family, whereas the lazy man does not work in the garden and therefore his wife has no yams to collect in the gardens and to cook at home, thus doing her proper work as a mother (89–94).

In the days to come the good gardener's wife starts cooking in the afternoon and then she eats with her family. The lazy man's wife has no provisions; she makes a fire and then she visits a friend to see whether she can get some food from her. She is away for some time, and when the fire has almost burned down, she returns with *pewaga*-clams for her children to eat. Obviously her begging for food was unsuccessful (lines 95–104). In this part of his narrative Gerubara refers for the first time to the lazy man with the term *tobugumata* – the antonym of *tokwebagula* (line 98).

Gerubara emphasizes that this situation did not change for some years until the *tokwebagula* went to the bush to cut a new garden. When he had finished this strenuous work he goes to visit the lazy man and calls on him to go and work in the garden. But the man responds that he is too lazy to do this hard work and that he prefers to stay idly in the village. The good worker leaves him without having achieved anything. He continues working diligently in his garden, planting taro, yams, tapioca, sweet potatoes and *bisiya* (arrowroot-plants?; see Malinowski 1935II: 91). His family can also eat fish, pumpkins and *tokuluveli*-yams (lines 104–115).⁶⁵

After the *yavata*, the north-west monsoon, had started to blow, indicating the start of the rainy season and thus the time for planting the yams and taro seedlings in the gardens, the hard working man's daughter comes to her friend, the lazy man's daughter and asks her and her mother to accompany her to the gardens.⁶⁶ When they arrive in the gardens, the daughter of the *tokwebagula* notes that the gardens of their fathers are just opposite each other – and she tells them that her father is willing to provide some food for the two of them. The daughter of the *tobugumata* is extremely sad and starts crying because her father prefers to idly

65. This is one of the many varieties of yams that grow in the gardens of the Trobriand Islanders. Senft (1986: 597) lists 18 such varieties and five generic expressions for yams.

66. Note that there is an inconsistency in Gerubara's narrative; so far he mentioned the lazy man's children, but here we learn that he has only one daughter. This inconsistency pervades throughout the narrative.

roam around instead of working in the garden. She takes taro and bananas from the garden of the good gardener and together with her mother and her girl friend she brings them home to her father's veranda where her mother starts cooking the food. While her father roams around at the beach, she and her mother eat the taro and the bananas and then do the dishes. When the lazy man comes home in the afternoon, he asks his wife for food, but she responds that there is no food for him. She tells him that she and her daughter went to the hard working man's garden together with his daughter, that they harvested taro together with this girl and that they brought just two (but not three) tubers of the harvested taro home, cooked them and ate them. There is nothing left for him. She ends the conversation stating that she and her daughter have finished their meal and that he can just sit down now (lines 115–143).

The next day the mother and her daughter decide to go to the hard working man's garden again; they take two taro tubers there, while the lazy gardener is strolling around at the beach. On their way home to the village the girl tells her friend that they took two tubers out of her father's garden. Then mother and daughter peel the tubers, wash them, put them in their cooking pot, cook them, eat them and then do the dishes. When the lazy man returns from the beach he asks them to serve him some food. However, both his wife and his daughter reply that they had harvested only two tubers in the hard working man's garden, that they had cooked them and that they had eaten them. The *tobugumata* then wonders why his wife and his children can eat food while there is no food for him – obviously he is not even aware of his slothfulness and indifference and thus he does not change his behavior for three more years: he just does not go and work in his garden (lines 143–158)

The *tokwebagula* does his garden work as usual. He plants *vilaga*-taro and then all the other food that he wants to grow in his garden. And already during the time when the *yavata*-wind prevails, he can go and harvest some tubers. The lazy man's daughter helps him harvesting the yams and taro. When she comes back, her father – the *tobugumata* – leaves his house without a notice, goes to the garden of the *tokwebagula*, harvests some food and he and his wife eat it together with their daughter (line 158–164).

The good gardener does not notice this theft. He and his family continue harvesting food in the garden and when they had finished harvesting all the other types of food in this garden, they just left the planted *vilaga*-taro there. The *tokwebagula* did this on purpose, because he knew that after a while someone will come and harvest this taro-variety which he left in his garden (lines 164–168).

And indeed, after a while the *tobugumata* once more leaves his house without notice, goes to the garden of the *tokwebagula*, steals this *vilaga*-taro and brings it home. His wife peels the taro tubers, cooks them and they eat them together with

their children, but it does not agree with them. The inedible taro-variety burns their mouths and the children cry. The good gardener asks the lazy man what's wrong with his children, but he simply answers that they are crying. But the good gardener suspects that the children cry because of his *vilago*-taro. Nevertheless, the lazy man wants some more taro; he goes to the hard working man's garden again, steals some more tubers, brings them to his wife and she cooks them. They eat the *vilago*-taro with their children and the tubers burn their mouths again. The lazy man's wife puts all the remaining taro and its peeled skin into a basket, goes to the beach and throws it on the heap of rubbish there – Gerubara refers to Taidyeli, one of Gunter's neighbors, to make fun of him and specifies the heap as Taidyeli's rubbish (lines 168–182).

The next day the *tokwebagula* goes to that heap of rubbish with the *vilago*-taro, sees it and realizes that his suspicion was correct. He goes home and tells his children what had happened with the lazy gardener and his family (lines 182–187).

Now the lazy gardener has come to his senses: He decides to work in the garden so that his children can eat proper food. He realizes that his family had to pay the prize for his laziness – they were the ones who had to suffer because of him, they were hungry, they had to eat *pewaga*-clams and their mouths were burned by the inedible *vilago*-taro which he had stolen in the garden of the *tokwebagula*. He immediately starts working in his garden, and he works so hard that at harvest time he builds up so many big piles of yams and digs out so many taro tubers that he outperforms the former master-gardener and becomes the best gardener in the village because he realized that he was such a lazy man who did not care for anything and that he was rightly punished for his behavior because he made his family eat *pewaga*-clams and *vilago*-taro instead of good food (lines 187–197).

At this point of his narrative Gerubara explains his young audience why he has told them this true story: He did not tell the children about the two men because he heard this story from his parents or relatives. He himself experienced these events as they had happened in Tauwema some time ago – he knows the two men – whom he kept anonymous – very well, the man who was a *tokwebagula* and the man who was too lazy to work in the garden and even became a thief. He emphasizes that he told them this story because he wants to make the children understand what this means for their lives, that they realize to not live their lives like the lazy man and his family. When they have grown up and got married they should admonish their spouses to work in the garden, remembering the story that he had told them about the *pewaga*-clams and the inedible *vilago*-taro. All the older people in Tauwema know about what he just told them – it once was the talk of the village. Finally he appeals to the children to remember that young married couples and especially young married men should not live their lives like the man who was a lazy and indolent gardener (lines 198–215).

He ends the narrative with the ritualized formula that announces the end of almost all pieces of narrative – *bogwa mesinau* – “already it is finished” (line 216).

In what follows we will first comment on some of the rhetorical devices and verbal means Gerubara uses in his narrative. First of all, before he even starts with his story he points out that this is not just another tale or story of the kind the Trobrianders classify in their indigenous typology of text categories (see Senft 2010a) as *kukwanebu*, as a fictive story or a (fairy)-tale which adults and children tell for the entertainment of an audience (see Senft 2015a). This important metalinguistic information is emphasized by the fact that Gerubara does not start his narrative with the ritualized formula that is so indicative for the *kukwanebu* text category (see footnote 57 above).

Gerubara manages to keep his narrative pulsating and thrilling by using a number of narrative devices, like the following ones:

- The frequent use of verbs (400) without any Tense-Aspect-Mood (TAM) marker. These verbs without TAM markers come close to what Indo-European scholars (see e.g. Koschmieder 1945: 26, 44, 57) call “aorist”. The aorist is described as a ‘category for out of time actions and events’ and is the narrative tense in many stories and tales in many languages. This is also true for Kilivila (see Senft 2015a). In Gerubara’s narrative only 129 verbs are marked for future/irrealis, 10 for past events and one for a habitual action.⁶⁷
- A vivid change of protagonists (see e.g. lines 2, 30, 36, 39, 42, 52, 63, 78, 81, 86, 91, 94, 95, 97, 106, 110, 111, 116, 124, 128, 130, 132, 135, 138, 144, 145, 146, 149, 151, 153, 158, 162, 164, 168, 175, 178, 182, 188).
- Contrasting the good gardener – and his family – with the lazy man – and his family (see e.g. lines 25–36, 37–49, 60–72, 78–89, 91–94, 95–104, 158–161, 162–166, 166–168, 168–174, 175, 176–182, 182–187, 187–197).
- The use of direct speech (see lines 56–57, 59, 99, 108–110, 117, 119–121, 123–124, 134–135, 138, 139, 140–144, 150–151, 151–153, 154–155, 175–176, 185–187, 188–191).
- The repetition of episodes – the lazy man’s family works in the garden of the good gardener, gets some taro and denies their husband and father a share in

67. Kilivila has a fourfold series of prefixes that indicate tense, aspect and mood. The first series consists just of subject prefixes that are neutral, tenseless, and aspectless. The second series consists of the subject prefixes which themselves are prefixed by a marker /b-/ that indicates future, an incompleted action or an irrealis, the third series with its marker /l/ indicates completed action in the past and the fourth series with its marker /m/ indicates an habitual action (for a detailed description see Senft 1986: 36ff).

- it (see lines 116–143 and lines 144–155) – the lazy man’s theft of taro in the garden of the *tokwebagula* (see lines 162–164, 168–174 and 176–179).
- The use of anaphora – “the repetition at the beginning of two or more successive clauses” (Webster’s 7th New Collegiate Dictionary 1970) and other forms of repetition (see e.g. lines 17–19, 20–21, 25–26, 27–28, 33, 35–36, 49–50, 74–75, 135–136).
 - The use of tail-head linkage⁶⁸ which contributes to the coherence of the narrative (see e.g. lines 51, 83, 85, 125, 128, 192, 193).
 - The frequent use of serial verb constructions⁶⁹ which contribute to the detailedness and authenticity of Gerubara’s narrative (see e.g. lines 23, 36, 43, 54, 56, 57–58, 65, 80, 99, 101, 106 107–108, 109, 111–112, 118–119, 122, 127, 128–129, 131, 133, 137, 147, 152, 157, 160–161, 162, 163, 164, 170, 171–172, 177, 180–181, 183–185).
 - The narrator’s requests and appeals to his audience as well as his explanations and comments with which he “steps out” of his actual narrative (see e.g., lines 16–19, 24–26, 37–38, 49–52, 72–75, 198–215).

This last characteristic feature of Gerubara’s narratives needs some further comments:

In the narrative sequences listed above, Gerubara switches from his narrative frame to a meta-communicative level where he comes up with generalizations (lines 16–19: “All Trobrianders are responsible people and good gardeners”), which he somewhat modifies in his next comment (lines 24–26: “There are good workers and bad workers”).

He appeals to the cultural experience and knowledge of his young audience when he refers to special village meetings with visitors from other villages on the islands which involve speeches and other forms of proud self-presentation (lines 37–38) and reminds them of the very specific and highly competitive *kayasa*-ritual with the *kovesa*-ceremony, where the best gardeners receive prizes and the worst gardeners are ridiculed and publicly shamed (lines 49–52). With these comments

68. This is a quite sophisticated rhetorical device that is found in many Austronesian and Papuan languages. In lines 50–51 Gerubara produces the sentence “*Tuta tokunibogwa tom-mwaya ikayasasi*”. In the next sentence (see lines 51–52) he takes up the last verb of the previous sentence in the sentence initial position of the following sentence “*Ikayasasi ebigubagulasi*”. This is called “tail-head linkage”.

69. In line 23 the two verbs in series “... *bivilobusi bimikeyada*...” (somebody will come out of the garden and come to us) describe one event, splitting it up in two subevents. This kind of verb serialization results in very detailed event reports (see Senft 2004, 2008b).

he invokes the children's memories of these impressive and quite spectacular events and grabs their attention for the following parts of his narrative.

He reiterates the topic of, and the reason for, telling them this *livalela valu* – to differentiate a *tokwebagula* from a *tobugumata* – a gardener of excellence from a lazy, indolent man who is a bad gardener (72–75) – to make sure that they get the point of his educational narrative.

And – as if he himself does not really trust the effect of this narrative alone – he finally explicitly points out to his audience why he has told the children this true report on the former and present lives of two of their fellow-villagers. The actual *livalela valu* ends with line 197. And then – from line 198 till line 215 – Gerubara first emphasizes again that the children should not mix up this narrative with the *kukwanebu* they have heard before. Then he further clarifies that he wants them to really think about what they have just heard and take seriously what it means to be a good gardener on the one hand and a bad gardener on the other, who even may end up as a thief – as he reported it in his narrative. He wants them to internalize the personal and social implications of the two different ways of living on the Trobriand Islands. Being aware of these implications they should monitor the behavior of their respective future spouses and interfere if they realize that they neglect their duties. If this happens – once they are married, of course – they should remember him and the *livalela valu* he had just told them, they should think of the *pewaga*-clams and the stolen – and even inedible – taro tubers, and they should think of the public shame that not only the *tobugumata* but also his family had to experience. He ends this final excursus from telling the true story about the two so opposed Trobriand men with the strong plea that the children should not live their lives like the *tobugumata*, the “antihero” in this talk of the village.

In a later comment on this *livalela valu* Gerubara once more clarified what he was after by telling the children this educational story. This is what he said to Gunter after he had finished his narrative:

Gerubara:

- (1) *M-kwe-na* *gala kukwanebu, m-kwe-na.*
 DEM-CP.general-DEM not story/tale DEM-CP.general-DEM
 This is not a tale, this (narrative)
- (2) *la-bigitoni pela* *valu ala kesisu.*
 I.PAST-tell because village its way.of.life
 I told (it) because it represents the way of life in our village.
- (3) *Yegu titolegu a-livala ... livalela valu.*
 I myself 1.-tell talk village
 I myself have told this talk of the village.

- (4) *Makala, makala: Ku-gisi Namnabai deli silaya*
 like like 2.-see Namnabai with relatives
 It is like, like this: Look, Namnabai (a girl in the audience) and her relatives
- (5) *e-todadeli-si m-to-si-na, e makala la-seki*
 3.-line.up-PL DEM-CP.human-PL-DEM yes like 1.PAST-give
 they came together here, it's like this, and I gave (them)
- (6) *asi biga, asi guguya, m-kwe-na.*
 their speech their advice DEM-CP.general-DEM
 their speech, their advice, this one.
- (7) *E bi-lo-si bi-nananam-sa tuta kumwedona. Bi-masisi-si*
 And 3.FUT-go-PL 3.FUT-think-PL time all. 3.FUT-sleep-PL
 And they will go and they will think (about it) all the time. They will sleep (and)
- (8) *bi-ninamsi-si si paisewa, bi-masisi-si bi-ninamsi-si*
 3.FUT-think-PL their work 3.FUT-sleep-PL 3.FUT-think-PL
 they will think of their work, they will sleep (and) they will think of
- (9) *si bagula. E e m-to-si-ta tommota*
 their garden and and DEM-CP.male-PL-DEM men
 their garden. And and these men
- (10) *asiteyu la viseki bogwa ku-gisi:*
 two.of them its example already 2.-see
 the example of the two of them, already you see it:
- (11) *Te-tala tobugubagula te-ta(la) gala e-bugubagula.*
 CP.male-one gardener CP.male-one not 3.-garden
 One gardener and one man who does not garden.
- (12) *E te-tala latu-la i-kipatu-si pewaga.*
 and CP.male-one child-his 3.-hold-PL *pewaga*
 And one man whose children hold *pewaga*-clams.
- (13) *E te-tala latu-la i-kam-kwam-si kaula.*
 and CP.male-one child-his 3.-eat-REDUP-PL yams
 And one man whose children eat yams.
- (14) *E i-ninamsi e-kebiga: "A-doki ba-bagula".*
 and 3.-think 3.-say 1.-think 1.FUT-garden
 And he thinks he says: "I think I will garden".

He again points out that what he reported in the *livalela valu* was fact, not fiction. He wanted to highlight what it really means to live the way of life that is the

standard in Tauwema (and in other villages on the Trobriands, of course). With his narrative he wanted to give advice to Namnabai, one of the young girls in the audience, and all the other children, her friends and relatives who also listened to his report, on how to cope with the situation when they decide to marry and thus join their respective village community as fully-fledged members with all the rights associated with this new status, but also with all the duties. He wanted to make them think about this advice from now on so that they will consciously internalize the Trobriand role model that is represented by the *tokwebagula* and his family in the *livalela valu*, a model and a standard of life that is primarily shaped and informed by work in general and by the gardens on the Trobriands and the work they require in particular. Because of this reason he reported the *livalela valu* with its two paradigmatic and antithetical protagonists – the good gardener and the man who does not garden. And he also contrasted the two protagonists' children – the ones who had to eat inferior food like *pewaga*-clams, and the ones who ate yams.⁷⁰ If the children will have consciously internalized the moral conveyed in this *livalela valu*, then they will prefer to go and work in the gardens like the *tokwebagula* in Gerubara's report – and this does not only hold for boys, but also for girls.

Gerubara's comments clearly reveal that his intention to tell the children the *livalela valu* was not only educational but that it also conveyed moral implications and judgements. The way he contrasts the *tokwebagula* with the *tobugumata* completely agrees with Malinowski's understanding of these two fundamental concepts with respect to social roles within the Trobrianders' society. Malinowski (1935II: 124) provides the following characterizations of these two terms that classify social roles on the Trobriands:

The term *tokwaybagula*, 'good gardener' has already been mentioned above ... Its meaning from 'efficient husbandman' to perfect gardener, whose *butura*, 'renown', resounds over the whole district, never expresses being occupied in gardening – all Trobrianders are more or less gardeners – but rather excellency ... Its opposite, *tobugumata*, strictly 'poor gardener', in a wider sense 'lazy', 'indolent person' ... conveys a moral judgement...

70. Note that the generic term for both "food" and "yams" is *kaula* in Kilivila. The term subsumes the type *Dioscorea esculenta* – which is specified in Kilivila as *tetu* and the type *Dioscorea alata* – which is specified in Kilivila as *kuvi* (see, e.g., MacCarthy 2012: 140).

[T]*obugumata* is definitely a term of serious reproach and might, under some circumstances, be deeply resented and taken as a great insult. It is also characteristic that this is the generic term for 'lazy person, 'ne'er-do-well', 'generally useless individual'.

Given the obvious impact of these two role models, we list in Table 1 the characteristic features of the two antagonistic protagonists as they are reported, classified and morally judged in Gerubara's narrative. Note that these role models are valid for men on the Trobriands – they are the gardeners! And this is even morphosyntactically marked with the classifier (-)to(-) in its word formation; this classifier refers to all human beings, but especially to male persons – the classifier that refers especially to female persons is (-)na(-).⁷¹ However, as Gerubara highlights in his report, married women should monitor and control their husbands and interfere, if their spouse does not aspire to be a *tokwebagula*. Thus, the two role models are important for the lives of both married men and women.

We want to finish this section with a few additional observations we made in connection with these two role models. Gerubara uses the terms *tobugumata* and *tokwebagula* four times each, besides the general term *tobugubagula*, the non-evaluative term for a gardener (which he also produces 4 times). He repeatedly characterizes the *tobugumata* as a man who experiences feelings of personal and public shame – *kabomwasila* and *mwasila* – and as a man who is full of sadness – *valam* and *kabovalam*. All in all Gerubara relates the lazy gardener with these feelings 12 times in his narrative. The *tokwebagula* is characterized as a man who is full of joy and happiness – *kabomwasawa* and *mwasawa* – as a man full of pride – *vautu'utu* – and as a man who takes over responsibilities – *karewaga*.⁷² Gerubara relates the perfect gardener with these qualities 6 times in his *livalela valu*. However, the most important and most frequently produced terms in Gerubara's narrative refer on the one hand to work in general – *paisewa* and *paisau* (realized 35 times) – to work with tools – *youdali* (realized once) – and to work in the gardens – *buguli* (realized 9 times), *bugubagula* (realized 8 times) and *kalipola* (realized once)

71. For the role and function of classifiers – or classificatory particles, as Malinowski (1920) referred to these formatives – see Senft (1991a; 1996a).

72. In Senft (2015b) Gunter discussed this important concept; he showed that the term *karewaga* – which is realized both as a noun and as a verb – can be glossed in respective contexts as: (1) authority, competence, influence, status, power; (2) chief, man in power, man in command; (3) decision, discretion; (4) responsibility; (5) (free) will, decision; (6) accountability, reliability; (7) care; (8) wish, instruction; (9) right, law, jurisdiction, rule; (10) reign, kingdom.

Table 1. (Continued)

Behavior during harvest competitions	
takes up roles of the organizer, competitor and winner – <i>bikayasa bikamituli vavagi ... bikaponai ... bike'ula mapu</i> (lines 52–53, 54, 62), can rely on friends and other supporters – <i>boda kumwedona ... bivigakesi</i> (lines 62–63),	does not think and care about the <i>kayasa – gala ininamsi pela ... kayasa</i> (lines 64–65), roams around or stays in the village and sleeps – <i>bilomakava ... bisisu o valu bimasisi</i> (lines 65–66), deserves his personal and public shame – <i>deli la kabomwasila deli mwasila</i> (line 68), does not work in his garden – <i>gala ... bibubuli bagula</i> (line 70),
Behavior during famine	
works in the garden with the responsibility for his children and his wife so that they have food to eat – <i>ebuguli bagula ... latula deli si kabommwasawa ... ekoke'ula inasi imeya ikamkwamsi</i> (lines 79–81), his wife cooks in the afternoon – <i>bikwaiyai bisulu manana</i> (lines 95–96),	does not work in the garden, searches for food and gets <i>pewaga</i> clams for his (wife and) child(ren) to eat – <i>gala ibagula ... ine'i kaula ... ikatuvi pewaga iseki latula</i> (lines 81, 84–85) his wife cannot do her work (lines 93–94) his wife begs in vain for food, her fire burns down and she feeds her child(ren) with <i>pewaga</i> -clams (lines 98–104)
Behavior until the <i>tobugumata</i> comes to his senses	
works hard in the garden so that his wife can feed his family well (lines 111–115), he offers – via his daughter – the lazy man's wife and his daughter to work for him in his garden and gives each of them a tuber of taro which they cook and eat (lines 116–163), provides a trap for the <i>tobugumata</i> by planting the inedible <i>vilago</i> -taro in his garden to make him change his mind and attitude (lines 159–160).	openly concedes his laziness and refuses to work in the garden – <i>yegu kaikai vovogu</i> (line 110), he makes his daughter feel sad – <i>vivila deli ala valam</i> (line 124), his wife and daughter deny him a share in their food (lines 140–143, 150–153), he steals food in the <i>tokwebagula's</i> garden (lines 163–164), twice he steals inedible tubers of the <i>vilago</i> -taro and makes his family burn their mouths (lines 168–179), after all this he finally comes to his senses, realizes that his family suffered because of him and works so hard in the garden that he even outperforms the former <i>tokwebagula</i> (lines 188–195)

– and on the other hand to different types of gardens – *bagula* (realized 9 times), *buyagu* (realized 6 times) and *baleku* (realized once). The fact that Gerubara mentions gardens 16 times and refers to work even 54 times highlights the over-arching social significance of these concepts particularly for the life of Trobriand men.



Photo 50. A man and his son, who is carrying a bunch of betelnuts, on their way from the garden back home to their village Kaduwaga (1983)

3.2 Gerubara's tale "the good girl and the bad girl" – *vivila bwena vivila gaga*

Almost exactly a year later Gunter was back in Tauwema to continue his field research. In Port Moresby he had found an audio-cassette with songs from Kiriwina Island by Tokwebasi, a young Trobriand musician who was quite popular not only on the Trobriands but also in the rest of Papua New Guinea. Gunter bought the cassette and in Tauwema he played the songs and transcribed and translated them together with his consultants Gerubara, Pulia, Mokeilobu, and Moagava. The songs and the music attracted many children, especially young girls. When Gunter and his consultants had finished their work in the late afternoon, Gerubara noticed the girls and told them that he knew a nice tale which he wanted to tell them because they behaved so well while he and the other men were working together with Gunter.

And then he started to narrate the story with the title *vivila bwena vivila gaga* – the tale of “the good girl and the bad girl”. The tale runs as follows:

Gerubara: *Kukwanebuyee vivila bwena vivila gaga*

- (1) *Te-tala vivila, te-tala vivila e-'uni latu-la*
CP.human-one girl CP.human-one girl 3.-give.birth child-her
One girl, one girl she gives birth to
- (2) *te-yu, te-yu vivila. E e-sisu-si e-sisu-si*
CP.human-two CP.human-two girls and 3.-be-PL 3.-be-PL
two children, two girls. And they are (there) they are (there)
- (3) *e-sisu-si-ii, i-vinunu, bogwa e-gudivakaveaka-si,*
3.-be-PL-EMPH 3.-breast-feed already 3.-grow.up-PL
they are (there) indeed, she breast-feeds them, already they grow up,
- (4) *e-kavagina-si e-okwa, i-tomalaula-si-ii i-lola-si i-vokwa,*
3.-crawl-PL 3.-finish 3.-stand.up-PL-EMPH 3.-walk-PL 3.-finish
they crawl, it is finished, they really stand up and they walk it is finished,
- (5) *e bogwa e-kapugula-si. Ina-si i-luki*
and already 3.-go.and.sleep.with.boys mother-their 3.-tell
and already they go and sleep with boys. Their mother tells
- (6) *m-to-si-na vivila e-kebiga: “Ku-luvai-si*
DEM-CP.human-PL-DEM girl 3.-say 2.-remember-PL
these girls she says: “Remember
- (7) *so-m tua-m ku-youdila-si*
friend-your older.sister-your 2.-gather.bush.material.make.useful.things
you and your older sister, gather bush material and make useful things out
of it,
- (8) *ku-tai-si doba, ku-vatu-si doba, ku-basi-si*
2.-scrape-PL grass.skirt.material 2.-bind-PL grass.skirt 2.-weave-PL
scrape fibre-skirt material, bind grassskirts, weave
- (9) *moi. Tuta oluvi ba-kariga, e tommota bi-livala-si:*
mat time then 1.FUT-die yes people 3.FUT-say-PL
mats. Then at the time when I will die, yes, people will say:
- (10) *'Sena amitovagi paisewa'’. E m-to-si-na*
very two.maker.of work and DEM-CP.human-PL-DEM
“These two are excellent and busy workers’’. And these
- (11) *vivila e-sisu-si e-ninanamsa-si e-ninanamsa-si. Ivatu*
girl 3.-be-PL 3.-think-PL 3.-think-PL time.passes
girls they are (there) they think (about this) they think (about this).
Time passes

- (12) *ivatu-uu bogwa e-va'i-si. Bogwa e-va'i-si,*
 time.passes-EMPH already 3.-marry-PL already 3.-marry-PL
 time passes quickly and already they marry. Already they marry,
- (13) *mi-na-na na-kekita gala i-lagi ina-la la*
 DEM-CP.female-DEM CP.female-little not 3.-listen mother-her her
 and this younger girl does not listen to her mother's to her
- (14) *la guguya, e mi-na-na na-veaka i-lagi*
 her advice and DEM-CP.female-DEM CP.female-big 3.-listen
 her advice, and the older girl she listens
- (15) *ina-la la guguya. Mi-na-na na-kekita i-la*
 mother-her her advice DEM-CP.female-DEM CP.female-little 3.-go
 to her mother's advice. This younger girl she goes
- (16) *gala e-nukwali i-tuvatu doba, gala e-nukwali bi-sibasi*
 not 3.-know 3.-bind grass.skirt not 3.-know 3.FUT-weave
 she does not know how to bind fibre-skirts, she does not know how
 to weave
- (17) *moi, gala e-nukwali bi-sibasi koasi, gala e-nukwali*
 mat not 3.-know 3.FUT-weave bracelet not 3.-know
 mats, she does not know how to weave bracelets, she does not know
 how to
- (18) *tatai doba, gala e-nukwali bagula budubadu,*
 scrape grass.skirt.material not 3.-know garden much
 scrape fibre-skirt materials, she does not know much about work in the
 garden,
- (19) *gala e-nukwali youdila kumwedona*
 not 3.-know gathering.bush.material.making.useful.things all
 she does not know anything at all about how to gather bush material and
 make useful things out of them,
- (20) *avaka avaka vivila si youdila*
 what what girl their gathering.bush.material.making.useful.things
 whatever girls do in gathering bush material and in making useful things
 out of them,
- (21) *gala e-nukwali. mi-na-na na-kekita. E*
 not 3.-know DEM-CP.female-DEM CP.female-little and
 she does not know that, this young girl. And
- (22) *mi-na-na na-veaka i-lagi la biga ina-la,*
 DEM-CP.female-DEM CP.female-big 3.-listen her speech mother-her
 this older girl she listened to her mother's speech,

- (23) *i-paisau makala: E-nukwali i-tuvatu doba, e-nukwali*
 3.-work like 3.-know 3.-bind grass.skirt 3.-know
 she works like this: She knows how to bind fibre-skirts, she knows how to
- (24) *bi-sibasi moi, e-nukwali bi-sibasi koasi, e-nukwali*
 3.FUT-weave mat 3.-know 3.FUT-weave bracelet 3.-know
 weave mats, she knows how to weave bracelets, she knows how to
- (25) *bagula, vavagi kumwedona e-nukwali i-vinaku. E*
 garden thing all 3.-know 3.-finish and
 work in the garden, all these things she knows, it is finished. And
- (26) *tuta ma-tuta-na ina-si i-kariga i-paisewa-si.*
 time DEM-CP.time-DEM mother-their 3.-die 3.-work-PL
 at this time when their mother dies they work (like this).
- (27) *Ma-na-na na-kekita, la paisewa nigada,*
 DEM-CP.female-DEM CP.female-little her work begging
 This young girl, her work was begging,
- (28) *la paisewa nigada, la paisewa vevava, la*
 her work begging her work giving.away her
 her work was begging, her work was making people give away something, her
- (29) *gugua gaga, gala la pweya, gala la moi, gala*
 goods bad no her grass.skirt.basket not her mat not
 goods are bad, she does not have a big basket for fibre-skirts, nor a mat
 of her own,
- (30) *to-bisibasi moi, gala pela... gala moireyava i-basi,*
 CP.human-weave mat not for not pandanus.mats 3.-weave
 she is not an expert weaver of mats, not for..., she does not weave
 pandanus mats,
- (31) *gala gala gala. E mi-na-na na-veaka la*
 no no no and DEM-CP.female-DEM CP.female-big her
 nothing, nothing, nothing. And this older girl, she has
- (32) *pweya budubadu, la kekatiga simwa la moi,*
 grass.skirt.basket many her shelves with her mat
 many big baskets for fibre-skirts, her shelves are full of mats,
- (33) *vavagi kumwedona e-nukwali e-vinaku. Mi-na-na*
 thing all 3.-know 3.-finish DEM-CP.female-DEM
 all things she knows it is finished. This
- (34) *gwadi makala la bubunela. I-la o si bagula tommota*
 child like her custom 3.-go LOC their garden people
 child, like this are her customs. She goes to other people's garden

- (35) *i-velau e i-meya e-kam-kwam. E tommota i-lukwe-si*
 3.-steal and 3.-bring 3.-eat-REDUP and people 3.-speak-PL
 she steals (food) and brings it and eats it. And the people they speak
- (36) *e-kebiga-si: "Gala ku-pati ina-m.*
 3.-say-PL not 2.-resemble mother-your
Ina-m na-kebagula,
 mother-your CP.female-gardener
 they say: "You do not resemble your mother. Your mother was a good
 worker in the garden,
- (37) *vavagi kumwedona i-kibwadi. E*
 thing all 3.-be.in.order and
yokwa-ga o-ku-ma
 you-EMPH binding.vowel-2.-come
 everything was in order. But you, you come
- (38) *ku-velau, gala ku-nukwali vitivatu doba, vavagi kumwedona*
 2.-steal not 2.-know binding grass.skirts things all
 you steal, you do not know how to bind fibre-skirts, all things
- (39) *gala ku-nukwali". Ma-na-na gwadi deli la valam, deli*
 not 2.-know DEM-CP.female-DEM child with her crying with
 you do not know". This child (is left) with her crying, with
- (40) *la valam. Bata-nukwali ma-na-na vivila gaga, gala*
 her crying Dual.INCL.FUT-know DEM-CP.female-DEM girl bad not
 her crying. One will know that this girl is bad, she did not
- (41) *i-lagi la biga la guguya ina-la. Bata-nukwali*
 3.-listen her word her advice mother-her Dual.INCL.FUT-know
 listen to her mother's words and advice. One will know
- (42) *mokwita: ma-na-na na-veaka vavagi kumwedona*
 true DEM-CP.female-DEM CP.female-big things all
 truly: this older girl – all things
- (43) *e-nukwali, pela i-lagi la biga ina-la, i-paisau bwena.*
 3.-know for 3.-listen her word mother-her 3.-work good
 she knows, because she listened to her mother's words, she works well.
- (44) *E mi-na-na-ga na-kekita gala i-lagi*
 and DEM-CP.female-DEM-EMPH CP.female-little not 3.-listen
 And really this younger girl she did not listen
- (45) *la biga ina-la, e-paisau gaga deli ala mwasila*
 her word mother-her 3.-work bad with her shame
 to her mother's words, she works badly, (she is left) with her shame

- (46) *deli la valam so-la la mwala tuta kumwedona.*
with her crying friend-her her husband time all
and with her crying together with her husband all the time.
- (47) *Kwe-vila tetu, kweluva-vila tetu i-sisu-si*
CP.thing-how.many year CP.tens.of-how.many year 3.-be-PL
How many years, how many decades is she living (like this)
- (48) *so-la la mwala, taga bogwa makala la.*
friend-her her husband but already like her
she with her husband, but already like this was her
- (49) *bubunela. E tuta ma-tuta-na i-kariga ina-si*
custom and time DEM-CP.time-DEM 3.-die mother-their
custom. And at this time when their mother had died
- (50) *i-sagali-si. I-sagali-si, mi-na-na*
3.- mourning.exchange-PL 3.- mourning.exchange-PL DEM-CP.female-DEM
they do a mourning exchange. They do a mourning exchange and this
- (51) *na-veaka sena bwena, migile'u vavagi kumwedona migile'u-wala.*
CP.female-big very good clean things all clean-just
older girl was very good, all her things were clean, just clean.
- (52) *Tommota vivila kumwedona e-me-si i-yakaula-si beya*
People girl all 3.-come-PL 3.-praise-PL here
The people and all the girls come and praise here
- (53) *ma-na-na vivila, i-tilevai-si beya ma-na-na vivila*
DEM-CP.female-DEM girl 3.-award-PL here DEM-CP.female-DEM girl
this girl, they award here this girl,
- (54) *pela bogwa e-kaliseva. Bwada-la-ga deli la valam*
for already 3.-win younger.sister-her-EMPH with her crying
because she already has won the competition. But her younger sister with
her crying
- (55) *deli ala mwasila e-ke'ita metoya. O la bwala*
with her shame 3.-return from LOC her house
and her shame she returns from (there). In her house
- (56) *i-nanamsa i-nanamsa. "O ina-gu, e-lukwe-gu ma-bigana*
3.-think 3.-think oh mother-my 3.-tell-me DEM-CP.word-DEM
she thinks she thinks. "Oh my mother, she told me these
- (57) *biga taga gala a-kabikaula, ula bubunela gaga". Bitadou*
word but not 1.-favour my custom bad Dual.INCL.FUT-shout
words, but I did not favour them, my customs are bad". One shouts:

- (58) *Ma-na-na vivila gaga*. *E*
 DEM-CP.female-DEM girl bad and
mi-na-na na-veaka
 DEM-CP.female-DEM CP.female-big
 “This girl is bad”. And with respect to this older girl
- (59) *bita-dou: “Mi-na-na vivila bwena pela i-lagi*
 Dual.INCL.FUT-shout DEM-CP.female-DEM girl good for 3.-listen
 one shouts: “This girl is good because she listened
- (60) *ina-la la biga, i-paisau makala makala.*
 mother-her her word 3.-work like like
 to her mother’s words, she works like this and like that”.
- (61) *Bitu-livala: “Ma-na-na vivila bwena”.*
 Dual.INCL.FUT-say DEM-CP.female-DEM girl good
 One will say: “This girl is good”.
- (62) *Bogwa me-sinaku, Gunter, agutoki, yegu Gerubara*
 Already 3.HABIT-finish Gunter thank.you I Gerubara
 Already it is finished, Gunter, thank you, I Gerubara
- (63) *la-bigatona.*
 1.PAST-said
 I told the story.

After the ritualized formula *kukwanebuyee* – “a story” which is used to introduce tales on the Trobriands (see Senft 2015a: 21) Gerubara presents the title of the story. He then refers to a woman who gave birth to two girls (lines 1–2). Time passes – the sucklings grow into crawling toddlers, they learn to walk and become teenagers who have affairs with boys (lines 2–5). The girls’ mother admonishes her daughters to not forget to gather bush-materials with which they can make useful things, to get banana leaves, scrape them and make fibre-skirts out of these leaves, and to weave mats out of the fibres of dried pandanus leaves (lines 5–9). All these activities are typical for a woman on the Trobriand Islands and constitute an important part of her daily routines.

When a woman marries, she is able and entitled to participate in complex mourning rituals, the so-called *sagali*. In one of these *sagali*, fibre-skirts made of banana leaves – the *doba* – and bundles of scraped and dried banana-leaves – the *nununiga* – are exchanged and distributed between members of the mourners’ clan and members of the other three Trobriand clans. This specific mortuary distribution ritual, “[t]he women’s mortuary ceremony” (Weiner 1976: 62) is called

lisiladabu; it is a competition in women's wealth, in *doba*.⁷³ A woman who gives away most *doba* and *nununiga* to other women during this ritual earns much prestige. She demonstrates that she is very influential within her matrilineage. The more a woman is involved in these ceremonies, the more fibre-skirts she needs – and the more fibre-skirts she distributes, the higher will be her status within the group of Trobriand women. To be able to engage in this complex competition with other women in the *lisiladabu* mourning ritual, a woman is dependent on her husband who has to plant banana trees so that his wife has as much banana leaves as possible at her command for making *doba* and *nununiga* (see Weiner 1988: 197ff). Thus, if a woman disposes of many fibre-skirts, she is not only a diligent and industrious worker; she also proudly indicates that she leads a happy and loving marriage. Mats are parts of a woman's personal belongings which she can use for bartering or which she can sell. Thus they are an important source of income for a woman. These two activities of women are carefully monitored by both male and female villagers and busy makers of *doba* and weavers of mats are highly respected in the Trobrianders' society. The girls' mother is completely aware of this fact – and she tells her daughters that if they follow her admonition, people will praise them as busy workers. She knows that a part of this praise will fall back on herself, because even after her death the villagers will have evidence for her good education of her children (see lines 9–10). The girls think about their mother's advice – and after some time they marry (lines 10–12).

It turns out that the younger daughter does not take her mother's advice seriously – only the older daughter respects and follows her mother's educational guidance (lines 10–15).

The younger daughter obviously does not know and has never learnt how to make fibre-skirts, how to weave mats and bracelets, how to work in the garden together with her husband and how to make useful things – for example baskets – out of bush materials (lines 15–21).

However, the older daughter has carefully listened to her mother's words and knows how to do all these kinds of things: She has become the busy worker her mother wanted her to be (line 21–24).

After the death of their mother the younger daughter does not work but resorts to beggary to get things from other villagers because she never acquired

73. Weiner (1976) provides a detailed discussion, description and analysis of this and the other mourning ceremonies on the Trobriands. She points out that "Bundles of banana leaves and skirts are objects of female wealth with explicit economic value" (Weiner 1976: xvii).

the skills that characterize an industrious and thus respected Trobriand woman (lines 25–31).

The older daughter has everything her younger sister has not – a number of big baskets and many fibre-skirts and mats – and she is an expert in making all these things (lines 31–33).

The younger daughter has developed bad habits – she even steals food from the gardens of other villagers, who publicly scold her because she does not resemble her mother and openly accuse her as being a thief and a good-for-nothing woman. She is isolated, left alone with her sorrow and distress. She has become a bad woman in the eyes of everybody because she did not follow her mother's advice (lines 33–41).

Her older sister is respected because of the skills she acquired following her mother's advice. The younger woman has not done this; she does not know how to work properly and thus has to live in shame, sorrow and distress together with her husband (lines 41–49).

Some months after the death of their mother the villagers organize a *sagali* for the deceased woman. Her older daughter disposes of everything that is necessary to participate in these distribution rituals and she even wins the competition as well as the villagers' praise which finds its expression in a *tilewai* – an awarding ceremony in which she receives a token of praise by some of the villagers. This *tilewai* ceremony starts a ritualized exchange of gifts between the parties involved; it is a bonding ritual which usually lasts for a year. However, her younger sister had to leave the village square because she had nothing at all to distribute (lines 49–55).

Crying and full of shame she returns back to her house and realizes what she had done, why people despise her and why she is a bad girl in their eyes. And she also realizes why people respect her older sister and refer to her as a good girl – contrary to her she took her mother's advice seriously (lines 55–61).⁷⁴

Gerubara finishes his tale with the ritualized ending formula *bogwa mesinau*, thanks Gunter for having tape-recorded his tale and proudly points out that he was the story-teller (lines 62–63).

Gerubara again uses the aorist as the narrative tense within this story – 83 of the verbs produced in this tale are unmarked with respect to tense, aspect and/or mood. Only 9 verbs are produced with the marker for future or irrealis and one verb each is marked for a past event and for a habitual action. The aorist as the

74. Brigitte Bauer (p.c.) pointed out to us that Gerubara's story has a striking parallel with the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15, 11–32). In both stories it is the younger sibling who deviates from the expected behavioral norms and cultural expectations.

narrative tense in Kilivila stories certainly contributes to the vivid and expressive literary ductus of the tale.

Gerubara also uses direct speech again to create this effect. He presents the mother's advice to her daughter in direct speech (see lines 6–10), he reports the public shaming of the bad girl in direct speech (see lines 36–39), and the reaction of the younger daughter to this public shaming is also reported in direct speech. The tale ends with the final assessment of the girls by their fellow villagers – and these assessments are again presented in direct speech (see lines 57& 58 and 59–61). We will come back to the last three observations below.

In his tale Gerubara repetitively contrasts the good girl with the bad girl. After he has set the scene with the quickly maturing girls (in lines 2–5) and the mother's advice of how to become a good and respected woman, which finds its expression in a list of skills the girls have to acquire, he contrasts the two girls with respect to how they react to what her mother told them. In a kind of leitmotif way this contrast is expressed by the sentence(s)

- (*minana nakekita*) *gala ilagi inala la guguya / la biga*
“(this younger girl) does not listen to her mother's advice / her speech”

on the one hand, and by the sentence

- (*minana naveaka*) *ilagi inala la guguya / la biga*
“(this older girl) listens to her mother's advice / her speech”

on the other. Gerubara uses this way of contrasting the protagonists 5 times (lines 13–15; 22, 40–41, 43, 59–60). Then he repeats the list of skills the girls' mother told them to acquire, and with anaphora which start either with the phrase

- ... *gala enukwali* ... – “she does not know” –

or

- ... *enukwali* ... – “she knows”.

He goes through this list, pointing out that the older girl acquired the skills listed and therefore is a highly respected woman within her village while the younger girl did not care to acquire these skills and has no prestige at all in her community. We find 7 such negative anaphora in lines 16–21 which are contrasted by 5 positive anaphora in lines 23–25. In a similar way Gerubara also contrasts the younger daughter who neither has baskets for fibre-skirts (and no fibre-skirts, either) nor mats (see lines 29–31) with the older daughter, who disposes of all these goods (see lines 31–32). The repetitive style of this story and the use of anaphora as a

stylistic device crucially contribute to the successful transfer of the moral that is transported with this tale.

It is also interesting to note that the younger daughter – the bad girl – is said to experience feelings of shame – *mwasila* (see lines 45 & 55) – and to be a woman who is full of sadness – *valam* (see lines 39, 40, 46 & 54). In addition, we also learn that this woman steals food from the gardens of other villagers (see line 35) and that she is known and even publicly accused as being a thief (see line 38). Here the concepts *mwasila*, *valam* and *-velau-*, shame, crying/sadness and stealing – are associated with the bad girl in the same way as they were associated with the lazy gardener in Gerubara’s “village talk” narrative (in Subsection 3.1).

The use of direct speech for reporting this public accusation in the story plays an important role here. Such a public accusation of being a thief as well as a woman without the skills which the community expects of their female members is inconceivable for any Trobriand Islander – any woman accused like this would have lost her face forever. It would be even a worse experience than that of a man being mentioned and mocked during the *kovesa*-ceremony as the worst gardener of the village (see Subsection 2.3.4.2 above). To know that people will shout and to hear people actually shouting “this is a bad girl” would be devastating for any woman. She would most probably not simply repent that she did not follow her mother’s advice – like the woman in Gerubara’s story – her only way out in such a situation would either be leaving the islands forever or committing suicide. On the other hand, to know that people do say – and shout – “this girl is good” would support a woman’s “desire to show off, to produce a personal effect, to achieve *butura* (renown) in its most valued form, that of irresistible charm” (Malinowski 1929: 217), a desire that is also – and probably even more so – shared by every Trobriand man (see Howes 2003: 67; 83).⁷⁵

The moral of this tale is very well comparable with the moral transmitted with Gerubara’s “village talk” narrative, not least because of the joint format of two opposite models. However, this time the moral is exclusively addressed to young girls and women: If a girl wants to be a respected woman, she has to know how to make fibre-skirts, how to weave mats and bracelets, how to use bush materials for transforming them into useful things such as baskets, or containers, and how to work in her husband’s garden. If she is busy, she will produce a surplus of

75. The concept of *buturu* (in Tauwema *butula*) explains the use of the verb “shout” in connection with the shaming of the bad girl and the praising of the good girl. The noun stem *butu-* means “noise” – and the louder the name of a person sounds on the islands, the more one talks about this person, the higher is his/her social status and influence, her renown (see Howes 2003: 67, 83).

goods with which she can barter or which she can exchange in mourning distribution ceremonies so that she will be able to acquire public standing, prestige and renown. It may be due to the fact that the teller of this story is a man that other central aspects in the life of a Trobriand woman are not mentioned, for example to be a good mother and a loving wife, to educate the children, to be the keeper of her family's fire, to fetch drinking water, to cook the food for the family and to do the housework. But this is just an aside. The gist of the moral transmitted in this tale seems to be: Girls have to acquire all the skills that are expected from a woman in the Trobriand society and they have to work as busily and as industriously as possible to achieve a surplus of goods which they can use to get public respect and prestige at least within their village community.

3.3 Gerubara's advice for children – *gugwadi asi guguya*

A year before Gerubara told the tale of the good girl and the bad girl, on the 10th of June 1996, Gunter tried to collect life-stories of people in Tauwema. But it turned out that his consultants were not at all familiar with that kind of genre and thus this project could not be realized. However, Gunter's old friend Gerubara did not want to give him the impression that he was uncooperative – and therefore he offered Gunter to address children with an educational speech, a speech which the Trobriand Islanders metalinguistically label as "*gugwadi asi guguya*" – a piece of "advice for children". He asked Gunter to invite some children to his house and tell them that he, Gerubara, wants to tell them something. When a group of kids had gathered in and around Gunter's house, Gerubara presented them the following speech:

Gerubara: *gugwadi asi guguya*

- (1) *Ma-na-kwa bigatona ba-'ito'uli buku-vagi-si igau*
DEM-DEM-CP.thing speech 1.FUT-start 2.FUT-make-PL later
This speech I will start with it and you will make this later
- (2) *gugwadi - igau gugwadi yakamesi. Gugwadi yakamesi makala*
children later children you children you like
children – later you children (in the audience). Like you, children, (when we were)
- (3) *vake-masi - Uveaka - e ma-paisewa-si vayali,*
size-your Uveaka yes our-work-PL walking.on.the.beach
your age – Uveaka – yes, our work was just walking on the beach,
- (4) *gala kwe-ta(la) paisewa, ka-lo-si va bagula kena*
not CP.thing-one work 1.EXCL.GO-PL DIR garden or
there was no work, we went to the garden or

- (5) *ambeya, ka-vayali-si ka-vayali-si*
 where 1.EXCL.walk.on.beach-PL 1.EXCL.walk.on.beach-PL
 somewhere else, we walked on the beach we walked on the beach
- (6) *ka-vayali-si-iii. Tuta ka-toveaka-sima-si*
 1.EXCL.-walk.on.beach-PL-EMPH time 1.EXCL-grow.up-PL
 we just walked on the beach. The time came when we had grown up and
 out of
- (7) *ma-kavama-si - Topsikauya. I-vokwa makala - Gulavautetu.*
 our-senseless.behaviour-PL Topsikauya 3.-finish like Gulavautetu
 our behavior without sense – (when we were as old as) Topsikauya now. It
 came to an end – when we were as old as Gulavautetu.
- (8) *E ka-'ito'ula-si ka-bagula-si. Ka-bagula-si*
 yes 1.EXCL.-begin-PL 1.EXCL-garden-PL 1.EXCL-garden-PL
 Yes then we began to garden. We gardened
- (9) *ka-bugu-bagula-si-ii i-la i-la-aa ka-va'i-si.*
 1.EXCL.REDUP-garden-PL-EMPH 3.-go 3.-go-EMPH 1.EXCL.marry-PL
 we worked in the garden, indeed, it went on it really went on (like this) and
 we married.
- (10) *E ma-bubunela-si ma-kwe-si-ta gewagewa*
 Yes our-custom-PL DEM-CP.thing-PL-DEM listless
 Yes these (former) customs of ours (had become) listless (for us)
- (11) *ka-ligemwa-si. E tuta ma-tuta-na bi-valulu-si vivila*
 1.EXCL-forget-PL and time DEM-CP.time-DEM 3.FUT-give.birth-PL girl
 we could forget about them. And this time comes when the girls will give birth
- (12) *e deli gugwadi ka-sisu-si e deli ka-ninamsi-si*
 and with children 1.EXCL-be-PL and with 1.EXCL-think-PL
 and with children we live and with
- (13) *kwetinidesi bagula. Ta-la ta-bugu-bagula pela*
 one.thing garden Dual.INCL-go Dual.INCL-REDUP-garden for
 one thing we are obsessed: the garden. One goes to one's gardens so that
- (14) *bita-kam-kwam. Gala makala dimdim.*
 Dual.INCL.FUT-REDUP-eat not like white.people
Dimdim mani
 white.people money
 one will eat. (With us it is) not like with the white people. For the white
 people (it is) money
- (15) *e yakidasi bagula. Kidamwa avela bi-bugu-bagula*
 and we garden if who 3.FUT-REDUP-garden
 and with us (it is) the garden. If somebody will garden

- (16) *bi-kam-kwam, kidamwa avela gala bi-bagula gala bi-kam.*
 3.FUT-REDUP-eat if who not 3.FUT-garden not 3.FUT-eat
 he will eat, if somebody will not garden he will not eat.
- (17) *Ma-na-kwa pesta avaka bi-gatona ala kwema-tala*
 DEM-DEM-CP.thing first what 3.FUT-say its CP.idea-one
 This is the first thing what it will point out, it is one of the ideas of
- (18) *bigatona m-kwe-na a-livali. E bi-vokwa*
 speech DEM-CP.thing-DEM 1.-say and 3.FUT-finish
 this speech I (just) give. And it will be finished
- (19) *ba-luvapela asi guguya gugwadi. Ba-bigitoni e bi-nukwali*
 1.FUT-go.over their advice children 1.FUT-talk and 3.FUT-know
 and I will go over to their advice for children. I will talk and he will know
- (20) *m-to-na to-dimdim pela da-bubunela-si.*
 DEM-CP.make-Den CP.male-white.person for our-custom-PL
 this white man something about our customs.
- (21) *Yakamesi ma-bubunela-si Kilivila makala: Pesta gugwadi*
 we our-custom-PL Kilivila like first children
 We Kilivila speakers our customs are like this: First, the children
- (22) *bi-tovaka-veaka-si inisia tamasia*
 3.FUT-REDUP.grow.up-PL their.mothers their fathers
bi-gugu'i-si: "Gala
 3.FUT-instruct-PL not
 they will grow up and their mothers and their fathers they will instruct
 them: "Do not
- (23) *buku-velau, gala buku-kwelasi gala buku-mitikipwana,*
 2.FUT-steal not 2.FUT-commit.adultery not 2.FUT-peep
 steal, do not commit adultery, do not peep,
- (24) *gala avaka (ku-)kipwana la bwala tomwaya". E*
 not what 2.-peep his house old.man yes
 do never ever peep through holes into the chief's house". Yes
- (25) *m-kwe-si-na sena tabu i-siligaga. Ma-na-kwa:*
 DEM.CP.thing-PL-DEM very taboo 3.-important DEM-DEM-CP.thing
 these things are very important taboos. (And) this:
- (26) *Bu-kula buku-velau - avetuta buku-gisi dedila kena*
 2.FUT-go 2.FUT-steal when 2.FUT-see taboo.sign or
 If you may go and steal – whenever you will see a taboo sign or
- (27) *tabu tapwaroro e-gini-si e-sela-si va buva: "Tabu",*
 taboo church 3.-write-PL 3.-put-PL DIR betelpalm taboo
 the tabu of the church which they write and put on the betelpalm: "Taboo",

- (28) *kena sisi-tala yoyu e-goma-si tapwa-la*
 or CP.bough-one palm.branch 3.tie.around-PL side-its
 or one palm-branch which they tie around the side of
- (29) *buva, ya-tala kaluma e-didali-si*
 betelpalm CP.flexible-one taboo.string 3.-tie-PL
 a betelpalm, one taboo string which they tie on
- (30) *poula-tala buva, kena ya-tala kaluma e e*
 CP.grove.one betelpalm or CP.flexible-one taboo.string eh eh
 one grove of betelpalms, or one taboo-string, eh, eh,
- (31) *e-sipu-si otapwala buva, e ma-na-kwe-si*
 3.-knot-PL at.side.of betelpalm yes DEM-DEM-CP.thing-PL
 which they knot at the side of a betelpalm, yes – these things
- (32) *yaga-la “tabu”: Gala buku-mwena, gala buku-supwana, va*
 name-its taboo not 2.FUT-climb not 2.FUT-go under DIR
 are called “taboo”: Do not climb (the tree), do not go beneath it,
 towards a
- (33) *dedila, gala buku-watuni dedila,*
 taboo.fence not 2.FUT-step.on.and.break taboo.fence
gala kuku-didemi
 not 2.FUT-destroy
 taboo-fence do not step on a taboo fence and break it, do not destroy
- (34) *sina’uli gala kuku-didemi vavagi kumwedona. Igau buku-didemi*
 weaving not 2.FUT-destroy thing all later 2.FUT-destroy
 woven (taboo signs for betelnuts), do not destroy all these things. Later if
 you will have destroyed these things
- (35) *bi-ne’i-m-si bi-bane-m-si yokwa tovelau, igau*
 3.FUT-look.for-you-PL 3.FUT-find-you-PL you thief then
 they will look for you, they will find you you thief, then
- (36) *bi-bugwawe-m-si buku-kwaliga.*
 3.FUT-bewitch-you-PL 2.FUT-die
Bi-bugwawe-m-si buku-kwaliga
 3.FUT-bewitch-you-PL 2.FUT-die
 they will bewitch you and you will die. They will bewitch you and you
 will die
- (37) *e bi-kali’umaliga bi-loki veyamwa kumwedona makala.*
 and 3.FUT-fall.back 3.FUT-go your.relative all like
 and it will fall back on you it will go to all your relatives like this.

- (38) *E-tabinake-si m-to-na e avaka*
 3.-blame-PL DEM-CP.male-DEM and what
e-bwagau, taga
 3.-perform.black.magic but
 They will blame this man and that he performed black magic on you, but
- (39) *m sula titolem, vavagi m-kwe-si-ta (ku)-kodidemi.*
 your fault yourself things DEM-CP.thing-PL-DEM 2.-spoil
 it is your fault indeed, you spoil these things.
- (40) *E yokwami gugwadi ku-luluvai-si m-kwe-we-na*
 and you children 2.-remember-PL DEM-CP.thing-there-DEM
 And you children, remember that
- (41) *vavagi: Tabu Gala besatuta, taga tommwaya tokunabogwa,*
 thing taboo not now but old.people in.former.times
 thing: Taboo! Not now but people in times of old
- (42) *e-tabu-si, e lata-me-si makala lata-yayosa-si.*
 3.-make.taboo-PL and 1.INCL.PAST-come-PL like 1.INCL.PAST-hold-P
 they made this taboo and we came and like this we keep to it.
- (43) *Kidamwa te-tala tommwaya bi-kariga e igau*
 when CP.male-one old.man 3.FUT-die and then
 When an old man dies and then
- (44) *m-to-na sena e-koma kalagila vakota,*
 DEM-CP.male-DEM very 3.-eat his.food peace.(ceremony)
 this man devours the food he received during the first food distribution mourning ceremony
- (45) *e-sakauvali e-meya e-meya e-meya tokunabogwa,*
 3.run 3.-come 3.-come 3.-come in.former.times
 it runs it comes it comes it comes (to this) in former times and
- (46) *e-meya e-meya besatuta: E-kariga; ma-na-kwa*
 3.-come 3.-come now 3.-die DEM-DEM-CP.thing
 it comes it comes now: He dies; and this
- (47) *gala kwe-ta(la) dimlela. Kidamwa magi-m ku-mwasawa*
 not CP.thing-one useless if wish-your 2.-play
 is not something useless. If you like to play,
- (48) *buku-mwasawa, kidamwa magi-m buku-keosi-si buku-keosi-si-la.*
 2.FUT-play if wish-your 2.FUT-sing-PL 2.FUT-sing-PL-EMPH
 you will play, if you like to sing, you will sing

- (49) *E taga yokwami gugwadi ku-luluwai-si: M-to-na*
 Yes but you children 2.-remember-PL DEM-CP.male-DEM
 Yes, but you children remember: This
- (50) *tommota e-sasa vadeli e-tamwau migi-la.*
 person 3.-be.gap group.going.in.line 3.-be.lost face-his
 man, there is a gap within the group, it is lost his face.
- (51) *Bi-boda buku-nokapisi-si, bibodi buku-kwamiyabi-si*
 3.FUT-be.good 2.FUT-bewail-PL 3.FUT-be.good 2.FUT-obey-PL
 It will be good if you bewail him, it will be good if you obey,
- (52) *bi-boda buku-temali-si,*
 3.FUT-be.good 2.FUT-show.respect
bi-boda buku-boli-si
 3.FUT-be.good 2.FUT-respect.mourning.time-PL
 It will be good if you show respect, it will be good if you respect the
 mourning time
- (53) *pela so-mi. Tuta kumwedona buku-lilola-si bu(ku)-kanukwenu-si*
 for friend-your time all 2.FUT-walk-PL 2.FUT-lie.down-PL
 for your friend. All the time when you will walk, when you will lie down,
- (54) *buku-sisu-si, buku-ninamsi-si m-to-na tommota avaka pela*
 2.FUT-be-PL 2.FUT-think-PL DEM-CP.male-DEM person what for
 when you will be somewhere, you will think of this man, why
- (55) *la kariga e yokwami ami lumkola bi-yapu.*
 his death and you your feeling 3.FUT-be.good.and.bad
 he had to die and with you your feelings will be mixed.
- (56) *Kwe-tala vavagi e-sisu la-gigise-mi gala sitana mi kamayaba*
 CP.thing-one thing 3.-be 1.PAST-see-you not bit your disrespect
 One other thing is there, I saw you never show any kind of disrespect
- (57) *beya m-to-na tommota. La-gigise-mi makala*
 here DEM.CP.male-DEM person 1.PAST-see-you like
 towards this person. I saw you like
- (58) *gulukwalakulasi, e taga bi-doda. Buku-namsi-si*
 bad.manners yes but 3.FUT-be.good 2.FUT-think-PL
 having bad manners, yes, but it will be good. You will think about it
- (59) *kunu-mi buku-kwapituni-si bi-mwa, ami kalekwa yau-vau*
 hair-your 2.FUT-cut 3.FUT-come your clothes CP.thin-new
 your hair you will cut it it will come off, your new clothes
- (60) *gala buku-sikoma-si, vavagi kumwedona, gala buku-kwatububula-si,*
 not 2.FUT-wear-PL goods all not 2.FUT-dress.up-PL
 you will not wear them, all the goods, you will not dress up,

- (61) *gala bu(ku)-kwala'i-si dagula, gala buku-gigila-si, gala*
not 2.FUT-put.on-PL feather not 2.FUT-laugh-PL not
you will not put feathers (in your hair), you will not laugh, you will not
- (62) *bu(ku)-koyawa-si buda-mwedona. Bi-simwa te-tala*
2.FUT-walk.in.group-PL CP.group-all 3.FUT-be CP.male-one
walk in big groups. There will be someone
- (63) *o la kaukweda so-la ina-la tama-la bi-simwa*
LOC his veranda friend-his mother-his father-his 3.FUT-be
on his veranda, he with his mother and his father, there will he be
- (64) *o la kaukweda te-tala ina-la sola tama-la*
LOC his veranda CP.male-one mother-his friend-his father-his
on his veranda someone with his mother and his father,
- (65) *e igau ma-na-kwe-si guguya bi-sake-si veisiya.*
and then DEM-DEM-CP.thing-PL advice 3.FUT-give-PL their relatives
and then their relatives will give this (kind of) advice.
- (66) *Veimiya bi-sake-mi e buku-nanamsi-si e makala.*
your.relative 3.FUT-give-you and 2.FUT-think-PL yes like
Your relatives will give this to you and you will think about it, yes, like this.
- (67) *Tuta kumwedona makala wala. A-gigise-mi a-sisu beya.*
time all like only 1.-see-you 1.-be there
All the time it will be just like this. I will see you I will be over there.
- (68) *Tau va bwala a-gigise-mi makala mi-bubunela. Buku-ve-si*
man DIR house 1.-see-you like your-manner 2.FUT-go-PL
The man at the house – I see you and how you behave. You will walk around
- (69) *deli kalimwana deli mi gigila e deli ami bisila*
with happiness with your laughter and with your pandanus.leaf
with happiness, with your laughter and with your pandanus leaves (in your
bracelets)
- (70) *ami kuva, bi-boda, buku-ligemwe-si gala pela.*
your necklace 3.FUT-be.good 2.FUT-forget-PL not for
and your necklaces, it will be good, you will not forget this because of that.
- (71) *Lukwasisiga kena kumakumila bi.sikam-si kuwa,*
Lukwasisiga.clan or other.clan 3.FUT-tie-PL mourning.necklace
The Lukwasisiga-clan or another clan they will tie mourning necklaces
(around your neck)
- (72) *vavagi kumwedona bi-semwe-si, Mimalasi, Lukuba,*
goods all 3.FUT-put.away-PL Malasi.clan Lukuba.clan
all other body decorations they will put them away, the (people belonging to
the) Malasi-clan, the Lukuba-clan,

- (73) *Lukwasisiga, Lukulabuta, bi-boda Buku-tadabali-si*
 Lukwasisiga.clan Lukulabuta.clan 3.FUT-be.good 2.FUT-cut.off.hair-PL
 the Lukwasisiga-clan and the Lukulabuta-clan, it will be good. You will cut
 off your hair,
- (74) *buku-boli-si so-mi, pela sena to-kekita,*
 2.FUT-respect.mourning.time-PL friend-your for very CP.human-small
 you will respect the mourning time for your friend who was so young
- (75) *gala makala to-veaka - sena to-kekita.*
 not like CP.human-big very CP.human-small
 and not like an adult – so young.
- (76) *Ku-nanamsa-si bi-bwena, vavagi kumwedona buku-semwe-si.*
 2.-think-PL 3.FUT-be.good goods all 2.FUT-put.away-PL
 You will think about this and it will be good, all the body decorations you
 will put them away
- (77) *E bu(ku)-kwalipola-si buku-lo-si buku-kwatimigile'u-si mi*
 and 2.FUT-go.to.bush-PL 2.FUT-go-PL 2.FUT-clear-PL your
 And you will go to the bush you will go you will clear your
- (78) *tapopwa – kabinai ma-ke-si-ta kaula- e o*
 taro.garden growing DEM-CP.long-PL-DEM food and LOC
 taro garden – the growing of this food – and at the time of the
- (79) *yavata sita bita-kam-si. A makala. E*
 yavata.wind bit 1.INCL.FUT-eat-PL ah like and
 North-Westerly we will eat a bit. Ah, it is like this. And
- (80) *vavagi kwe-yu bi-lobu-si o davalusi December,*
 thing CP.thing-two 3.-come.out LOC our.village December
 another thing will come out in our village in December
- (81) *olopola a-doki gala December kena October [(Kwetomber)],*
 in.the.middle 1.-think not December but October
 in the middle of it, I think not in December but in October,
- (82) *katuboda o davalusi. Yuti women, avaka, women*
 closing LOC our.village youth women, what women
 the closing of the year in our village. The young women, what is it, the
 women's
- (83) *pelosip bi-ma o davalusi, gulem o*
 fellowship 3.FUT.come LOC our.village celebrating.new.year
 fellowship will come to our village for the celebration of the new year in
- (84) *davalusi. E bwada ku-nanamsa-si ku-vakola-si*
 our.village Yes younger.brothers 2.-think-PL 2.-get.ready-PL
 our village. Yes, younger brothers, think about it and get ready

- (85) *pela tapopwa m-kwe-na, buku-vagi-si*
 for taro.garden DEM-CP.thing-DEM 2.FUT-make-PL
kali bi-bwena,
 fence 3.FUT-be.good
 for this taro-garden, you will make its fence it will be good,
- (86) *vavagi kumwedona bwenaòkwa. Buku-kwam-si deli*
 thing all excellent 2.FUT-eat-PL with
 all things will be excellent. You will eat with
- (87) *veimiya, ke-tala-ga kena o kebudi o ku-kile'i-si*
 your.relative CP.long-one-EMPH well LOC kebudi.tree oh 2.-leave-PL
 your relatives, one long taro, indeed, planted close to a *kebudi*-tree, oh, you
 leave it,
- (88) *pela bi-me-si sidayasi. Sita bita-'ulusi-si,*
 because 3.-come-PL relatives bit 1.INCL.FUT-have.much.food-PL
 because they come the relatives. We will have a bit – food in abundance,
- (89) *bita-kam-si bita-mwasawa-si, bita-keosi-si,*
 1.INCL.FUT-eat-PL 1.INCL.FUT-play-PL 1.INCL.FUT-sing-PL
e bi-ke'ita-si
 and 3.-return-PL
 we will eat, we will play games, we will sing – and they will go back
- (90) *bi-lo-si sidayasi e bita-sisu-si o davalusi.*
 3.FUT-go-PL relatives and 1,INCL.FUT-be-PL LOC our.village
 they will go (home) the relatives and we will stay in our village.
- (91) *E ma-na-kwe-na bigatona la-bigitoni*
 and DEM-DEM-CP.thing-EMPH speech 1.PAST-tell
 And this speech that I just held
- (92) *bi-lau tau, bi-tepi bi-la va tepi pila-veaka,*
 3.FUT-take.away man 3.FUT.record 3.FUT-go DIR tape CP.part-big
 he will take them away this man, he tape-records it and it will go onto the
 big tape,
- (93) *e bi-weya o computer, buku-gise-si, pela bigatona.*
 and 3.FUT-hit LOC computer 2.FUT-see-PL because speech
 and he will hammer it into the computer, you will see it, because of what
 it says.
- (94) *Bogwa me-sinaku, agutoki kumwedona kubukwabuya deli*
 Already 3.HABIT-finish thans all young.girls with
 Already it is finished. Thank you all, young girls and

- (95) *gugwadi deli vegilavau.*
 children with newly.married
 children and young married couples.

Gerubara starts his speech with the announcement that he will tell the children how to behave when they have grown up (lines 1–2).⁷⁶ Then he provides a brief and rather simplistic description of growing up on the Trobriands. Children who are as old as his youngest son Uveaka (to whom he refers in line 3) do no work at all, they just walk on the beach and even if they go to the gardens they do it just for fun, without any intention to work there (lines 2–6). But then, at the time when they have grown up and are young adolescents like his son Topsikauya or the son of his neighbor Taidyeli, Gulavautetu (to whom he refers in line 7) the young people realize that something has changed with them: they realize that their childhood is over, that they have grown out of this time of what he calls “senseless behavior”. At this age boys start to work in the garden and after some time which is dominated by gardening they marry. They have overcome the lazy shiftless customs of childhood. The married girls will give birth to children and the families live happily together. However, adult Trobriand Islanders are obsessed with gardening – because working in the garden means having food to eat. Gerubara explains that this is the big difference between white people and Trobrianders: what money is for the *dimdim* are gardens for the Trobrianders – and he repeats that whoever works in the garden will have something to eat and whoever does not work in the garden will not have anything to eat (lines 6–16).

Gerubara then points out that this was the first point he wanted to make with this speech. In what follows he will give the children in the audience his educational advice – and even Gunter, the *todimdim* in the audience, will learn something about the Trobriand Islanders customs (lines 17–20).

Then Gerubara starts to mention the customs of good-mannered Trobrianders. When children grow up, their parents tell them not to steal, not to commit adultery when they have married and not to voyeuristically peep through the holes in the walls of the chief’s house (these “walls” consists of woven mats of palm-leaves) – this is a very specific reference; children generally should not do this. Gerubara emphasizes that these three forms of behavior are important taboos (lines 21–25). Then he continues his advice by pointing out that the children who

76. This intention is reflected in his frequent use of verbs (94) marked for future and/or irrealis; only 52 verbs are produced without Tense-Aspect-Mood (TAM) markers. Two verbs are marked for past events and one for a habitual action. If we compare this speech with the narrative texts presented in the two previous subsections, it becomes immediately obvious that we are dealing here with a completely different text category or genre.

want to break the taboo of stealing must be aware of taboo signs and respect them. These taboo signs – the written ones of the missionaries⁷⁷ as well as the signs that consist of strings that are tied around betel palms, for example – and the taboo fences mark forbidden objects and areas like a betelpalm tree with its nuts or whole betelpalm groves. It is taboo to climb these trees and to steal betelnuts and it is also forbidden to destroy the taboo signs and fences. If someone breaks this taboo, the evildoer will be persecuted and bewitched so that he or she will die. Thus the evildoer will pay with his life for breaking the taboo of stealing – and his/her relatives will realize what he or she has done. The relatives may then blame the black magician who bewitched and killed the culprit, but it was first and foremost the culprit's fault. The children in the audience must remember this taboo and the consequences of breaking it – a taboo that was introduced and set up by their ancestors in times of old and has been valid and respected ever since. (lines 25–42).

Gerubara then refers to the death of an old man and points out that one should not eat too much of the food that is distributed in the first *sagali* mourning ceremony, because one will die then – due to the disrespect towards the deceased. But not only adults should respect the deceased person and his death: If the children want to play or sing as if nothing has happened, they should remember the deceased person and that his death means a loss for the village community. So they should bewail the deceased, obey their parents who tell them how to behave properly, they should respect the dead person and the mourning time during which singing, dancing and other inappropriate forms of behavior are forbidden after the death of a villager. The children should intensively think of the old man and why he had to die, even if they may have mixed feelings towards this man and his death. However, even then they should not show any kind of disrespect towards the deceased – and Gerubara here concedes that he has not seen children who misbehaved in such a situation (lines 43–57).

However, he immediately asserts that he saw that the children misbehaved in other situations, but he tells them that he is sure that they will learn how to behave properly. That means that they will cut their hair, they will wear new clothes on special occasions only,⁷⁸ they will not dress up and decorate themselves with

77. The fact that the local Christian missionaries, the *misinari*, also safeguard their betelpalms by relying on taboo signs with magical spells against theft cast on them reveals the syncretism between Christian ideas and traditional belief in the power of magic that prevailed for a long time on the Trobriand Islands (see also Senft 1997b: 55).

78. This reminds members of at least our generation of the time in our lives where there was a clear difference made between everyday clothes and clothes that were only worn on Sundays or other official holidays.

feathers and other pieces of decorations, they will not laugh exaggeratedly and they will not walk in big groups. They should respect their parents and their relatives and the advice these adults give them (lines 57–66).

Here Gerubara interrupts his listing the dos and don'ts and reminds the children that he will watch them and observe their behavior (lines 67–68).

Then he continues his speech and tells the children that they can always happily walk around in the village, laughing and being decorated with bracelets and necklaces, as long as nobody has died. During times of mourning they may only wear mourning necklaces but no other pieces of body decoration, they will cut their hair and they will respect the mourning time – even if one of them has died (lines 68–76).

After this flashback to proper behavior during times of mourning, which he already topicalized a minute or so before, Gerubara now continues his advice with admonishing the children to clear new gardens in the bush, to work in the gardens and to grow their food there. When the rainy seasons starts with the north-west monsoon, they can already harvest the first taro tubers. Then it is time for celebrating the start of the new year on the Trobriands.⁷⁹ Visitors will come to the village – but the children should remember that despite these festivities they also have to fence their newly cut and planted gardens. Then they can continue their festivities with much food to consume and playing games and singing songs until their relatives and friends will go home again. Gerubara's advice for children comes to its end here (lines 77–90).

He closes his speech telling the children that Gunter has tape-recorded his speech, that Gunter will transcribe it and type it into his laptop because his – Gerubara's – speech was important for the understanding of the Trobriand Islanders's customs. Then he finishes his advice for children with the ritualized formula that marks the end of speeches like this one and he thanks his audience for listening to him (lines 91–95).

To summarize, Gerubara's speech presents a list of nine moral rules and rules of behavior that are crucial for the Trobriand Islanders' social construction of reality:

- After childhood is over, work in the gardens, marry, beget children and live a family live! Trobrianders are obsessed with gardening and this obsession differentiates them from white people.

79. We just want to note here that the Trobriand Islanders have a lunar calendar in which different names for moons are more or less equivalent with our months. The moon that also refers to the prevailing monsoon – the *yavata* – is called *yavatamwa*; it coincides with January (see Senft 1996b: 384, and the literature quoted there).

- Do not commit adultery!
- Do not steal! Stealing can have fatal consequences
- Do not peep into the houses of other villagers, be tactful and behave decently!
- Behave properly after the death of a person, bewail the deceased properly and respectfully and generally adapt your behavior during times of mourning!
- Obey your parents, respect them and your relatives and the advice they give you!
- Cut your hair and take care of your appearance, but do not dress up without any reason and wear new clothes on special occasions only!
- Do not attract negative attention by laughing exaggeratedly or by walking around with others in big – and therefore somewhat threatening – groups!
- Celebrate official holidays and other highlights in the village life with your relatives and friends, but don't neglect or even forget your work in the gardens!

3.4 Keda'ila's speech "educating children in the good customs of Tauwema village" – *education pela gugwadi pela bubunesi bwena valu Tauwema*

Unus pro omnibus, omnes pro uno
Every man for himself and God for us all

We had one of our first "aha" experiences (Bühler 1934: 311) that made us realize why Bronislaw Malinowski over and over emphasizes competitive aspects of Trobriand culture in his oeuvre⁸⁰ when we observed the prize distribution during the *kovesa* ceremony at the end of the *kayasa* – the harvest competition – in Tauwema in 1983 (see also Subsection 2.3.4.2 above).

Another insight we got observing this *kayasa* was that Topiesi, who organized this harvest competition in honor of his father, chief Kilagola, had to rely on a number of men, mainly but not exclusively relatives, who cooperated with him for at least a year to make sure that he could provide the prizes to be distributed – for the most part yams and betelnuts, but also a few pigs, some pots and pieces of cloth. This cooperation implied that they agreed to work for Topiesi in the gardens to supply him with additional food and to organize fishing expeditions for him so that he could barter or sell fish at the markets on Kiriwina Island to be able to accumulate the necessary prizes. The benefit they could expect from investing in Topiesi's *kayasa* was that they could count on future support by a man whom they had helped to get more prestige and political influence, a man

80. (See, for example, Malinowski 1922; 1935 Vol. I: 181–187, 211–217, 392–405; Vol. II: 187–192, 194–196; see also Bell-Krannhals 1990: 209–217; Weiner 1988: 111–116)

who had shown “who he is” (Weiner 1988: 111). Thus, we realized that the form of competition we observed was actually based on, and only possible because of, cooperative actions.⁸¹

This, of course, also holds for the famous *Kula* expeditions which we mentioned in Chapter 1 and in Subsection 2.3.2. The crews of a *kula*-canoe are dependent on their good cooperation at sea, although all crew-members know that they will severely compete with each other in the actual *Kula* enterprise, leaving no stone unturned to get the most prestigious *soulava* necklaces or *mwali* bracelets (see also Weiner 1976: 129, 180f).

And it also holds for Trobriand women who finish the mourning period for a deceased person with a final distribution of fibre-skirts and banana-leaf bundles – the *doba* and the *nununiga* – during the *lisiladabu* ritual to which we referred in Subsection 3.2 above (see Weiner 1988: 116–123).

Competition is indeed one of the most typical and characteristic features of the – adult – Trobriand Islanders’ culture and society – but in the dialectics of Trobriand society, competition is always based on cooperation between competitors and their supporters. Competition permeates all areas of the Trobriand Islanders’ life affecting, among many other things, the control of land (Weiner 1976: 157), leadership (Powell 1960; Senft 1995), gardening (Malinowski 1935), magic (Senft 1997a; Weiner 1976: 70–72, 153), mortuary ceremonies (Senft 1985a; Weiner 1976: 65, 86), and games played by adults – *nota bene* – like the famous Trobriand cricket (Leach 1976; Weiner 1988: 114).

In what follows we document and analyze a speech in which Keda’ila, a man in his late thirties, transmits his version of the Trobriand ideology of competition and cooperation to a group of schoolchildren at the village centre of Tauwema on Kaile’una Island. This speech documents this ideology in the make; moreover, it reveals that this ideology is already influenced by radiations of present processes of globalization, radiations which by now have reached villages as remote as Tauwema.

On the 21st of June 2003 Keda’ila, one of Gunter’s long term friends and consultants in Tauwema, came to him and told him that he, in his function as the chairman of the *Tauwema yuti*, the local youth club, was soon going to present a speech addressing some of the schoolchildren of Tauwema. The children were gradually gathering at the centre of the village. Keda’ila invited Gunter to video- and audiotape what he referred to as

81. This observation agrees with Gerubara’s characterization of the *tokwebagula* in Subsection 3.1 above (see lines 62–63 of the transcription of the *livalela valu* narrative).

Education pela gugwadi pela bubune-si bwena valu Tauwema.
 Education for children for custom-PL good village Tauwema
 “Educating children in the good customs of Tauwema village”.

When Gunter asked him whether this speech was a kind of *luavala* – a traditional admonitory speech – he somewhat reluctantly agreed: *E, makala, taga pikekita ituali* – “Yes like this, but a little bit different”. In 1983 Gunter had already documented a series of admonitory speeches addressed to the schoolchildren by Kilagola, then the chief of Tauwema, and some other influential elderly men (Senft 1991b). In these speeches the children were admonished to regularly go to school. Despite the fact that officially Papua New Guinea has compulsory education, only a few of the school-age children living in Tauwema went to school in the neighboring village Kaduwaga, and not all of them attended school regularly – as we have already mentioned in Subsections 2.3.1 and 2.4 above. In the 1983 speeches, the adults argued that all school-age children should regularly attend school to get a proper education which will allow them to get good jobs in the cities on the mainland of Papua New Guinea. The moral of the admonitory speeches was that once these educated young men and women would have well-paid jobs, they should not spend their wages on partners and make themselves a good life, but save most of their money and send it back to their parents, especially to their fathers who had to pay the school fees for them. This was quite amazing, if not revolutionary, given the fact that in the matrilineal Trobriand society a father is not related whatsoever with his children. We then took it as a first indication that there were attempts to change the matrilineal organization of the society into a patrilineal one (see also Senft 1992: 74f.). Moreover, the emphasis the speakers put on virtues like hard work, diligence, austerity and sexual continence reminded us more of Max Weber’s “Protestant Ethics” (1905) than of the description of the life of adolescents in Bronislaw Malinowski’s (1929) “Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Melanesia” (and our observation of their life in the village). Gunter remembered all this while he prepared the documentation of Keda’ila’s speech at the village centre and he was keen to hear (and see) whether this speech would follow the example set by the speeches which he documented 20 years before. A handful of girls and a few boys were sitting on palm tree leaves in the shade of chief Mota’esa’s big yamshouse. The chief was sitting in the shade nearby, and Keda’ila was standing in front of the children. He started his speech with the following introductory remarks and asked the children a first question (lines 1–5):

- (1) Keda’ila:
Yokwami gugwadi o mi tuta besatuta savali e
 You children oh your.PL time now busy yes
 You children oh your time now (is) busy, yes

- (2) *ku-savali-si pela avaka magi-mi buku-vagi-si?*
 2.-be.busy-PL for what wish-your.PL 2.FUT-do-PL
 you are busy because: what (are) your wishes, what would you like to do?
- (3) *Beya katupoi number one buku-mapu-si.*
 this question number one 2.FUT-answer-PL
 This (is the) question number one you will have to answer.
- (4) *O mi tuta savali besatuta avaka magi-mi. [pause]*
 oh your.PL time busy now what wish-your.PL
 Oh your time (is) busy now, what (about) your wishes?
- (5) *Avaka magi-mi? Yegu-la a-katupoi! [long pause]*
 what wish-your.PL I-EMPH I.-ask
 What do you want? I am asking (you)!

With his first sentence Keda'ila acknowledges that the schoolchildren are really busy. And this is true, given the fact that they have to walk every morning at about 7.00 am to the school in Kaduwaga from which they return in the afternoon at about 4.45 pm. Then they have to do their homework which generally takes them between 30 minutes and an hour. To go to school takes them about an hour; they have to walk a rather narrow path through the bush where they quite often hurt their bare feet and their legs. And if they want to go to High School they have to leave Kaile'una Island, go to Losuia on Kiriwina Island where the High School is, and live there with relatives. Children who do this are obviously motivated. Keda'ila's question "What are your wishes, what would you like to do?" (line 2) which is partly repeated (in line 4) and reformulated (in line 5) as "What do you want?" implies the questions "Why are you so busy? Why do you take the trouble to go to school? What is your motivation for doing this?" After marking his question explicitly as his personal question, one of the children – after a relative long pause – provides the answer in form of a repeated noun that is first uttered in a low voice and then, after a short pause, with confidence (line 6):

Child:

- (6) *Kabitam, [pause] kabitam!*
 Knowledge, [pause] knowledge!

Thus, the child claims that their motivation for attending school is to seek and acquire knowledge there. The concept of *kabitam* is very important for the Trobriand Islanders (see Senft 1986: 239). Persons who are characterized with the epitheton ornans *tokabitam*⁸² are people who have gained expert knowledge and

82. *Tokabitam* can be classified as either an adjective or as a nominalized adjective; it consists of the classifier (or 'classificatory particle' in Malinowski's terms) *to-* which can be glossed as

proficient skills in a specific domain; they are masters in their fields, intelligent, clever, and even artistic. The title *tokabitam* generally referred to a master-carver and strongly implied knowledge of specific forms of magic (see Campbell 2002; Scoditti 1990); but in the last 25 years the semantics of this title broadened in the way just described, with almost no more connotations to magic. The fact that one of the young schoolchildren answered Keda'ila's question with this term indicates that he may not have asked the question for the first time – it seems to be staged somehow. And indeed, when Gunter talked with Keda'ila about his speech after he had delivered it, he told him that he relatively regularly addresses not only the schoolchildren but also other members of the *yuti* with such speeches. After the child's answer Keda'ila repeats the elliptic utterance in a full sentence, phrased as yet another question (in line 7):

Keda'ila:

- (7) *Ku-savali-si pela kabitam?*
 2.-strive-PL for knowledge
 You strive for knowledge?

And after the children had answered this question positively (in line 8) with

Child:

- (8) *E!*
 Yes!

Keda'ila continues his speech as follows (lines 9–21):

Keda'ila:

- (9) *E kabitam ka-lisavali-si makala sena mwau,*
 yes knowledge 1.EXCL-be.very.busy-PL like very difficult
 Yes, knowledge – we are very busy (it is) like (this): (it is) very difficult,
- (10) *kidi-keda-la kabitam ka-lisavali-si mwau,*
 REDUP-way-PL knowledge 1.EXCL-be.very.busy-PL difficult
 (the) road (to) knowledge, we are very busy – (it is) difficult,
- (11) *olopola e-sisu molu i-bwadi bita-lumkwali,*
 inside 3.-be hunger 3.-be.full FUT.Dual.INCL-feel
 inside (there) is hunger, it is full (of it and) one will feel (it),
- (12) *e i-bwadi somata bita-lumkwali,*
 and 3.-be.full tiredness FUT.Dual.INCL-feel
 and it is full (of) tiredness – one will feel (it),

“human” and more specifically as “male” and the adjective form *-kabitam* which requires a prefixed classifier.

- (13) *i-bwadi mayuyu bita-lumkwali,*
3-be.full pain FUT.Dual.INCL-feel
it is full (of) pain – one will feel it,
- (14) *e oluvi bita-bani kabitam.*
and then FUT.Dual.INCL-find knowledge
and then one will gain knowledge.
- (15) *E ma-na-kwe-si vavagi olumolela*
and DEM-DEM-CP.general-PL things inside
And (with) these things inside
- (16) *bi-nukwale-da-si tommota,*
3.FUT-know-Dual.INCL.PPIV-PL people
they will know one, the people,
- (17) *da-kabitam igau bi-nukwali-si tommota.*
Dual.INCL.PPIV-knowledge then 3.FUT-know-PL people
one's knowledge – then they will know (about this) the people.
- (18) *O da-savali o da-bwetulula,*
oh Dual.INCL.PPIV-being.busy oh Dual.INCL.PPIV-hard.work
Oh, one's attempts, oh, one's hard work,
- (19) *e, tommota bi-nukwali-si. E tommota*
yes people 3.FUT-know-PL yes people
yes, people will know (about it). Yes, people
- (20) *o-si-nukwali bi-nukwali-si*
binding.vowel-3.PL.PPIII-knowing 3.FUT-know-PL
ambeya bi-kanobu-si,
where 3.FUT-come.out-PL
their knowing (about it) they will know where they (knowledge and
mastership) will appear,
- (21) *bi-nukwali-si.*
3.FUT-know-PL
they will know.

Keda'ila takes up the concept of *kabitam* again and emphasizes that he and others – but not his addressees – are (or were) very busy to reach that aim. Using the subject prefix *ka-* marking 1st person exclusive (in line 9) which is unspecified for tense, aspect, and mood, he deliberately separates himself and others (who are not specified) from the schoolchildren to whom he addresses his speech, indicating that they have not been busy enough so far in their efforts to gain knowledge. He then starts to explain why this is so. It's a very difficult, a long and winding road to gain *kabitam* (lines 9–10). Before he elaborates on this he repeats once more (in line 10) that he and others – but not his addressees – are (or were) very busy

to reach that aim. With this repetition he emphasizes the rhetoric device which excludes his addressees, denying that they can claim the same yet. He then repeats that it is difficult to get *kabitam*. The children will feel the need for it like hunger inside their bodies (line 11). They will feel hunger for knowledge, but also tiredness (line 12) and even pain (line 13) which is caused by this hunger. When Keda'ila points out that all this can be felt, he no longer uses the 1st person exclusive subject prefix but the dual inclusive marker with future tense marking *bita-*. This subject marker can be used in Kilivila as a defocusing and impersonalizing device in a stylistically quite sophisticated form of verbal politeness. This means that the schoolchildren can feel to be included again in what he says, that he is addressing them again. And he tells them that after these feelings of hunger, tiredness (if not exhaustion), and pain one will finally reach one's aim and gain knowledge (line 14). If this aim is reached, he continues, people will recognize it (lines 15–16). It is interesting to note that Keda'ila does not refer to *kabitam* here but that he produces the noun *vavagi* (in line 15) which can be glossed very generally as “thing”, but also as “product” and “deed”. This indicates that for him the concept of *kabitam* is a variety of products or deeds (he explicitly marks the plural in the demonstrative *manakwesi* – “these” in line 15) created during and based on a long, difficult, tiresome and painful process of learning. The benefit for all these efforts is that one will be recognized by the people as someone who has achieved to have *kabitam* (lines 16–17) – and this means that one has gained high status and prestige. People will acknowledge the hard work which was the basis for this achievement (lines 18–19), and they will also know and can expect that the ones recognized as having gained *kabitam* will be able to use their skills (lines 19–21). This knowledge of the people with respect to who has gained *kabitam* is marked both as a state (in the possessed noun *sinukwali* in line 20) and as a process (in the verbal expressions *binukwalisi* in lines 20 and 21), and the verbal expression *bikanobusi* reassures the addressees that once they will have acquired knowledge it will appear – the verbal expression *-kanobusi-* can also be glossed as “to come out” – whenever they need it. Once they have *kabitam* they can always fall back on it and use it. After this part of his speech Keda'ila announces a second question (line 22)

Keda'ila:

- (22) *Beya katupoi number two:*
 here question number two
 Here (is) question number two:

and asks (in line 23)

- (23) *Ambeya bi-kanobu-si bi-nukwali-si tommota? [Pause]*
 where 3.FUT-come.out.PL 3.FUT-know-PL people
 Where will they (knowledge and mastership) appear (so that) they will
 know (it) the people?

And again, after a marked pause, one of the children answers this question with a nominal ellipsis (line 24)

Child:

- (24) *Vavagi.*
deeds
(In) deeds.

which is evocative of the famous line in Matthew's gospel "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7, 16). Again, this answer seems to be staged somehow. Keda'ila takes it up and briefly elaborates on it (lines 25–27):

Keda'ila:

- (25) *E-ya metoya o mi vavagi, buku-vagi-si*
yes-EMPH with.us LOC 2.PL.PPIV deed 2.FUT-do-PL
Yes indeed, with us in your deeds, you will do
- (26) *vavagi siligaga beya tommota bi-nukwali-si*
deed many here people 3.FUT-know-PL
many deeds (and) here the people will know (about)
- (27) *mi kabitam mokwita.*
2.PL.PPIV knowledge true
your real knowledge.

Now he directly and explicitly addresses the children and points out twice that it will be their deeds, the products of their efforts in their future lives, by which the Trobriand Islanders⁸³ will realize that they have acquired true knowledge. He then continues with another thought that he finally formulates as another question (lines 28–31):

- (28) *Beya kwe-yu-vela nanamsa e-sunapula:*
here CP.thing-two-EMPH thought 3.-come.out
Here another thought appears:
- (29) *E o-ku-savali-si-ga ma-na-kwa*
yes binding.vowel-2.-be.busy-PL-EMPH DEM-DEM-CP.general
Yes you are busy indeed (for) this
- (30) *kabitam. O-ku-savali-si bi-kanobu-si*
knowledge binding.vowel-2.-be.busy-PL 3.FUT-come.out-PL
avela bi-kam?
who 3.FUT-eat
knowledge. You are busy, they (knowledge and mastership) will appear –
and for whom will it be good?

83. This is the referent for *metoya* in line 25.

- (31) *Pela tommota kena pela ve-mi-ya?*
 for people or for relatives-2.PL.PPIV-relatives
 For (all the) people or for your relatives?

At this point of his speech he first summarizes what he and the children have agreed upon so far. They are and will be busy to acquire *kabitam* and finally they will reach their aim. Then he asks them the “*cui bono*” question (in line 30): “For whom will it be good?” and he elaborates on it with the additional question: “For all the people or for your relatives?” (in line 31). Note that the literal translation of the first question is: “Who will eat (it)?”. Here Trobriand tradition surfaces extremely prominently: Experts, *tokabitam* like mastercarvers or magicians, have been traditionally paid for their products and skills with food. Their *kabitam* provided them with additional wealth in yams and betelnuts. They could redistribute this surplus food either within their matrilineal clan or during competitive food exchanges, especially during mourning rituals. Doing this they could gain even more prestige and status than they had anyhow, because, as we have already mentioned in Subsection 2.3.4.3 and as McDowell (1980) has put it, “It’s not who you are but how you give that counts” all over in Melanesia and especially in the Massim area (see also Young 1971). The literal phrasing of the question in line 30 alludes to the redistribution of food within the matrilineal clan of the *tokabitam* which strengthened the line either literally by offering additional food for consumption or indirectly by having available a surplus of food for competing with other clans in food exchanges. The free gloss “For whom will it be good?” is certainly adequate, but it does not encompass all the connotations of Keda’ila’s wording of the question. Another important issue is the fact that Keda’ila explicitly uses the possessed noun for denoting clanspersons, that is relatives within the matrilineal clan of the addressed (see also Malinowski 1929: 422f.). With this question he strongly emphasizes the traditional primacy of the matrilineal organization of Trobriand society. One of the children relatively promptly provides the expected answer to this question (line 32):

Child:

- (32) *Pela ve-ma-ya-si.*
 for relatives-1.EXCL.PPIV-relatives-PL
 For our relatives.

Again, Keda’ila takes up this answer and elaborates on it as follows (in lines 33–38):

Keda’ila:

- (33) *Pela ve-mi-ya,* *ma-na-kwe-na*
 for relatives-2.PL.PPIV-relatives DEM-DEM-CP.general-DEM
 For your relatives, that’s (it),

- (34) *o-kusavali-si* *pela ve-mi-ya.* *Gala pela*
 binding.vowel-2.-be.busy-PL for relatives-2.PL.PPIV-relatives not for
 you are busy for your relatives. Not for
- (35) *titolemi o kena gala pela tommota ituali,*
 yourselves oh or not for people different
 yourselves oh or not for other people,
- (36) *bi-kam-si gala. Bi-savali olumolela, o-ku-lumkwali-si*
 3.FUT-eat-PL no 3.-FUT-be.busy inside binding.vowel-2.-feel-PL
 they will not profit. It is busy inside, you feel
- (37) *somata, o-kulumwali-si molu, o-kulumwali-si*
 tiredness binding.vowel-2.-feel-PL hunger binding.vowel-2.-feel-PL
 tiredness, you feel hunger, you feel
- (38) *mayuyu, pela ve-mi-ya bi-kam-si.*
 pain for relatives-2.PL.PPIV-relatives 3.FUT-eat-PL
 pain for your relatives, they will profit (from it).
- (39) *Kwe-tolu-la nanamsa.*
 CP.general-three-EMPH thought
 (That was the) third thought.

He emphasizes that with their acquired *kabitam* they will first and foremost support their maternal clanspersons. He repeats his point and then first explicitly excludes the children themselves (lines 34–35) and then other people with whom the children are not related. They should not profit from the children's *kabitam* (lines 35–36). It is worth noting here that Keda'ila expects the children to use their acquired knowledge and their skills solely for the welfare of their maternal clanspersons but not for themselves. This is rather atypical for Trobriand Islanders – altruism is a concept which is quite foreign to this society; it does not play any role whatsoever in the everyday life of the Massim (see Malinowski 1922: 26). Keda'ila may come up with this demand because he does not want the school-children to become presumptuous, despite the fact that he indoctrinates them as becoming the future elite within their society and despite the fact that this would be impossible anyhow: A *tokabitam* is a person with prestige and status in the Trobriand society – and this is a value per se in this culture. After his verdict that they should use their *kabitam* to be acquired for the welfare of their relatives only, he repeats again that the longing for *kabitam* is something 'busy' inside of people and that the children will feel tiredness, hunger and pain exclusively for the sake of their maternal clanspersons – it is them who will profit from their efforts; they will get the benefit, the 'fruits' of the children's work – as Keda'ila's literal formulation implies (see lines 36–38). He closes this part of his speech with the remark that this

was the third point he wanted to make in his speech (line 39), and immediately continues with his fourth point (lines 40–45):

- (40) *E kwe-vasi-la nanamsa bita-vakela-si:*
 and CP.general-four-EMPH thought 1.INCL.FUT-step.on-PL
 And the fourth thought we will step on:
- (41) *yokwami gugwadi gudi-mi(na) Tauwema.*
 you children CP.child-from Tauwema
 you children (you are) children from Tauwema.
- (42) *E ku-sisu-si ku-paisewa-si olopola Tauwema,*
 and 2.-live-PL 2.-work-PL inside Tauwema
 And you live and work in Tauwema,
- (43) *e ku-si-savali-si pela Tauwema. E mi nanamsa*
 and 2.-REDUP-be.busy-PL for Tauwema and 2.PL.PPIV thought
 and you are busy for Tauwema. And your thoughts
- (44) *olumole-mi: Ku-savali-si pela m valu ituali*
 inside-2.PL.PPIV 2.-be.busy-PL for hm village other
 inside you: Are you busy for – hm – another village
- (45) *kena pela Tauwema?*
 or for Tauwema
 or for Tauwema?

After mentioning that he will now come to his fourth point⁸⁴ he explicitly addresses the children as children of Tauwema, as children who live and work in this village and who are ‘busy’ for it, that is to say that they offer their services for the village community (lines 41–43). He wants to know what they think about his next question, namely whether they would like to be busy and offer their services for Tauwema or for another village? (line 44–45). Keda’ila’s question is answered by two children in the expected way (line 46):

Children:

- (46) *Pela Tauwema!*
 for Tauwema
 For Tauwema!

Again Keda’ila takes up this answer, repeats it and explicitly states that the children have internalized their solidarity with their village community (lines 47–48):

84. Note the use of the subject prefix of 1st person inclusive marked for future tense in the verbal expression *bitavakelasi* in line 40.

Keda'ila:

- (47) *Pela Tauwema. E gugwadi si nanamsa olopolo*
 for Tauwema and children 3.PL.PPIII thought inside
 For Tauwema. And the children's inner thoughts
- (48) *si savali makala: Pela Tauwema bi-savali-si.*
 3.PL.PPIII busy like for Tauwema 3.FUT-be.busy-PL
 (for) their being busy (are) as follows: For Tauwema they will be busy.

This is the third demand Keda'ila is exacting on the children: They have to strive for knowledge at school, they have to use their acquired *kabitam* solely for the benefit of their maternal kinspersons, and they have to offer their services exclusively for Tauwema, expressing their solidarity with the village where they live. In what follows (lines 49–57) Keda'ila elaborates on this point:

- (49) *E beya kwe-yu, kwe-yu-vela nanamsa.*
 and here CP.general-two CP.general-two-EMPH thought
 And here (are) two, really two thoughts.
- (50) *E kwe-tolu-la nanamsa bita-tota-si:*
 and CP.general-three-EMPH thought 1.INCL.FUT-stand-PL
 And we will step on a third thought:
- (51) *Gwadi gudi-tala gudi-tala olopolo Tauwema, e bi-ke'ula*
 child CP.child-one CP.child-one inside Tauwema yes 3.FUT-carry
 Every child in Tauwema, yes, will carry
- (52) *ala vilavila, bi-pelasi pela tommote-la Tauwema.*
 3.PPII share 3.FUT-help for people-EMPH Tauwema
 its share, it will help the people of Tauwema.
- (53) *Gala pela bi-kau vilavila ma-na-kwa kena*
 not for 3.FUT-take share DEM-DEM-CP.general or
 It will not take its share like this or
- (54) *bi-kibubwati bi-pilasi-ga bi-la bi-pilasi*
 3.FUT-be.oriented 3.FUT-help-EMPH 3.FUT-go 3.FUT-help
 it will be oriented (so that) it will really help (that) it will go and help
- (55) *tommota ituali, gala! E-savali-si e-bwetukula-si bi-pilasi-si*
 people other no 3.-be.busy 3.-work.hard-PL 3.FUT-help-PL
 other people, no! They are busy they work hard and they will help
- (56) *pela wala Tauwema tommota-la: tauwau vivila*
 for only Tauwema people-EMPH men women
 only the Tauwema people, indeed: men, women
- (57) *deli gugwadi deli nunumwaya.*
 with children with old.women
 and children and old women.

He not only repeats his demand for village solidarity, emphasizing that every child in Tauwema will contribute to the benefit of the village community and help the people of Tauwema in their daily routines (lines 51–52). He also explicitly excludes that the children may even think of helping other people who do not live in Tauwema (lines 53–55), and then rephrases once more his request for the children's solidarity with the people of Tauwema (lines 55–57). After this he mentions that he wants to make one more point (line 58) and he continues as follows (lines 59–62):

- (58) *E taga kwe-tala katubuyoyu olopolo e-sisu:*
 yes but CP.general.one admonition inside 3.-be
 Yes, but one admonition remains inside:
- (59) *Toginigini bi-vini-si, mokwita bubuna tokarevaga.*
 pupils 3.FUT-work.hard true custom person.with.responsibility
 (The) pupils will work hard, (and) this is the correct custom of a person
 with responsibility.
- (60) *Avelai bubune-la bwena, e, m-to-na*
 who custom-3.PPIV good yes DEM-CP.human-DEM
 Whose customs (are) good, yes, this one
- (61) *vilavila bi-kau. Avelai bubune-la gaga gala*
 share 3.FUT-take who custom-3.PPIV bad not
 will take his/her share. (The person) whose customs (are) bad won't
- (62) *vilavila bi-kau.*
 share 3.FUT-take
 take his/her share.

The schoolchildren will work hard – as any other responsible person within the community of Tauwema. Hard work is good custom, and people whose customs are good can rely on the fact that the community will reward them – they can always take their share in the social and economic welfare of the village; but those people whose customs are bad can not.⁸⁵ With the use of the archaic form *avelai* of the pronoun *avela* (“who”) Keda'ila marks the seriousness and the traditional validity of this maxim.

After this culmination of his speech Keda'ila finishes his “education of the children in the good customs of Tauwema village” with the following summary of his main points (lines 63–77) and with a comparison between the Trobriand Islanders and white people and their search for knowledge:

85. Again, this reminds one of Max Weber's “Protestant Ethics” (1905 (= 1991); 1992)

- (63) *Gugwadi olopolo si paisewa*
 children inside 3.PL.PPIII work
 (The) children (immersed) in their work
- (64) *i-si-savali-si, i-ne-ne'i-si pela wala kabitam.*
 3.-REDUP-be.busy-PL 3.-search-PL for only knowledge
 they are busy, they search only for knowledge.
- (65) *E kabitam-gwa olopolo e-sisu sena mwau sene-la.*
 and knowledge-EMPH inside 3.-be very hard very-EMPH
 And to have the knowledge inside is very very hard indeed.
- (66) *Bogwa ta-kamituli-si ma-kada-si-na keda*
 already 1.INCL-reveal-PL DEM-CP.road-PL-DEM road
 Already we revealed that these roads
- (67) *olopola pe'ulaki bi-bani-si, e tuta oluvi*
 inside strenuous 3.FUT-find-PL and time afterwards
 inside will be strenuous to find, and (in) the time afterwards
- (68) *asi bwena bi-bani-si. E yam kwe-tala*
 3.P.PPII well.being 3.FUT-find-PL and day CP.general-one
 they will find their well-being. And day by
- (69) *kwe-tala olopolo si pasiewa bogwa makala.*
 CP.general-one inside 3.PL.PPIII work already like
 day in their work (it will be) like (this).
- (70) *E-savali-si i-bwetupula-si i-ne-ne'i-si pela wala kabitam.*
 3.-be.busy.PL 3.-work.hard-PL 3.-REDUP-search-PL for only knowledge
 They are busy, they work hard, they search for knowledge only.
- (71) *Gala makala dimdim, dimdim kabitam si vavagi,*
 not like white.people white.people knowledge 3.PL.PPIII thing
 (It is) not like (it is with) white people, white people – knowledge (is)
 their thing
- (72) *e yakamesi to-bwabwau gala. Kabitam sena mwau*
 and we CP.human-black not knowledge very hard
 but not with us black people. Knowledge – (it is) very hard
- (73) *ala paisewa, i-gaga – bagula yakamesi.*
 3.PPII work 3.-be.bad garden we.(EXCL.)
 its work, (this) is bad – the garden is ours (our thing).
- (74) *E pela-ga ginigini: Olumolela gugwadi e-bani-si mwau,*
 and for-Emp writing inside children 3.-find-PL hard
 And with respect to learning how to write: Inside (their bodies) the children
 find it hard,

- (75) *bi-savali-si pe'ula pela kabitam e si savali*
 3.-FUT-be.busy-PL strong for knowledge and 3.PL.PPIV smartness
 they will be busy with all their strength for (achieving) knowledge, and
 their smartness
- (76) *olopola. Bogwa la-taniku ma-kada-si-na. A-doki*
 inside already 3.PAST-unknot DEM-way-PL-DEM 1.-think
 (will be) inside (of them). I already unknotted these ways. I think
- (77) *bogwa makala olopola buki. Bog(wa) e-okwa.*
 already like inside book already 3.-finish
 (it is) already like this inside the book. It is already finished (the speech).

Keda'ila states – in a probably provocative vein – that all the children are immersed in their work, that they are busy in searching for *kabitam* (lines 63–64). He concedes again that it is very hard to acquire knowledge and to have it ‘inside’ (line 65, see also line 63). This expression refers to the fact that according to the Trobriand Islanders’ indigenous and by now archaic belief system, the human belly functions as the store or, if you like, the memory for magical formulae and other forms of knowledge (see Malinowski 1922: 408–409; Senft 1998: 88–90); thus in this view knowledge is *olopola* – “inside”, that is *o lopo-la* – “in belly-his/her”, “in the belly”. Keda'ila takes up this idea emphasizing that he revealed in his speech the difficulty to find the roads for acquiring knowledge. Moreover, it is strenuous and painful to construct these roads to knowledge inside one’s body; but once the children have achieved this, they will feel well again (lines 66–68). To busily strive for *kabitam* will be their daily routine (lines 68–70).

Keda'ila then compares the Trobriand Islanders, the *tobwabwau* – “the black people” – with the *dimdim* – the “white people”. He states that *kabitam* is the white person’s ‘thing’ or domain, but not the domain of the Trobriand Islanders. To acquire knowledge means hard work – and Keda'ila ironically concludes that this is bad because it means that the domain of the Trobriand Islanders is not knowledge but their gardens and gardening (lines 71–73). This contradicts the main points of his speech – and therefore we think one has to interpret this utterance as a provocation for the schoolchildren to do their very best so that they can compete with the Whites in their country. This reading becomes plausible when we realize that immediately after this almost resignative note which gets some additional support by Keda'ila’s statement that the schoolchildren find it hard to learn how to write (line 74), he again emphasizes that the schoolchildren will do whatever they can to achieve *kabitam* and that they will become smart and intelligent people (lines 75–76).

He finishes his talk by pointing out that in his speech he has paved the way that leads towards knowledge – unknitting its various paths (line 76). This is

obviously his personal assessment of his speech. Keda'ila then briefly and jokingly refers to my work insinuating that his speech will soon be transcribed and stored in my notebook (lines 76–77). And he finishes his speech with the ritualized formula *bogwa eokwa* – “(it is) already finished” (line 78).

Keda'ila's “education of the children in the good customs of Tauwema village” is relatively short – it lasts for about 5½ minutes. The structure of this speech event is presented in Table 2 below. We just want to emphasize here the following observations once again, before we summarize the main points of his speech.

What is most striking here is the fact that *kabitam* in Keda'ila's speech – and in his reading of the concept – does not refer to the traditional concept of the Trobriand Islanders. At school the children do not learn how to become a mastercarver, or an expert magician with specialization in one or more of the various forms of Trobriand magic, or an expert healer, or an expert canoe builder and navigator; they learn how to read and write, how to do arithmetics, they get instructed in geography and biology and in other disciplines of Western type and origin (see e.g. McInnes 1995). Keda'ila tries to motivate his audience to acquire the *kabitam* that is codified in Papua New Guinean curricula, most of which are based on Australian theories of education and the respective Australian teaching aids. However, to become a *tokabitam* in this field is as difficult and burdensome as to become a *tokabitam* in the traditional domains of Trobriand culture! Moreover, this striving for the modern forms of *kabitam* at school is competitive, too, because only the best pupils will be recognized by the other Islanders as the new *tokabitam* of post-colonial times. To be publicly recognized and estimated as a *tokabitam* has always been a matter of prestige, status and power on the Trobriand Islands – this will be the benefit for all the costs the schoolchildren will take upon themselves in the years to come. And with this argument Keda'ila is on firm traditional grounds of Trobriand culture again.

The Trobriand *tokabitam* have always been forced to proof their faculties in their deeds and actions. Thus, the piece of art created by a mastercarver was the proof of his *kabitam* (see Scoditti 1990), and magicians, for example weather magicians, had to proof over and over again that their magic was not only powerful but also more powerful than the magic of other magicians once they agreed to engage in it. The results of their magical deeds were easy to observe, and if they would have failed with their magic they would have lost their reputation and their face in the Trobriand society (see Senft 1997c; Weiner 1976: 203f.). The schoolchildren, the future *tokabitam* of modern times, will face the same challenges: According to Keda'ila they, too, have to proof their competence over and over again to ensure their public reputation – and this implies that they have to compete with each other in the same ways as the traditional *tokabitam* to proof the power of their faculties.

Keda'ila emphasizes the importance of exclusively supporting one's matrilineal clanspersons (see Table 2, K VII). This part of Keda'ila's speech highlights the strong undercurrents of rivalry and competition between the four main clans and their subclans in the hierarchically structured Trobriand society that go back to time immemorial (see Malinowski 1929: 417–421). Whoever has achieved *kabitam* is compelled to use it first and foremost – and if possible even exclusively – in cooperation with, and for the benefit of, his/her matrilineal clanspersons. This rule and principle for competition and cooperation guides almost all social behavior on the Trobriands.

However, Keda'ila somehow relativizes this strict verdict. He demands the children to offer their services also – but here again exclusively – to the village community of Tauwema. With this demand Keda'ila severely weakens his former claim for exclusively supporting matrilineal clanspersons. As we have pointed out repeatedly, the society of the Trobriand Islanders is matrilineal, but with patrilineal residence. Thus, many women leave the villages where they have lived with their parents when they marry and move to the village of their husbands to live there with them. However, the children that come of these marriages have most of their matrilineal clanspersons in their mothers' villages. Therefore, Keda'ila's demand for extending the cooperation from the matrilineal clanspersons to the village community in which the future *tokabitam* live is quite contradictory to his demand for clan solidarity and puts the children in a kind of social dilemma. The fact that Keda'ila does not seem to be aware of this indicates the severe contradictions in a society torn between traditional and modern values.

He also assures that anybody who is willing to take over responsibilities in his or her village community can expect to get their share in the social and economic welfare of the village. This assurance of the validity of the Trobriand social contract for everybody who accepts the Trobriand ethics of hard work is the culmination of Keda'ila's speech. Resorting to these traditional ethics provides security not only for the schoolchildren, but also for other adolescents and younger people who are confronted with new Western ideas, values and standards in their changing culture.

Table 2 below presents and summarizes the structure of Keda'ila's speech:

Keda'ila classified his speech as a form of “education of the children in the good customs of Tauwema”. However, the emphasis he puts on the modern forms of *kabitam* that are taught at the schools on the Trobriand Islands reveals that some of the ‘good customs’ have been changing over the last 25 years. As mentioned above, most of the traditional forms of *kabitam* like the art of carving, knowledge of magic, skills in canoe building, sailmaking, and traditional navigation have lost their importance in modern Trobriand society; they have been in decline for years by now. When so-called curio-dealers from Alotau, the capital of Milne Bay Province, and Port Moresby, the national capital, decided some years

Table 2. The structure of Keda'ila's speech "Education of the children in the good customs of Tauwema village" (K = Keda'ila; Ch = Child / Children)

K I	Introduction and 1st question "What do you want"	(lines 1–5)
Ch I	Answer: <i>kabitam</i>	(line 6)
K II	Reassuring 1st question: <i>kabitam</i> ?	(line 7)
Ch II	Answer: "Yes"	(line 8)
K III	The difficult, tiresome, and painful road to <i>kabitam</i> and the benefit that people will know who has acquired it	(lines 9–21)
K IV	2nd question "Where will <i>kabitam</i> appear?"	(lines 22–23)
Ch III	Answer: "In deeds"	(line 24)
K V	Elaboration on "deeds" as proof for <i>kabitam</i>	(lines 25–27)
K VI	3rd question: " <i>Cui bono</i> – all people or the relatives?"	(lines 28–31)
Ch IV	Answer: "For the relatives"	(line 32)
K VII	Emphasis on support of the matrilineal clanpersons	(lines 33–39)
K VIII	4th question "Are you busy for Tauwema or for another village?"	(lines 40–45)
Ch V	Answer: "For Tauwema"	(line 46)
K IX	Demanding exclusive solidarity with the village community of Tauwema	(lines 47–48)
K X	Elaboration on this demand	(lines 49–57)
K XI	Responsible persons will get their share in the social and economic welfare of the village	(lines 58–62)
K XII	Summary and final comparison of Trobriand Islanders with white people	(lines 63–76)
K XIII	Assessment of the speech	(line 76)
K XIV	Joking reference to the documentation of the speech and closing formula	(lines 76–77)

ago to regularly buy Trobriand carvings, they started a wave of mass production of carvings on the Islands. Pieces of excellent quality were bought at the same prize as pieces of much less quality. Master-carvers not only lost their apprentices who learned the art and the magic of carving over many years of apprenticeship because their skills were good enough for the demands of the market, they themselves were also forced to work faster and without care if they wanted to make money in this field – their very own domain (see Senft 1992: 71).⁸⁶ After more than a hundred years of mission activities, Christian missionaries finally managed

86. Note that recently Jarillo de la Torre (2013: 29) has contradicted our impression that Trobriand artefacts are in decline. We hope that he is right!

to supersede the Trobriand magicians (see Senft 1997a&b), fibre-glass dinghies – the so-called banana boats with outboard engines are gradually replacing the big *masawa* canoes with their pandanus sails, and the knowledge of how to build these canoes and to make these sails is gradually getting lost (see Senft 1992: 75; 2016). These processes of culture change which originate in the ever increasing contact with, and influence of, forms of modern capitalist economy have resulted in the shift of what kind of form of *kabitam* is regarded as most important on the Trobriand Islands. And the fact that some of the pupils who finished High School, left the Trobriands and got well-paid jobs on the mainland which enabled them to send back money to their relatives and at the same time secure their influence in their former village community, convinced the majority of the Trobriand Islanders that it is no longer necessary and appropriate these days to strive for traditional forms of *kabitam* but for the knowledge that can be acquired in the Papua New Guinean school and education system. Thus, it is certainly a ‘new’, a more recent custom that Keda’ila propagates in his speech.

However, a rather old Trobriand custom supports this new goal to strive for school education, namely the fundamental principle of competition and competitiveness in the Trobriand Islanders’ society. People like Keda’ila have realized that the increasing importance of Western capitalist market economy has already cast its shadow on the Trobriands and the smart people of his generation know that their children soon will have to compete with other Papua New Guineans as well as with Australians and other (not necessarily white) foreigners for jobs to secure their standard of living. Moreover, over the last years the population of the Trobriand Islands has exploded, due to the local missionaries’ activities against traditional and modern forms of birth control. This has resulted in shortening the periods during which the bush could overgrow former gardenland that was gained through slash-and-burn cultivation from between five or six years to three or even two years to get bigger crops. It is foreseeable that the soil will soon be overcultivated – and this means that people have to leave the Trobriands and live somewhere else (see Senft: 2017b). A good school education will help these people to adapt to these impending changes in their living conditions. Thus, competition will remain a constitutive feature in the life of a Trobriander. However, the relatively well established and well-off community of Trobriand Islanders in Port Moresby has shown that the Trobriand Islanders also stick to their custom of cooperation, especially in their competition with other Papua New Guineans (see Battaglia n.d.). And this community has also confirmed that the Trobriand ethics work not only on the Islands but also elsewhere: These ethics, based on the dialectic interplay between competition and cooperation, offer social and economic security to everybody who is willing to engage in this kind of competition and cooperation and who takes over social responsibilities.

At the end of this section we summarize once more the main points of Keda'ila's speech to elucidate how he transmits important aspects of the Trobriand ideology of competition and cooperation:

- The schoolchildren have to work as hard as possible to acquire *kabitam* at school.
- This *kabitam* will become manifest in their future deeds and thus will be socially acknowledged by the Trobriand Islanders.
- The children will use their *kabitam* as exclusively as possible for the benefit of their matrilineal clanspersons.
- The children will also use their *kabitam* to solely support the village community of Tauwema.
- With their *kabitam* the schoolchildren will become persons who are willing and able to take over responsibilities in their society, and therefore they can trust in getting their share in the social and economic welfare of their village community.
- Despite the fact that white persons may acquire the modern forms of *kabitam* easier than the Trobriand schoolchildren, people trust in the schoolchildrens' diligence, smartness and intelligence.

There is competition and cooperation in both the acquisition and use of *kabitam* on the individual level, on the matrilineal clan level, on the village community level, and on the broader national and even international level. However, the Trobriand ethics which are based on the dialectic interplay between competition and cooperation will offer social and economic security to everybody who is willing to work as hard as possible to be able to engage in this kind of competition and cooperation, in which all parties involved take over their more often than not onerous and burdensome social responsibilities. This is the gist of the Trobriand ideology that Keda'ila transmits in his speech to the schoolchildren.

Max Weber on the Trobriands? – Or rather A. S. Neill? – Or neither of them?

The concept of the balanced society

The stories and the speeches presented and discussed in Chapter 3 all emphasize one important aspect of life – as adults see it and transmit it to their children: Respected Trobriand Islanders – be they men or women – feel themselves obliged to work as hard as they can. If Trobriand adults do not exercise this duty to work, they have no chance for social advancement; they will not prosper socially, but fail and may even perish. Acquittal, the performing of one's duties – as a good gardener and a busy wife and mother – is regarded as the ultimate goal of life which provides the utmost form of self-affirmation and gratification. Work and the social status and prestige resulting from it is the most important end in itself in a Trobriander's life.

This synopsis of the essential moral codified in the oral texts in the previous chapter reminds us – and certainly many other attentive readers – of Max Weber's analysis of "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" which was first published in 1905. Weber talks about "the absolutely essential feeling of obligation to one's job" (Weber 1991: 53, 1992: 26),⁸⁷ and emphasizes "the conception of labour as an end in itself" within the framework of the Protestant ethic (Weber 1991: 61, 1992: 26). He asserts that a maxim of the spirit of "protestant" capitalism was: "Whoever does not adapt his manner of life to the conditions of capitalistic success must go under, or at least cannot rise" (Weber 1991: 61, 1992: 34). In addition, he notes that after Luther's Reformation "...one thing was unquestionably new: the valuation of the fulfilment of duty in worldly affairs as the highest form which the moral activity of the individual could assume" (Weber 1991: 67, 1992: 40). And he points out that after 1517 "...the most important thing was that ... labour came to be considered in itself the end of life, ordained as such by God (Weber 1991: 168f., 1992: 105).

87. Talcott Parson (1992: 26) translates Weber's German term "Arbeit" here with "job". It is obvious that Weber does not refer anywhere to "jobs" in this essay; the adequate translation for the term "Arbeit" as Weber uses it here is "work" (and elsewhere also "labour").

The similarities between the Trobriand Islanders' essential moral that should guide every adult's life and the maxims of the Protestant ethic as analysed by Weber are striking, indeed. However, the Trobriand Islanders were neither affected nor afflicted by some of the more serious consequences of this ethic which Weber (1991: 167f., 1992: 104; see also 1991: 44, 1992: 18)) characterizes as follows:

The real moral objection is to relaxation in the security of possession, the enjoyment of wealth with the consequence of idleness and the temptations of the flesh, above all of distraction from the pursuit of a righteous life ... Waste of time is thus the first and in principle the deadliest of sins Loss of time through sociability, idle talk, luxury, even more sleep than is necessary for health, six to at most eight hours, is worthy of absolute moral condemnation.

Ever since Malinowski (1922, 1929, 1974; see also Senft 1999, 2010a, 2011b) we know that Weber's analysis of the Protestant ethic and its consequences just presented does not hold for the Trobrianders. Even the hardest workers know how to celebrate feasts and festivities – especially after the annual harvest which is followed by a time of leisure and all kinds of feasts, festivities and entertainments before the gardening cycle begins again (see Senft 1996b). They are not opposed at all to temptations of the flesh, they balance their time with respect to work and social activities, they like idle talk and they are not disinclined either to a good long nap at times. Ideas like “the security of possession” and “loss of time through sociability” are completely foreign to them. The Trobrianders enjoy their wealth because this luxury allows them to distribute their surplus of food and other goods and valuables – and this results in an increase of their personal prestige and social status within the community. And “the *summum bonum*” of their ethic (see Weber 1991: 44, 1992: 18) is not “the earning of more and more money” – read yams, fibre-skirts, fibre-skirt bundles and kula valuables in the Trobrianders' case – “combined with the strict avoidance of all spontaneous enjoyment of life”. They are not “dominated” by the accumulation of wealth but by the idea that “it's ... how you give that counts” (McDowell 1980: 58). All this clearly contradicts the “spirit of capitalism”.

Thus, we have to refute the hypothesis – which was based on the presentation and analysis of the Trobriand educational ideologies manifest in stories and speeches – that the Trobriand Islanders come very close to an exemplary showcase of an ethnic group consisting of apologists of the Weberian Protestant Ethic. This hypothesis is obviously based on a too one-dimensional and socially inapplicable understanding of the role that work and possession plays in the Trobriand Islanders' lives.

If we cannot use Max Weber to come up with an appropriate understanding of how and why the Trobriand Islanders are socialized into a relatively homogeneous group with common and binding social and personal norms and with rules

and regulations that guide the behavior of its members, then what about the philosophies of educators like for example Alexander Sutherland Neill who with his “radical approach to child rearing” (Neill 1960) propagated “freedom, democracy, and self determination ... in the field of education” (Fromm 1960: ix) where he meets the children as an “equal” and not as an “authority” (Neill 1960: 8). Are these educational aims and qualities not also characteristic for the Trobriand children’s “small republic” in which they “enjoy considerable freedom and independence” (Malinowski 1929: 44f.)? In his school “Summerhill” – which was founded in 1921 – Neill claimed to educate “healthy, free children whose lives are unspoilt by fear and hate”, to “allow children freedom to be themselves ... [renouncing] all discipline, all direction, all suggestion, all moral training, all religious instruction” based on “a complete belief in the child as a good, not an evil, being” who is “innately wise and realistic” (Neill 1960: 4). Are these educational aims and is this educational approach not comparable with some of the essential principles and characteristic features of the children’s groups on the Trobriand Islands and with the socialization processes the children undergo in these groups?

A very superficial reception of our report on the socialization of Trobriand children may indeed come up with the assumption that many aspects of these processes resemble a loosey-goosey form of *laissez-faire* education. But this would be a grave misreading and misunderstanding. The Trobriand Islanders do not at all agree with Neill’s anti-authoritarian approach to education, although they agree with Ernest Dimnet’s maxim “Children have to be educated, but they have also to be left to educate themselves”.⁸⁸ We pointed out in Subsections 2.3.4.2 and 2.3.4.3 that Trobriand children learn at an early age – between three and four years – to share and distribute goodies and other personal items; at this age they have learned and internalized the social norm to share, knowing that they are not estimated on the basis of their possessions but on the way of how they distribute and share them – not only within their peer-group but also within their society as a whole. And we emphasized the active role adults – mostly their parents – take up in this learning process. This is another argument, by the way, for refuting similarities between Weber’s description of the Protestant ethic and the foundations of Trobriand sociality and society.

But back to our refuting possible hypotheses with respect to similarities between Neill’s ideas of antiauthoritarian education and the Trobriand Islanders’ forms of socializing their children. We described in Subsection 2.3.4 the active role adults play in their children’s guided education and socialization into the adult society with its norms that govern social life and interaction

88. This bon mot was attributed to Dimnet by Clements & Fiorentino (2004: 111).

within their community and regulate which forms of behavior are acceptable and which are taboo.

But it is not only the parents who actively guide and educate children on the Trobriands based on their authority qua age, experience, role and status. In the Subsections 2.3.1 and 2.3.4.4 we pointed out that the childrens' groups are mixed-age groups where children pass through a number of different roles and positions where they occupy peripheral toddler positions, initiate member positions and finally leader positions (see Martini 2009: 158f.). Older children – also qua age, experience, role and status – teach and control the younger children's socialization processes and – like adults – also sanction forms of deviant and nonstandard forms of misbehavior of younger group members. Thus, during their socialization processes children on the Trobriands – as most probably children everywhere else in the world – experience authority by both their parents and other children, an authority which despite all the freedom and independence within the children's group includes sanctions of misbehavior. Thus we cannot but refuse any hypotheses about similarities between forms of antiauthoritarian education and the Trobriand children's free and independent 'little republic'. There is no room on the Trobriands neither for Max Weber nor for A. S. Neill.

In their assessment of the Whiting's "Six Culture Study (SCS)" Carolyn Edwards and Marianne Bloch (2010: 488) note that the results of the SCS showed that there is

... a particular set of powerful predictors [that] ... influence normative patterns of child development: the gender, age, status, and rank of children's typical social companions; the type of and frequency of children's contact with nuclear and extended kin; children's ongoing activities of work, play, and rest; and the basic organizing features of daily life in their community associated with social structure (subsistence ... division of labor ... family and household structures, residential patterns, education, ... and social networks and community institutions).

In this volume we have described these predictors and analysed them in detail. We have emphasized over and over again that the children's groups on the Trobriands are (at least) as important for the children's socialization as their parents and their extended kin are and that both these agencies for education complement each other – often in very subtle ways. In what follows we will elaborate a bit more on this fact.

It is in their mixed-age and mixed-gender groups where the children in everyday interactions and especially in play directly experience and learn about social hierarchies, authority, status, rank, social roles, rules and behavioral norms to which they have to conform if they do not want to risk exclusion from the group as outsiders. In this way they also acquire self-discipline, especially with respect

to controlling their emotions and monitoring their forms of behavior. As a result, their behavior becomes more and more predictable for others and they realize that this quality essentially contributes to their own as well as to their group members' social safety. Thus, they experience solidarity and group cohesion and acquire social bonding strategies which can create, and very often result in, life-long companionships and even friendships. Moreover, the various forms of play offer the children fora where they have the license to test out the limits of what they can do in social interactions and what is socially sanctioned. These dos and don'ts include behavioral as well as moral rules.

The acquisition of these culture-specific rules of appropriate social conduct is complemented and completed by their parents. They educate their children to become autonomous and independent members of their community who conform with the cultural norms of their society. Besides the priming function of their good example and their proper role models for what it means to have undergone a successful socialization process within their culture, and besides direct educational interventions, the parents also use a variety of more or less indirect and subtle verbal means to socialize their children, means like those we have documented in the previous chapter.

In the tales documented in Chapter 3 the children are confronted with positive and negative male and female role models with an essential emphasis on industriousness, diligence, hard work and the necessity to acquire knowledge (*kabitam*) of all kinds. Among the morals that can be found in other tales of the Trobriand Islanders which Gunter collected over the years, we find commandments and interdictions like the following ones: behave properly, be generous, overcome your fears, use your wits, keep promises, be polite, respect traditional forms of knowledge respect traditional residence rules, do not go alone into the bush and gardens, do not share a meal with others, do not sleep in the house of strangers, do not ridicule the sick, and do not disregard cultural norms and rituals (see Senft 2015a: 275).

These stories as well as speeches like the ones documented in Chapter 3 transmit the Trobrianders' *weltanschauung* and their educational ideologies. Keda'ila's speech in Subsection 3.4 is an excellent example of how he attempts to "promote adaptation to constraints imposed by external factors" (Edwards & Bloch 2010: 489). The speech illustrates that "changes in parenting [and educational – B. & G. S.] beliefs and practices are brought about by socioeconomic and daily life changes" (Edwards & Bloch 2010: 493). In his speech Keda'ila attempts to "project complete developmental trajectories, or pathways, that are cultural solutions for universal developmental tasks" (Edwards & Bloch 2010: 489) – in this case the challenges of globalization and competition where a good school-education becomes more and more important for Trobriand children. And this speech – as

well as the other tales in the previous chapter – confirms insights already gained by the Whitings, as Edwards and Bloch (2010: 489f.) point out:

Successful development is enabled for children when communities lay out meaningful and accessible pathways that children can follow. These pathways include culturally defined and valued directions for development and sets of skills that children should master to succeed...

Keda'ila's speech and Gerubara's tales lay out such pathways for the Trobriand children in their traditional as well as in their changing world.

One of the most important, if not the most import of these pathways leads to the education of children into ideally independent but also highly socially competent individuals who can take up the challenges of social competition – which pervade Trobriand society – in such a way that they become acknowledged as persons of influence who easily find friends who are willing to cooperate with them and to put them in an even better position within the framework of these competitions, with the benefit that they can count on the future support by this individual whose name, with the help of their support and on the basis of their cooperation will finally be known all over the Massim area.

As we have seen in the tales and speeches in Chapter 3, this pathway requires hard work – either in the gardens or in the production of fibre-skirts (*doba*) – which results in a surplus of goods that enables individuals to generously redistribute them to others, and to share their wealth of food or other valued items with them. In the previous chapters we frequently referred to the *kayasa* harvest competition, a ritual which provides such a forum for men to become persons of influence,⁸⁹ and we also referred to the *lisiladabu*, a competition in women's wealth, that is *doba*, during mourning rituals (*sagali*) which provide the forum for women to become persons of influence. It is only by the generous giving and sharing of one's surplus products that people gain rank, status and renown in addition to their inborn social rank within the hierarchical society of the Trobriands. Thus, as repeatedly pointed out by now, it is not the aim of the Trobrianders to accumulate food, goods and possessions in general to be a wealthy person – as it is the case in capitalist societies – it is giving, sharing and redistributing these items of wealth that makes a Trobriander – be it man or woman – influential and famous in his/her society (see Widlok 2017: 49). But what does this pathway actually look like?

In Chapter 2 we noted that the vast majority of the games the children play are not competitive at all. The children do not play them to win, they play them

89. The *Kula* of the Trobrianders provides another such forum, of course. See Malinowski (1922); also Huizinga (1956: 75, 1949: 63) and Howes (2003: 61ff). But even a brief discussion of the *Kula* here is out of the scope of this volume.

for the joy of it. Most of the competition games which we described in Subsection 2.3.2.5 are games which were introduced to the Trobriands during the Australian colonial times. Games, even competition games, are first and foremost played for fun – and we pointed out that children who achieve something remarkable in a game, for example a child who could throw a stone farther than everybody else, are not admired by others; they show their pride and their happiness with their special skills and with the outcome of their games in a very even-tempered way (see Subsection 2.3.4.2). This attitude towards playing games – where winning does not really play a role – secures the social balance within the children's group. *Emwasawasi wala* – they are only playing games!

Even the most competitive ritual of the men – the *kayasa* – is also first and foremost a *mwasawa* – a game for the Trobriand Islanders (see fn 34 in Subsection 2.3.2 and Subsections 2.3.4.2 as well as 2.3.4.3). The game character provides certainly a way out for Trobrianders who have no ambition whatsoever to compete with other members of their community for status and rank and who can arrange themselves with the fact that they fulfil the duties their community expects from them. However, the characterization of the *kayasa* as a play also encourages persons who have such ambitions to 'seriously' get engaged in it. If they fail, they have only played a game. But if they excel in the harvest competition or in the *lisiladabu* fibre-skirt competition, they will be rewarded not only with a prize or even with prizes – mostly in the form of food, but also with status, fame and renown. This reward for their efforts is the incentive to play the game – in addition with the fact that it offers individuals the opportunity to come close to an ideal with which they have been educated by their parents and other adults from an early age on until they married and founded a family. In the case of the *kayasa*, the objective of the game is to become the best gardener – a *tokwebagula* – of the village. This results in a surplus of a man's harvest, especially of his yams harvest – and the prize(s) he will earn for his diligent work will be even more food. With this abundance of food he can either make allies with other kinpeople or with friends who may agree to work for him during the next year so that he can defend his honorary title as a *tokwebagula* during the next harvest competition, or he himself can organize a *kayasa* and set out the prizes for rewarding the best gardeners. Both these alternatives will not only offer him as an individual even more fame, they will also guarantee the respective community utmost security with respect to its subsistence as a whole. However, the distribution of prizes as rewards to the gardeners who have managed to produce a surplus of food increases the moment of inequality within the Trobriand Islanders' society of gardeners – the society loses its balance. Winners of a *kayasa* harvest competition or of a *lisiladabu* fibre-skirt competition need to be aware of this fact. They can of course revel in their public acknowledgement and in their status gained, but they have to strive to restore the societal balance

as well. They are expected to rebalance the situation by the redistribution of their surplus manifest in their own performance and in the rewards for it. This is a very important part of the game played. This rebalancing of the society by the winners' redistribution of the accumulated surplus results in even more fame for the winners – but fame, status, influence and renown acquired by an individual – the *butula*⁹⁰ – is not regarded as a threat to the balance of the Trobriand society; it is acknowledged and respected as a personal achievement which – like special expertise and knowledge – *kabitam* – in certain fields such as in magic or in navigation or success in the *kula* trade or in school education – can overcome the hierarchical clan structure of this society, at least to a certain degree. If Trobrianders do not comply with the social norm to restore any form of imbalance they have caused within their society, they have to face severe consequences which can even result in exile – the dreaded *yoba* ritual – by which Trobrianders who have severely violated certain taboos and social norms are expelled from their village and become *personae non gratae* (Malinowski 1929: 11f.; see Senft 1998: 137, fn 18).

This concept of the balanced society results in a kind of communist levelling, in an enforced conformity with respect to individual accumulation of wealth and possessions. This certainly contributes to and increases the solidarity within this society and strengthens its social bonds, but it actually impedes any form of personal entrepreneurship. This can be fatal for persons who try to make money by opening grocery stores or by offering inter-island boat trips with dinghys. Usually their kinspeople expect to get free goods or free rides – and it is extremely difficult to disentrall these expectations.

The Trobriand Islanders' balanced society has been working for a long time, but it may very well be that this socioeconomic model which was successfully handed on from generation to generation proves to be inadequate for coping with the challenges the Trobriand Islanders' society has to face in our times of economic globalization and climate change.⁹¹ That some Trobrianders are aware of these imminent changes and try to adapt their educational ideologies in an appropriate way is documented by Keda'ila's speech (in Subsection 3.4). We hope that the extremely smart Trobriand Islanders will find a way to adapt to these existential challenges which menace the foundations of their society, their cultural norms and their cultural and ideological superstructure.

90. The possessed noun “*butu*-PossProIV” means “sound, noise” and also “renown” and “fame”; *butu-la* (fame-his/her) is the form for 3rd person singular but also the general citation form. For an excellent explanation of the concept see Howes (2003: 67f., 77f, 83, 113, 168, 172); see also footnote 75 above.

91. First fatal effects of the climate change that affects the Trobriands are described in Senft (2017b).

Appendix I

Metadata for three of the texts presented in Chapter 3 documented on audio- and video-tape

See URL: <<http://www.mpi.nl/people/senft-gunter/research>>

Click: Web page for “*Growing up on the Trobriand Islands of Papua New Guinea: Childhood and educational ideologies in Tauwema*”

Gerubara’s account of a “village talk” – *livalela valu* (3.1)

Gerubara’s tale of “the good and the bad girl” – *vivila bwena vivila gaga* (3.2)

Keda’ila’s speech “educating children in the goo customs of Tauwema village” – *education pela gugwadi pela bubunesi bwena valu Tauwema* (3.4)

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This volume deals with the children's socialization on the Trobriands. After a survey of ethnographic studies on childhood, the book zooms in on indigenous ideas of conception and birth-giving, the children's early development, their integration into playgroups, their games and their education within their 'own little community' until they reach the age of seven years. During this time children enjoy much autonomy and independence. Attempts of parental education are confined to a minimum. However, parents use subtle means to raise their children. Educational ideologies are manifest in narratives and in speeches addressed to children. They provide guidelines for their integration into the Trobrianders' "balanced society" which is characterized by cooperation and competition. It does not allow individual accumulation of wealth – surplus property gained has to be redistributed – but it values the fame acquired by individuals in competitive rituals. Fame is not regarded as threatening the balance of their society.

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