

Further symbolism: foetal growth, birth and the child

Malinowski divides the horticultural year into two phases. The first, dealt with in the previous chapter, begins about July with the inaugural garden ceremony and ends in November after planting.¹ This is a period of intense and almost exclusively male activity in both magical and practical work. Of interest is the fact that during this time of horticulture sunshine is a prerequisite;² in New Caledonia the time of the sun and the concept of dryness are associated with maleness.³ The second period extends approximately from December to June, a time of essentially subterranean *taytu* activity and plant development;⁴ it is a phase virtually dominated by women⁵ and quiet but energetic growth in the gardens. As in New Caledonia,⁶ in contrast to the first phase, this is the rainy season,⁷ which suggests that symbolically wetness could be associated with femaleness in the Trobriands.⁸

Foetal growth

When the fresh shoots appear above ground and twine round the supports, plants and weeds grow rapidly.⁹ In consequence the garden magician inaugurates the weeding session by conducting a short magical act which incorporates a mime of weeding. On every plot he repeats the rite and "sweeping clean" spell:

I sweep, I sweep away.
I sweep, I sweep away.

Cut thy top, O taro root; split thy leaf, O taro.
Thy stalk bows over.

O taro of the *kalakayguya* kind; O taro red like blood:
 O taro of the *kalipadaka* kind, O taro of the *namtamata* kind.¹⁰

Sweeping is a domestic activity aimed at keeping the village clean.¹¹ The garden magician as representative of the mythical founders of the sub-*clan* and retainer of its magical potency¹² briefly recites the weeding spell on each plot, thus apparently signalling that the activity relates to that area owned by every male.¹³ I have tentatively suggested that the second act of the burning ceremony which specifically concentrates on the firing of weeds and refuse, projects the idea of purifying the garden;¹⁴ likewise weeding appears to accord with the imagery of cleansing the garden plot. Weeding is distinctly women's work.¹⁵ There are two major themes in the weeding spell: the first, brushing or sweeping clean. This concept of the need for purification of the garden recurs in ideas concerning human procreation in which the pregnant woman has to pay particular attention to cleanliness and guard against adultery.¹⁶ The other main theme of the spell concerns the ripening taro.

As has been noted, reference to taro may be a vestige of a former taro magical system.¹⁷ Be that as it may, taro was planted and mentioned in the ceremony of burning, associated with conception; it was also observed that in parts of Oceania taro is considered a feminine plant or one tended by women. Significantly, taro now reappears in a period of female activity. The taro reference in the weeding spell concerns a state of maturity, for the stalk is bent over.¹⁸ Taro and weeds are linked and yet differentiated: both grow in the garden and are a part of it, but the weeds are swept away as refuse while the taro becomes ripe and nourishing, like the blood of woman in gestation.¹⁹ The garden magician specifically likens taro to human blood.²⁰ In anticipation of the pending harvest associated with birth this seems to symbolize the placenta, in which blood is joined with, yet distinct from the human foetus. It is significant that in taro cultivation the main taro tuber is termed "mother"; those sprouting from it are "siblings", and the germinating young plant is "the child".²¹ When it is harvested, that part remaining in the ground is called *bam*, the afterbirth.²² Viewed in this way the taro symbolism would appear to be a necessary part of the story of the growth of the *taytu*.

It seems strange that Tambiah does not consider red in the Trobriands to be linked with blood, even though he acknowledges the indigenous procreative dogma that the infant receives flesh and blood from the mother.²³ In general he links Trobriand redness with "radiance, anima-

tion, irresistible physical charm" and beauty magic.²⁴ Weiner links redness with female sexuality since it is the colour of women's skirts which are in turn indices of wealth.²⁵ Munn has associated redness with excitement and erotic seduction²⁶ though she has subsequently indicated the need for revision of this interpretation.²⁷ Baldwin for his part regards Trobriand red as a symbol of "life and happiness".²⁸ The idea of the life-principle being associated with redness is noteworthy,²⁹ but at the present stage of our superficial knowledge of the Trobriand cognitive process such generalizations should perhaps be viewed with caution.

Weeding normally starts in the fifth or sixth gardening month.³⁰ It is introduced with the "sweeping clean" spell which contains images of cleansing, of redness and of blood, and hence, it seems, of femininity.³¹ Women often weed communally, and the work is punctuated by competitive wagers (no detail available), joint eating and gossip.³² Men are forbidden access to such a weeding group on pain of sexual abuse.³³ The strict privacy of weeding together with its sexual overtones exposes it as something particularly feminine, private, fulfilling and powerful.

Men have been active in the early stages of gardening in opening the way to the plot and in planting the *taytu* embryos. But once the *taytu* embryo develops, the male is superfluous, for the belly of the garden alone can nurture it; and because of the identification of the garden with woman, it appears that weeding is exclusively apportioned to women. Similarly in the later stages of pregnancy the woman's sexual desire diminishes: she becomes self-absorbed and introspective in her creative process. In Trobriand procreative dogma, once a woman's vagina has been dilated by sexual intercourse — or some other means — and the spirit foetus inserted, she primarily sustains foetal growth.³⁴ Furthermore, sexual intercourse between a man and his pregnant wife is taboo during the later stage of pregnancy.³⁵

Thus during the latter stage of these two processes, the garden, like the woman, is removed from the ambit of men. Weeding, like pregnancy, confers special privileges on women and stresses their biological difference from men. During this activity even men of their own village may not approach them. The orgiastic assaults on strange men who come near them, which are the privilege of women during communal weeding in some parts of the Trobriands, are particularly illuminating.³⁶ The women who practise this custom, known as *yausa*, allegedly rip off a man's pubic leaf, induce ejaculation and may cover him in excreta.³⁷

It is perhaps significant that a watch is kept over the Trobriand mother in late pregnancy which is termed *yausa*,³⁸ it suggests a symbolic correlation between weeding and gestation. A pregnant woman's male maternal relatives guard her from male sorcerers who might attempt to approach and cast the magic of *vatula bam* (paralysis of the uterus) on her, hereby adversely affecting her childbirth.³⁹ In practical terms the *yausa* custom which is associated with weeding can be said to prevent women from being molested by strangers, at least during the day, and to enable them to pursue their work efficiently. However, the apartness and sanctioned aggressive behaviour at this time, which coincides with the *kula* of the men,⁴⁰ appears as a protective device and as a signal denoting a feminine domain into which any kind of intrusion is forbidden.

Standardized sexual aggression and obscenity as evinced in the horticultural *yausa* appear to be a symbolic expression of dominance, in this case over the publicly important Trobriand male. The *yausa* behaviour is perhaps the most powerful manifestation of dominance a female can employ, even refuting the dictum that though males can rape females, the female cannot rape a male. By revelling in his pain and revulsion the women can force a man to wince at his masculinity⁴¹ and can sexually display their superior and unique status.

Malinowski does not interpret the *yausa* custom, though he mentions how his informants avidly described it, particularly when discussing gardening or the position of women. He says that the only parallel to this *yausa* custom is found in the legend of Kaytalugi, the land inhabited by sexually insatiable women.⁴² The present interpretation of the *yausa* custom is consistent with this legend in so far as the practice illuminates female sexuality; however, the *yausa* does not seem to suggest sexual demand⁴³ so much as sexual dominance. Covering of the male victim with excreta together with the display and ridicule of the phallus seem to indicate sexual satiation and abhorrence; whereas the behaviour of the Kaytalugi women suggests sexual desire.

The *yausa* therefore emphasizes an important theme of weeding and pregnancy: the need to maintain the symbolic purity of the female body,⁴⁴ hence strange males are anathema and even men of their own village should keep their distance. The symbolic statement is that pregnancy is the sole prerogative of women and their source of inalienable power, for which men have no counterpart. The organization of weeding therefore tends to reveal the garden as a female body with

women alone preoccupied in attending to it. The *yausa* custom in particular exposes weeding as a complement to the process of pregnancy and as signalling an area of female dominance.

The *yausa* custom certainly poses the question as to the purpose served by obscenity. Evans-Pritchard, from his research in Africa, concludes that collective and prescribed obscenity accentuate the social value of the activity with which they are associated.⁴⁵ Turner expands on this: "The raw energies released in overt symbolisms of sexuality and hostility between the sexes are channelled towards master symbols representative of structural order, and values and virtues on which that order depends."⁴⁶ In the case of the *yausa*, the importance of female sexuality and procreation associated with the perpetuation of the matrilineal sub-clan, and the values of cleanliness, beauty and purity of the female body seem to be expressed.

During the period of growth the *taytu* plant becomes the focus of magical activity.⁴⁷ The magical procedure accompanying the development of the *taytu* is basically that of reciting a series of fertility spells designed to promote growth in the young cultivar.⁴⁸ Familiar similes of the ant-hill and bush-hen's nest reappear,⁴⁹ and with them the concomitant associations of plant and human fecundity. I do not accept Weiner's point that this stage of the gardening ceremonial reflects male sexuality. She assumes, but does not prove, that "come out", "shoot" and "anchor" are male activities.⁵⁰

Just as the pregnant mother is surrounded by ceremonies ensuring her purity, and the development of the foetus is given added impetus by magical means,⁵¹ so the garden magician, dissociated from the men and women of the village, alone permeates the gardens of the sub-clan and of each individual man with spells which assure successful growth and well-formed *taytu*. These spells, providing magical assistance to development of the tubers, evoke the conventional fertility images of roundness and warmth: "The yam rises and swells like a baking-mound"; there are images of plenty "Make mop upon mop of leaves, O head of my *taytu*", and the tubers are encouraged to multiply and become securely anchored.⁵²

During this period the villagers tell one another interminable, often ribald tales to assist the growth of their *taytu*.⁵³ The *taytu* is endowed with a receptive, almost human disposition.⁵⁴ Oral encouragement to the growing tropophyte is a notable feature of certain Melanesian yam-

gardeners as the peoples of Kai (New Guinea) and Bwaidoga (Good-enough Island) evince.⁵⁵ The supposition is that the yam can hear, that it is responsive to the telling of tales, receives succour from the stories and is thus encouraged to develop. The growing *taytu* plant requires careful nurturing.⁵⁶ Much of the practical activity is necessary for purely horticultural reasons – such as inserting larger *taytu* poles, training the vines, or thinning and removing bad tubers.⁵⁷ But a ceremony introducing the thinning of the tubers⁵⁸ entails the use of the standard magical repertory of substances associated with roundness, whiteness and pullulation⁵⁹ and the oft-repeated *vatuvi* spell: "Show the way... into the deep ground... The belly of my garden leavens..."⁶⁰

Repetition in both animal and human behaviour serves to reduce the ambiguity of a signal.⁶¹ continued reiteration of the *vatuvi* formula has the effect of echoing the procreative theme throughout the horticultural cycle. Thus, although thinning is a practical necessity,⁶² the spell and associated substances which accompany the act colour the work with a hue of fecundity.

As has been mentioned, the horticultural process is divided into two periods: in the initial drier months the men are active and in the latter half of the season during plant development, women prevail.⁶³ There is a close structural resemblance between these two phases of Trobriand horticultural activity and those of pregnancy, which is confirmed in an article by Margot-Duclot and Vernant.⁶⁴ There are also two phases in Trobriand pregnancy, the one corresponding to a male presence and conception, the other to development within the womb and a predominantly female presence.⁶⁵ The authors emphasize the important break of the fifth month in the pregnancy sequence, pointing out that "after the fifth month the foetus is thought to grow and develop, and it is this peaceful development – away from the male and the sun, in the shadow of the pregnancy cloak, under the sign of the water and under the watchful protection of women – that the taboos and rules of pregnancy aim to ensure, by means of the predominance of the female influence".⁶⁶ The neglected analysis of Margot-Duclot and Vernant which agrees in principle with that pursued in this treatise, shows that unless the complex interweaving roles of both male and female are taken into account, the magic and symbolism of horticulture cannot be explained.⁶⁷

Birth

The zenith of the gardening year is reached when the crops have matured.

At the commencement of the preliminary harvest, that of taro and large yams, the garden magician is to be found in his house reciting the *isunapulo* formula, here abridged, over a pearl shell.

Full moon here! Full moon then, full moon here ever. Round off in the north, round off here in the south...

Taro round off, taro round off...
 The belly of my taro – taro round off...
 The top of my taro – taro round off, taro round off –
 The foundation of my taro tuber – taro round off...
 The leaves of my taro – taro round off, taro round off.

They eat the taro...
 The *tuvata'u* weed grows out of the taro rotting in the garden...
 The belly of my garden becomes smooth like a trimming-board.
 The belly of my garden becomes smooth like a pounding-board.
 The holes in the belly of my garden are as the holes the mangrove mollusc bores in the mud.

I shall go to the village laden with *taytu*.⁶⁸

The garden magician proceeds to wrap the pearl shell in a dried banana leaf in order to contain the magical power.⁶⁹

That an association with the process of human birth is being drawn is tenable in that a hole of emergence of the eponymous ancestress may be referred to by the same term as the harvest: *isunapulo* – her "spot of emergence".⁷⁰ As has been mentioned, every Trobriander is associated by birth or descent with a distinct spot through which his first ancestress emerged and the adjoining locality forms the land of his sub-clan.⁷¹ In this way the affinity between the birth of mankind and that of the crops is annually reaffirmed.

In this *isunapulo* preliminary harvest spell the parallel of birth begins with the rounding off of the foetus. Use of the banana leaf and verbal allusions to rotundity continue to project suggestions of human fecundity. Use of a pearl shell may also contain connotations of birth: it is used in the pregnancy ceremonial in which it is associated with beauty magic.⁷² Malinowski concedes that the gist of the spell concerns roundness and fullness, yet is adamant that neither lunar mythology nor extraordinary ideas concerning the moon are implied.⁷³ He maintains that the moon "is simply used as a magical simile, the mere utterance of its name being potent in itself".⁷⁴

The information from other cultures in New Guinea indicates that the moon may be sex-linked and associated with creative growth. The Abelam,⁷⁵ Enga⁷⁶ and Kuman⁷⁷ consider the moon female, and the Iatmul regard it as a female fertility symbol.⁷⁸ Thus there are Melanesians who consider the moon to be closely identified with woman; and the Trobrianders, it appears, share a similar outlook: in one story the moon is born of a woman, in another it is a personified female.⁷⁹ Furthermore, a Kiriwina mother will lift up her newly-born infant to the first full moon that the child might grow quickly and soon learn to talk.⁸⁰ Therefore when the full moon is mentioned in the *isunapulo* spell it needs to be viewed against a backdrop depicting femaleness, sound development and maturity or ripeness.

From such imagery the creative growth in the garden is given the incentive to reach its conclusion. The theme becomes explicit when the spell advances the wish that the taro finalize its growth. As already discussed in the burning and weeding ceremonies,⁸¹ taro seems magically linked with the formation of the *taytu* or foetus. In similar manner to the placenta it now becomes waste. Consistent with this interpretation is the fact that the spell says the weeds, connoting refuse, grow from the rotting taro. Again the procreative imagery is reinforced by likening the garden to a trimming- or pounding-board, both being perfectly smooth and used by women.⁸² After birth, the belly of the garden will be as smooth as these boards. Use of the word "belly" together with such similes again reminds us of the female nature of the garden.

The last line of the *isunapulo* spell presents an interesting development. Although the subject of the spell is taro, it is hereby conjoined to *taytu*: the ultimate statement concerns the economically and ceremonially important harvest of the small yams. Implicitly then, despite a superficial relevance to taro harvesting, the spell enunciates the concluding stages of *taytu* growth by reference to the contributory developmental agent — taro.

The garnering of *taytu* is an important occasion for the Trobriander. It is initiated through the preparatory (*okwala*) and the main (*tum*) harvest ceremonies. In the preparatory harvest ceremony the garden magician recites the *okwala* spell on the standard and all other plots to lend final momentum to the ripening tubers.⁸³ The second stanza of the formula makes reference to the various structural supports constructed for the growing vines, such as the training-stick and *kamkokola*

(magical prism) about which the repeatedly mentioned "dolphin plays".⁸⁴ The dolphin's undulating movements metaphorically represent the twining of the vine.⁸⁵ The last stanza⁸⁶ repeats the early section of the spell central to gardening magic, the *vatuvi* with its dominantly creative imagery: "The belly of my garden rises..." Although this part seems semantically divorced from the rest of the spell, there is a logical progression in the poetry from the initial reference of the dolphin to the metaphor of the spiralling *taytu* vine, which may be symbolic of the umbilical cord,⁸⁷ to the image of the tumescent belly of a woman with child.

The main harvest ceremony (*tum*)⁸⁸ is the final occasion when the garden magician recites once again the pivotal formula of garden magic, the *vatuvi*:

Show the way firmly, show the way to the firm moorings... The grubs I sweep, I sweep away... The blight I drive, I drive off, begone... The belly of my garden leavens... The belly of my garden lies down... The belly of my garden swells as with a child...⁸⁹

The spell is chanted over an adze of which the cutting edge has scented leaves attached: these will give the *taytu* a sweet aroma. Banana leaves are also fastened to it, in order that the *taytu* can emulate the bulging shape of the palm.⁹⁰ The reciting of the *vatuvi* spell is said to be the quintessential act of the *tum* ceremony.⁹¹

The repetition of the entire *vatuvi* formula at the harvest climax seems to underscore the magic of the gardens which induces procreation and drives away malevolent influences. In like manner during pregnancy and childbirth, curative formulae are uttered against black magic which would harm the human foetus and provoke difficult labour for the Trobriand mother.⁹² Other corollaries to the pregnancy ceremony present themselves in the common use of aromatic and banana leaves.⁹³

On the day following the recitation of "the belly of my garden" spell, the garden magician goes to the main standard plot accompanied by a small entourage. The plant to be harvested grows against the vertical *kamkokola* pole in the magical corner. The garden magician ceremonially cuts the stalk of the specially planted *kwanada* yam with his charmed axe, breaks the sod and extracts the tubers. Next he cuts the stalk of an ordinary *taytu* plant, but preferably one winding around the *kamkokola*. The lower section of the stalk sags onto the ground, whereupon

he squats over it, tears up a handful of weeds, and puts these over the stalk which is lying on the ground. He weighs down the entire heap by means of a stone, hence the name *tum* (pressing, weighing down).⁹⁴ The harvest is now inaugurated. It should be noted that similar treatment is accorded the umbilical cord. After being severed, it is buried in the garden together with the afterbirth.⁹⁵

The severing of the *kwanada* yam vine inserted at the burning ceremony (conception) may be seen as the symbolic cutting of the umbilical cord (the vine growing against the *kamkokola*).⁹⁶ The garden magician behaves partially like a parturient mother when he squats as a woman in labour⁹⁷ over the flopped stalk on the ground, covering it with weeds. The vine and its associated ceremony appear to represent the navel string, and the weeds the refuse of afterbirth.

Although Malinowski shows obvious concern at not being able to explain this ceremony,⁹⁸ he provides useful data in registering that the act is called *tum* (pressing down), and that the term describes the entire ceremony.⁹⁹ It is noteworthy that women similarly weigh down upon the Trobriand mother during labour: "[A] woman presses on the parturient one so that the baby may fall out quickly."¹⁰⁰ The *tum* harvest thus appears as a metaphoric enactment of the birth of the human infant. It is salient that both *taytu*¹⁰¹ and human embryos mature nine months after conception.

The child

The *taytu*-human analogy is pursued through the harvest customs in which the woman handles the *taytu* for the first time once it has been extracted from the earth.¹⁰² Hairs bearing the same name as human body hair (*unu'unu*) are removed from the *taytu*.¹⁰³ Both husband and wife have specific duties to perform with regard to the newly-harvested *taytu*:¹⁰⁴ just as their ways of caring for their human offspring complement one another each is solicitous to nurture the new Trobriander.¹⁰⁵

Arbours are constructed from the now obsolete garden poles — the *kamkokola* (magical prismatic construction) and vine supports. *Taytu* vines are attached to the structure and the roof is made of coconut leaves.¹⁰⁶ The crops are graded as they are stacked in the arbour. The finest *taytu* are destined for matrimonial harvest gifts (*urigubu*). They are arranged in the centre of the arbour in a conical mound. Inferior

and damaged *taytu* are placed in smaller heaps around the *urigubu*: they will be eaten without being ceremonially stored.¹⁰⁷ Later the *urigubu taytu* will be measured in circular baskets, then with much ostentatious conveyance ceremonially presented to one or more households in another village. Coconut leaves will cover the conical *taytu* heap built in front of the recipient's storehouse.¹⁰⁸

Malinowski says that the energy expended on the *taytu* display serves to satisfy the gardener's ambition;¹⁰⁹ while Austen suggests that the stacking of *taytu* in the garden simply serves to prevent rotting.¹¹⁰ But the predominant shape, the substances and customary forms of behaviour associated with the arbour are too closely related to the entire gardening symbolism to be disregarded. The *taytu* heap is conical and in the horticultural symbolism this shape is suggestive of pregnancy.¹¹¹ The materials used in construction of the arbour appear to endorse and promote the procreative theme: coconut leaves, a symbol of fecundity,¹¹² the *kamkokola* and the *taytu* vines, seemingly symbols of the womb and umbilical cord respectively.¹¹³

The content of the arbour is the little yam, *taytu*, symbol of the child.¹¹⁴ Friends from the gardener's own or a neighbouring village view his arbours and admire his displayed *urigubu taytu* as custom requires.¹¹⁵ Similarly a Trobriand mother displays to admiring villagers her newly-born infant at its coming-out ceremony.¹¹⁶

Finally the gardener's *taytu* are placed in the storehouse of a matrilineal kinswoman's husband (e.g. sister's husband) in the form of *urigubu* (matrimonial harvest gift); and the garden magician, now called village magician, performs the two ceremonies of *vilamalia* (magic of plenty and village prosperity).¹¹⁷ The aim in both ceremonies is essentially one of conservation: to ensure the durability of the *taytu*,¹¹⁸ and also to diminish the people's appetite.¹¹⁹ The Trobrianders are noted for allowing their *taytu* to rot in the storehouses and for reaping a crop in excess of their needs;¹²⁰ perhaps it is the symbolic affinity of the *taytu* and child which partly underlies the cultural reluctance to consume their cherished crop.¹²¹

I have argued that the division of the gardening calendar into two stages correlates with that in Trobriand pregnancy ceremonial. In the first stage the male was seen to be active in preparing the way for conception to take place. The second phase presented similarities in the symbolism pertaining to foetal growth: the *yausa* weeding custom with its power-

ful signal that pregnancy is the domain of women, and the comparison between the harvest of *taytu* and human parturition.

In trying to ascertain woman's relationship to gardening it appears to me that if the activities of gardening are taken literally the woman seems to be of minor importance, but if read symbolically, it is the Trobriand man who functions as an assistant in this grand scheme of life. His role is that of organizing the life of the sub-clan which woman perpetuates. Even when she is physically absent from work or excluded from the performance of magic, woman's presence is acknowledged through metaphor. The rhythm of woman's body and the procreative process in her is the drama enacted in the soil; and it is woman's procreative power that absorbs the magic and imagination of men.

The horticultural ceremonial picture thus projects the garden as a woman and the produce as her child. It is a theme pursued in the *urigubu* institution which will be dealt with in the following chapter.

Notes

- 1 Malinowski 1927a 211, 214; Malinowski 1966 I figure 3 (50–51), 52, 136, 149, figure 14 (436–441)
- 2 Malinowski 1966 I figure 3 (50–51), 54
- 3 Leenhardt 1930 114; 33 above
- 4 Malinowski 1966 I figure 3 (50–51), 149, 171, figure 14 (440–443)
- 5 12 above
- 6 Leenhardt 1930 114; cf. 58
- 7 Malinowski 1966 I figure 3 (50–51), 54, 144; Malinowski 1927a 207; Malinowski 1926b 24
- 8 Cf. Malinowski 1966 I 343; Malinowski 1966 II 290
- 9 Malinowski 1966 I 144
- 10 Malinowski 1966 I 145
- 11 Malinowski 1932 375
- 12 8 above
- 13 Cf. 6–8 above
- 14 31, 33 above
- 15 10, 13 above
- 16 23 above
- 17 33 above; cf. Malinowski 1966 I 145
- 18 Malinowski 1966 II 285
- 19 Cf. 34 above
- 20 Malinowski 1966 II 285; cf. Lehner 1928 443–444 (Melanesians)
- 21 Malinowski 1966 II 105–106
- 22 Malinowski 1966 II 106

- 23 Tambiah 1968 204
 24 Tambiah 1968 204
 25 Weiner 1976 92, 118–119
 26 Munn 1971 8, table 5
 27 Munn 1977
 28 Baldwin 1950 283
 29 Cf. Lehner 1928 442 (Melanesians)
 30 Cf. 47 above; Malinowski 1966 I figure 3 (50–51), 61 n.3
 31 47–48 above
 32 Malinowski 1966 I 144
 33 10 above; cf. Róheim 1950a 178 (Normanby Island, D'Entrecasteaux Archipelago)
 34 27, 33, 39–40 above; cf. Weiner 1976 121–123
 35 Malinowski 1932 171, 192–193
 36 10 above
 37 Malinowski 1932 232
 38 Malinowski 1932 194
 39 Malinowski 1932 193–195
 40 10 above
 41 Cf. Malinowski 1932 232
 42 Malinowski 1932 234, 356–358; Malinowski 1922 223
 43 Cf. Malinowski 1932 356
 44 48 above; Malinowski 1932 191–192, 291
 45 Evans-Pritchard 1965 97
 46 Turner 1969 79
 47 Malinowski 1966 I 137
 48 Malinowski 1966 I 142–144
 49 Malinowski 1966 I 146, 151
 50 Weiner 1976 196
 51 22–23 above
 52 Malinowski 1966 I 146–151
 53 Malinowski 1966 I 156–157; Malinowski 1966 II 179–181; Malinowski 1926b 25; Malinowski 1932 339–347; Peacock 1969 167–168
 54 17 above; cf. Mead 1934 378 (Arapesh, New Guinea)
 55 Keysser 1911 125; Jenness & Ballantyne 1928 144
 56 Malinowski 1966 I 137
 57 Malinowski 1966 I 137–138, 151–152
 58 Malinowski 1966 I 152
 59 22–24 above
 60 19–20 above
 61 Cf. Lorenz 1966 281; Lévi-Strauss 1955 443
 62 Austen 1939 250; Austen 1945–46 40
 63 47 above
 64 Margot-Duclot & Vernant 1946 27–28
 65 Margot-Duclot & Vernant 1946 22
 66 Margot-Duclot & Vernant 1946 22 (translated from French)

- 67 Margot-Duclot & Vernant 1946 22, 27
 68 Malinowski 1966 I 165
 69 Malinowski 1966 I 165–166
 70 Malinowski 1966 I 341–344
 71 8–9 above
 72 Malinowski 1932 181–183, 186–187, 298–299
 73 Malinowski 1966 II 307–308
 74 Malinowski 1966 II 308
 75 Kaberry 1941 346
 76 Meggitt 1958 307
 77 Nilles 1950 58
 78 Binder 1972 26
 79 Malinowski 1927a 205–206; Frazer 1930 48
 80 Brown 1910 37
 81 32–34, 48 above
 82 Malinowski 1966 I 155; Weiner 1976 247 n.8
 83 Malinowski 1966 I 169
 84 Malinowski 1966 I 169
 85 Malinowski 1966 I 170
 86 Malinowski 1966 I 169
 87 Cf. 37–38 above
 88 Malinowski 1966 I 170–171
 89 Malinowski 1966 I 96–98; cf. 19–20 above
 90 Malinowski 1966 I 170
 91 Malinowski 1966 I 170
 92 Malinowski 1932 188, 193–195
 93 Cf. Malinowski 1932 187; 22–23 above
 94 Malinowski 1966 I 171
 95 Malinowski 1932 196
 96 37–38 above
 97 Cf. Malinowski 1932 194–195
 98 Malinowski 1966 I 473 n.22
 99 Malinowski 1966 I 171
 100 Malinowski 1932 195; cf. Saville 1926 96 (Mailu, New Guinea); Handy 1923 72 (Marquesas, Polynesia)
 101 Cf. Galang 1920 65 (Philippines); Defngin 1959 56–57 (Yap, Micronesia); Jenness & Ballantyne 1920 30 (D'Entrecasteaux Archipelago); Williamson 1912 197 (Mafulu, New Guinea)
 102 Malinowski 1966 I 172
 103 17 above
 104 11 above
 105 Cf. Malinowski 1932 17–18, 171, 176; Malinowski 1927b 10, 23–24
 106 Malinowski 1966 I 172
 107 Malinowski 1966 I 172–173, 193–194, 230
 108 Malinowski 1966 I 177, 179–180
 109 Malinowski 1926a 36; Malinowski 1922 169; cf. Malinowski 1932 108–109

- 110 Austen 1945-46 40
111 21-23 above
112 23-24 above
113 36-38, 56 above
114 17-18 above
115 Malinowski 1966 I 172-173, 175; Malinowski 1932 105; Malinowski 1922 170
116 Malinowski 1932 197
117 11 above
118 Malinowski 1966 I 220, 226; Malinowski 1922 169
119 Malinowski 1966 I 226-228; Malinowski 1922 169
120 Malinowski 1936 446; Malinowski 1966 I 8, 231; Malinowski 1922 58, 169; Uberoi 1969 1148; cf. Austen 1945-46 17-18, 44; Harris 1959 191-192; Sahlin 1960 407
121 Cf. Malinowski 1966 I 227-228

Symbolism of the distribution of garden produce

Each Trobriand household retains and eats the secondary produce it has grown.¹ Inferior *taytu* of the principal crop are consumed by the producing household, small tubers being reserved as seed.² The greater proportion of *taytu* grown is destined to become *urigubu* (matrimonial harvest gifts); these are the most important garden produce.³ In the south, and in other areas where taro constitutes the *urigubu*, it does not store well and accordingly is extracted from the ground as required by the recipient.⁴ Since *urigubu* has particular relevance for the position of woman, it calls for detailed discussion. Usage of the term *urigubu* will follow that of Malinowski.⁵

Basically *urigubu* refers to the matrimonial harvest gifts a man usually receives from his wife's nearest matrilineal kinsman, i.e. her brother, maternal uncle, and later her son or sister's son.⁶ From each man's crops a large and high quality quota must be given annually to a close matrilineal kinswoman in order to fill the "open well" of her husband's main storehouse.⁷ Malinowski estimates that at least half a man's yield goes to his sister's household, the presentation usually consisting of *taytu*.⁸

The Trobriand man is the owner of the garden plot which bears his name,⁹ although according to Weiner,¹⁰ it may be "marked" in the name of a close matrilineal kinswoman for *urigubu* purposes. He obtains his principal prestige from the amount of high quality *taytu* he is able to cultivate.¹¹ The matrilineal kinswoman who receives it, and who is usually his sister,¹² derives her renown from the size of the *uri-*

gubu which accrues to her and her husband.^{1 3}

The following are the diacritical features of the *urigubu taytu*: they are the select crop, the only ones stacked into conical heaps in the arbour, flamboyantly carried to the village, and ceremonially displayed in the storehouse; only over these is the magic of abundance and endurance pronounced; they alone are referred to as "real *taytu*".^{1 4} In the storage and removal of crops from the arbours a distinction is made between the ordinary *taytu*, modestly stored, and the *urigubu* displayed as show food and retained "as long as possible for festive occasions, gifts and exchanges".^{1 5}

Urigubu is one of the duties incidental to marriage.^{1 6} Malinowski says the *urigubu* is given by name to the husband,^{1 7} yet it is closely linked to the wife, for at the transfer in cases of rank (when the ceremonial is most explicit) the words pronounced are: "Thy heap, O So-and-so. It is the *urugubu* [sic] gift of So-and-so [the wife's name]."^{1 8} Should the wife leave the husband or die, *urigubu* payment is discontinued. "It is because of her, for her and for her children's maintenance that the annual gift is given."^{1 9} Weiner considers *urigubu* to be given in the woman's name but also regards the husband as a recipient.^{2 0}

Marriage not only implies bearing children but also the *urigubu* endowment.^{2 1} A married woman thus unites the two items of value, *taytu* and children. I have postulated that Trobriand horticultural ceremonial replicates woman's ability to create life. Through the process of creation and birth Trobriand woman regenerates her sub-clan with children who fall under the guardianship of a male of this group, specifically her brother.^{2 2} Symbolically, the ceremonial of gardening mirrors her procreative act, but instead of humans, *taytu* are involved. The interpretation follows that the male owner of the plot annually renders his matrilineally significant female partner his garden's "offspring", the *urigubu taytu* tubers, as the nearest possible equivalent to children, just as the woman provides him, and thus the sub-clan, with children.^{2 3} Significantly, children and *urigubu* tubers move in opposite directions: children to the guardianship (and male children often also to the residence) of sub-clan males,^{2 4} *taytu* to the residence of sub-clan females.

Since the descendants of men do not belong to their lineage in a matrilineal system, and since the Trobriand theory of procreation denies the male any procreative ability, by giving *taytu* to the female members of the sub-clan, Trobriand men are able to produce the equivalent of

children for its perpetuation. Therefore the child-*taytu* exchange expresses the social roles of female and male sub-clan members and ensures the survival and solidarity of the sub-clan. It is understandable that a man should not use the *urigubu* he receives from his wife's sub-clan to meet his own *urigubu* obligations,^{2,5} for he would then be exchanging the *taytu* of a sub-clan to which he does not belong.

Exogamy obliges a woman to marry a man who is not of her sub-clan, in whose village she must live until the end of her marriage or life.^{2,6} Malinowski interprets the *urigubu* institution as representing and recognizing a woman's rights in her ancestral soil:^{2,7} the annual harvest gift makes explicit her claim to a share in its produce. Her spatial removal does not diminish her importance to the sub-clan, for her position is annually reaffirmed by way of *urigubu*.^{2,8} The giving of *urigubu* revives the tie of the localized sub-clan with its scattered female members.

Powell and Montague reject Malinowski's assertion that the gift of *taytu* harvested for Trobriand woman articulates her continued identification with the fertility of her matrilineal soil. In contrast to the male avunculocal residence recorded by Malinowski,^{2,9} Powell found men of the same sub-clan living in various villages (or sections thereof), and Montague states that Kaduwagan men (Kayleuna Island) spend their lives patrilocally in their natal villages.^{3,0} Both these later fieldworkers emphasize other kinds of *urigubu*, rather than isolating that of brother to sister as Malinowski tended to do.^{3,1}

Powell argues that because the sub-clan is not localized, *urigubu* will not necessarily be produced on sub-clan land^{3,2} (although most members of those sub-clans that own land will be found in the villages associated with their sub-clan^{3,3}). He nevertheless agrees with Malinowski that *urigubu* represents sub-clan "corporateness"; and his statistical data indicate that the most common (although not exclusive) type of harvest gift is from brother to sister.^{3,4}

Montague disagrees with both Malinowski and Powell that the sub-clan "corporately" owns land.^{3,5} She argues from direct questioning of her informants that land ownership is individual.^{3,6} To some extent, as Malinowski himself explicitly adduces, Trobriand land ownership is individual in the sense that each man owns a garden plot,^{3,7} but Malinowski's criticism of the "verbal approach, the collecting of statements about who is the owner"^{3,8} should be noted. The myths of origin and gardening, the role of the garden magician and chief, the annual ratifi-

cation of plots in the presence of the matrilineal head, and the rules of land inheritance reveal that the sub-clan does in fact own the rights to a territory and supervises its gardens.^{3 9}

The individual's personal identity in the *urigubu* transaction should certainly be acknowledged. However, individuality and the existence of other types of *urigubu* transactions do not negate the validity of that category of *urigubu* connected with a person's sub-clan membership which signals its unity via the male-female food gift. This type of *urigubu* formed the majority of such transactions in Powell's time.

Montague states that "harvest gifts may only be given through woman" and that *urigubu* "is usually spoken of in terms of the woman because she weeds and harvests it".^{4 0} She views *urigubu* correctly, though in limited fashion, when she sees it as one of four exchange cycles.^{4 1} She recognizes a raw-cooked, female-male dichotomy in the culture,^{4 2} but it is inadequate to explain that *urigubu* "is only given to married men [not widowers] because the right to cook it belongs only to married women".^{4 3} This leaves unconsidered its relevance to the ceremonial and the symbolism of the horticultural cycle, and does not explain why women derive greater renown from the receipt of *urigubu* than men. The matter is further complicated in that in Kaduwaga *urigubu* primarily consists of taro,^{4 4} not *taytu* (small yams) as in Omarakana, Kiriwina.^{4 5}

However, the major reservation concerning Montague's arguments is that she fails to realize the implications of her study occurring 50 years after that of Malinowski and 20 years after that of Powell.^{4 6} There is in her disagreement an assumption that such a non-literate culture is static; accordingly she points out that the sibling incest taboo is not as stringent as Malinowski portrayed it,^{4 7} and that there is no evidence of the *bukumatula* (bachelors' house) in her village.^{4 8}

Montague notes, but only superficially evaluates, the impact of westernization with its hallmark of individualism on the people's way of life.^{4 9} The village of Kaduwaga reveals definite signs of westernization: it has within it not only an Aid Post and Co-operative Society but a school and church which are regularly attended.^{5 0} Even during the period in 1914-20 when Malinowski conducted his fieldwork, the effect of missionary and western pressures on the culture was evident, and even then the number of *bukumatula* (bachelors' houses) had decreased.^{5 1} Carter and others make mention of the social changes wrought since

Malinowski's period of fieldwork.^{5 2}

There is little doubt that social patterns even in Malinowski's time will not have been as uniform as his work might superficially suggest, for the reality of any field situation is complicated by myriad individual factors. Malinowski is aware of the problem, but also of the necessity of deducing generalized principles of social structure which form the framework for social behaviour.^{5 3}

Weiner's fieldwork poses its own problems largely because she fails to relate her findings sufficiently to those of Malinowski. She makes the puzzling statement that a man's married daughter is the first woman for whom he makes an exchange garden,^{5 4} not his mother or sister^{5 5} as would seem more likely. She refutes Malinowski's and other fieldworkers' interpretation of *urigubu* as presentations of *taytu*, maintaining that *urigubu* refers to coconut and areca palms, betel pepper plants and pork. "Yam exchange gardens", she says, Malinowski would term *urigubu*, but are in fact referred to by such other names as *kaymata* and *kaymwila*.^{5 6} Malinowski's work,^{5 7} however, shows that he was aware of all the names she mentions in this regard.^{5 8} Weiner's^{5 9} but not Malinowski's evidence^{6 0} suggests that the "*urigubu*" on which Malinowski concentrated in Kiriwina — from brother to sister — would stem from the *kaymwila* plot. Powell says^{6 1} that his informants in 1950-51 used *urigubu* in Malinowski's sense: as referring primarily to the annual harvest gift grown in the main garden plots [*kaymata*]. The term may be extended to include any service or gift, such as pork or areca nut, which a man makes to his sister's husband. Powell witnessed *urigubu* transfers in Kwaybwaga, northern Kiriwina (Weiner's village), where the term was used in the way that his and Malinowski's informants used it.

Thus although *urigubu* is not exclusively linked with sub-clan land, and the term may have wider meanings, and its usage may be changing, the archetype of this kind of transfer is indicated by the phrase: "True brothers garden for their sisters."^{6 2} It is this fundamental type of *urigubu*, associated with the unity of the sub-clan, that is of interest to this study. (Powell has offered me an interpretation of *urigubu* in which he focuses on the relationship it establishes between men, particularly the sister's husband, wife's brother and his heirs. The reader is also referred to his 1969 articles which are based on a different approach, and which fall beyond the scope and focus of this book.) The receipt of *urigubu* seems to be an important link in the wife-husband unit. The

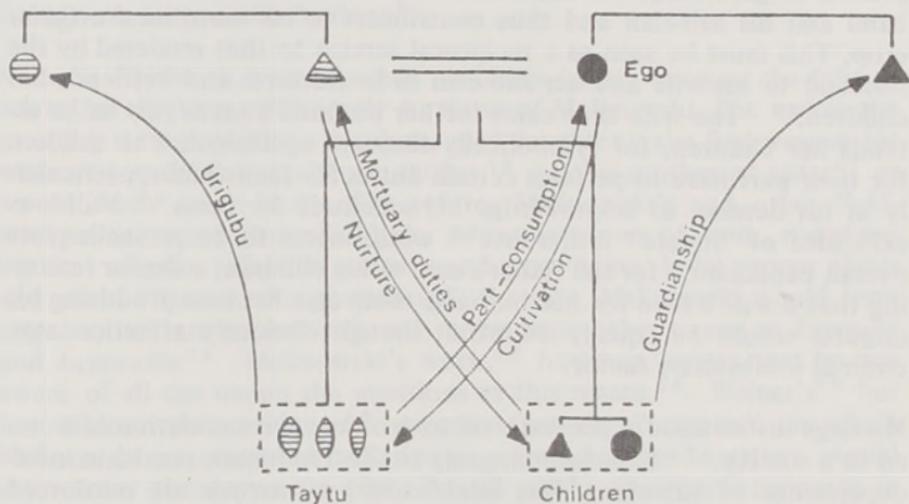
harvest gift appears to increase a husband's dependence on his wife for economic security and social wellbeing.^{6.3} It also adds to the wife's dependence, for although she derives most credit from the gift, it is publicly given to her husband.

The *urigubu* lends meaning to the marital relationship. In the actual process of gardening, the Trobriand wife labours with and for her husband and his sub-clan and thus contributes to his matrilineal *urigubu* crop. This must be seen as a reciprocal service to that rendered by the husband to his wife and her sub-clan as he nurtures and befriends her children.^{6.4} The wife thus cares for her husband's *taytu* just as he attends her children, for symbolically they are equivalent. The children for their part have to perform certain duties for their father, particularly at his demise, to acknowledge his solicitude for them.^{6.5} Malinowski's idea of "innate" father-love^{6.6} would seem to be an inadequate overall explanation for the father's care of his children; a similar reasoning that a wife's love for her husband motivates her into producing his *urigubu* would be equally doubtful, though obviously affection may enter as a subsidiary factor.

Marriage institutions in general tend to promote the circulation of women in a society.^{6.7} Sub-clan exogamy in the Trobriands results in interdependence of sub-clans. Ties established by marriage are reinforced by the associated institution of *urigubu* in which the fertility of woman is symbolically endorsed as she receives *taytu*. The husband's interest in receiving *urigubu* is sustained since he derives prestige from the gift^{6.8} and must reimburse his affinal kinsman with a suitable gift of valuables (*youlo*) at a later stage.^{6.9} This *youlo* gift is a duty, maintaining, as Uberoi observes,^{7.0} an affinal alliance between two sub-clans.

It should be noted that the Trobriand husband is a social "outsider" to his wife.^{7.1} According to Malinowski he is not her acknowledged legal guardian — that is the function of the wife's brother;^{7.2} his bond with her is essentially one of friendship, emotion and sexuality.^{7.3} A man does not primarily cultivate his gardens for his wife but rather for his mother or sister or another close matrilineal kinswoman. The important kinship group is the minimal matrilineal unit: a man, his sister and her children.^{7.4} A Trobriand wife who helps provide the *urigubu* for her husband's sister, receives from the latter at mortuary ceremonies skirts or bundles of banana leaves (*kabiyamila*) signifying women's wealth.^{7.5} This may be seen as a similar relationship to the *youlo* gift which passes between affinal males.

Figure 2

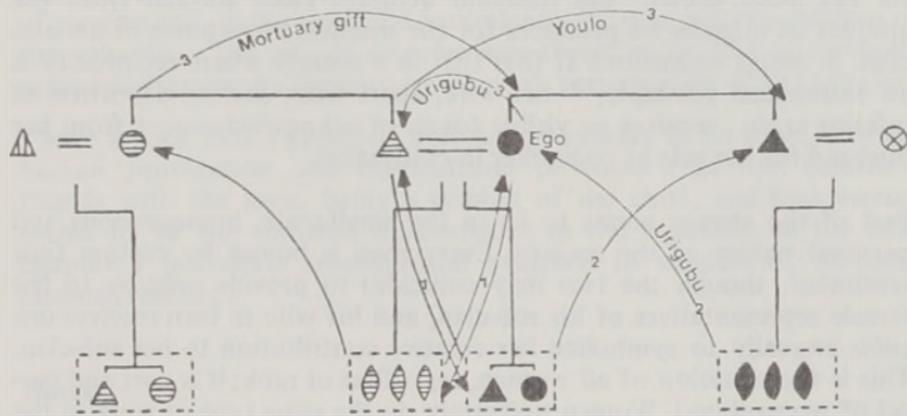
THE CONJUGAL PAIR, THEIR CHILDREN AND *TAYTU*

The *urigubu* gift therefore ensures regular interaction between at least two disparate sub-clans; and with women marrying exogamously a number of sub-clans become interlinked. That a man receives most renown from giving *urigubu*, and a woman from being the recipient of it, also reflects positively on different sub-clans. In a simplified manner Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the symbolic equivalence of the *taytu* and child, and the network of relationships established through recognition of the procreative capacities of Trobriand woman. Three cycles of links are discernible.

Cycle 1: The tie between the spouses is enhanced through the woman as wife assisting in the production of the husband's *urigubu taytu* and he in caring for her children. These children will have mortuary duties towards this man and thus reinforce the ties their mother maintains with their father's sub-clan, while she will share in the consumption of

Figure 3

MATRILINEAL AND AFFINAL RELATIONSHIPS EMPHASIZED THROUGH THE PROCREATIVITY OF WOMAN



■ Ego's lineage

≡ Ego's husband's lineage

$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{|||} \\ \text{X} \end{array} \right\} \text{Other linked lineages}$

1 Cycle 1

2 Cycle 2

3 Cycle 3

part of the retained *taytu* crop grown as *urigubu* for a female member of the father's sub-clan. The wife also receives assistance from her husband in accruing banana leaf skirts and bundles which signify women's wealth and which she will distribute in mortuary ceremonies.⁷⁶

Cycle 2: The woman perpetuates her sub-clan by bearing children for it; the brother consolidates its unity by giving the lineage-perpetuator *urigubu taytu*.

Cycle 3: The relationship between a woman's brother and her husband

is strengthened through the husband officially receiving the *urigubu* of his wife and returning this recognition with the *youlo* gift of valuables; in like manner the wife and husband's sister forge their relationship through acknowledgement of the *urigubu* contribution in mortuary gifts. Thus they unite their respective sub-clans in a working relationship.

As has been shown, the husband achieves most acclaim from the amount of *urigubu* he produces for the married kinswomen of his sub-clan. It seems anomalous at first that in a society where reciprocity is an entrenched principle,⁷⁷ the wife, apart from sharing a portion of inferior *taytu*, receives no visible token of acknowledgement from her husband for her role as co-worker in cultivation.

Part of the answer seems to lie in the small-scale, homogeneous and personal nature of the society. Every man is bound by custom (not sentiment, though the two may coincide) to provide *urigubu* to the female representatives of his sub-clan, and his wife in turn receives *urigubu* annually to symbolize her creative contribution to her sub-clan. This is the situation of *all* women, regardless of rank; it is part and parcel of womanhood. Women uniformly do the same type of work in the gardens and all perform this on the plots of their husbands. The mortuary gift from her affinal kinswoman may be a factor motivating her to work in the gardens, and also the fact that her husband helps her accumulate women's wealth.

The symbolic meaning of the horticultural ceremonial may also be relevant. Throughout the gardening year woman has an extensive symbolic association with the garden and crops in that the structure and process of the economic cycle metaphorically seem to reiterate that of human procreation. Woman thus serves as common denominator linking two creative processes, economic and human; through these she also interrelates two sub-clans.

Urigubu distributes the wealth of Trobriand society in the form of *taytu*, which I have suggested are analogous to children. The symbolic equation which emerges is that in the Trobriands, males "own" garden land, the produce of which is destined for women; women "own" their bodies, but the "produce" falls under the guardianship of men. Herein apparently lies an important part of the structural answer to the question of the wife's "unpaid" services to her husband: she assists him produce the *taytu* for his sub-clan, for he helps her rear children for her

sub-clan.

Malinowski stresses that "the marriage gift is the chief and most ostentatious product of the garden work".⁷⁸ The harvest of the Trobriand Islanders is not mere economic yield produced for the purposes of consumption and ease of living.⁷⁹ It sets in motion an important distribution of wealth and interaction of people promoting communication and cohesion between and within sub-clans. The focus is on the fertility of woman and on the symbolic equivalence of *taytu* and the children of the sub-clan. The gift of *urigubu* may therefore be seen as symbolic acknowledgement by the men of women's perpetuation of the sub-clan.

I have argued that a symbolic correlation appears to be made between human procreation and horticultural production in the Trobriand Islands with the *taytu* being a symbol of the child, and that woman seems to be the common denominator in the equation. In the next chapter I introduce cross-cultural evidence in support of the conclusions reached.

Notes

- 1 Malinowski 1966 I 193–194
- 2 Malinowski 1966 I 173, 193
- 3 11, 28 above; Malinowski 1966 I 193–194; Powell 1969b 581
- 4 Malinowski 1966 I 196, 295; Weiner 1976 139; cf. Montague 1974 122 (Kaduwaga, Kayleuna Island)
- 5 Malinowski 1922 180–181
- 6 Malinowski 1966 I 195; Malinowski 1920a 53; Malinowski 1926a 36
- 7 Malinowski 1966 I 195; Malinowski 1932 103–104; Austen 1945–46 41
- 8 Malinowski 1966 I 46, 189, 194, 196, 230; Malinowski 1932 103; cf. Powell 1956 76; Powell 1969b 581
- 9 7–8 above; Malinowski 1966 I 380, 427
- 10 Weiner 1976 197; cf. Malinowski 1966 I 329
- 11 Malinowski 1966 I 79, 82–83, 208; Malinowski 1932 105; Malinowski 1922 61
- 12 Malinowski 1966 I 189–190, 195–196, 353
- 13 Malinowski 1966 I 79, cf. 473–474 n.24
- 14 Malinowski 1966 I 56, 189, 194–195
- 15 Malinowski 1966 I 195; cf. Malinowski 1966 I 230–231
- 16 Malinowski 1966 I 196, 199; Malinowski 1932 103
- 17 Malinowski 1966 I 190; cf. Powell 1956 393; Powell 1969b 583
- 18 Malinowski 1966 I 179
- 19 Malinowski 1966 I 190, 353
- 20 Weiner 1976 197
- 21 Malinowski 1966 I 202, 352; Malinowski 1932 70, 166, 170–172

- 22 Malinowski 1926a 35, 37; Malinowski 1932 6, 30, 72, 110
 23 Cf. Weiner 1976 210
 24 Malinowski 1966 I 191, 205, 207, 352–353; Malinowski 1932 6; Malinowski
 1927b 44–45; Kroeber 1938 300–301
 25 Powell 1969b 584
 26 Malinowski 1966 I 203, 336, 352; Malinowski 1927b 45; Malinowski 1932
 5; Powell 1956 56, 190, 276; Weiner 1976 51; Robinson 1962 125
 27 Malinowski 1966 I 333
 28 Malinowski 1966 I 336, 352–354
 29 Malinowski 1926a 108; 104
 30 E.g. Powell 1956 53, 56, 95, 170, 434, 437, table 2a, table 4; Powell 1960
 table (120–121); Powell 1969a 188–192; Montague 1974 23; cf. Weiner
 1976 42, 154
 31 E.g. Powell 1956 385–386, 389, 392–395, 403–406; Powell 1969b 583–
 584; Montague 1974 103, 121–122, 124–125; but cf. Malinowski 1966 I
 393–395, 409
 32 Powell 1956 409; Powell 1969b 580–581, 583–587
 33 Powell 1969a 188
 34 Powell 1956 384–385, 387, 408, 413–414, 430, 479, 565; Powell 1969b
 581, 584–585, table 3 (586), 587, 592
 35 Cf. e.g. Malinowski 1922 70; Malinowski 1966 I 329, 378; Powell 1956 48,
 n.37, 371
 36 Montague 1974 39–40, 47, 103–104
 37 102 above; Malinowski 1966 I 329, 371, 379–380
 38 Malinowski 1966 I 379; cf. Malinowski 1966 I 318, 332, 370–373
 39 6, 8–9, 28 above; Powell 1956 343, 371–372, 415, 474, 513;
 Malinowski 1966 I 74, 334–336, 420; cf. Montague 1974 46
 40 Montague 1974 125, 127
 41 Montague 1974 106
 42 Montague 1974 111, 113, 197; cf. Malinowski 1932 9; Lévi-Strauss 1963 137
 43 Montague 1974 197
 44 Montague 1974 122
 45 Malinowski 1966 I 196–197
 46 Cf. e.g. Malinowski 1922 xix; Powell 1956 vii; Montague 1974 v. 2. 19
 47 Montague 1974 29–31; cf. Malinowski 1932 437–440, 448
 48 Montague 1974 33; cf. Malinowski 1932 53, 56, 59–63
 49 Cf. Montague 1974 212–213
 50 Montague 1974 34–38
 51 E.g. Malinowski 1932 61, 218, 230, 403, 428, 475–476; Malinowski 1922
 154–155, 464–465; cf. Powell 1956 140
 52 Carter 1971 21–25; cf. Powell 1956 401, 447, 487, 492, 498, 504–505, 523
 529, 535–562; Weiner 1976 31–33
 53 Malinowski 1922 17, 83–84; Malinowski 1966 I 90, 317, 320, 342; Malinow-
 ski 1932 428–429
 54 Weiner 1976 196
 55 Malinowski 1932 104

- 56 Weiner 1976 140, cf. 204
57 Cf. Malinowski 1966 I 54, 58, 87, 122, 196, 208, 223, 295–296, 299, 413, 422, 463, n.2; Malinowski 1966 II 86, 186
58 Cf. Weiner 1976 140
59 Weiner 1976 255, cf. 140
60 Malinowski 1966 I 422 (Vakuta), cf. 87
61 Powell 1977b
62 Powell 1956 150
63 Malinowski 1966 I 192, 195, 230; cf. Powell 1969b 583–584; Powell 1956 66
64 Cf. Malinowski 1966 I 203–204; Malinowski 1932 5, 17, 171; Powell 1956 141; Weiner 1976 125
65 Malinowski 1966 I 36, 205–206; Malinowski 1932 133; cf. Robinson 1962 137
66 Malinowski 1924 307–308; Malinowski 1932 17–18, 81; cf. Malinowski 1926a 101–111; Malinowski 1922 71–72
67 Cf. Lévi-Strauss 1963 60; Powell 1969b 595
68 Cf. Malinowski 1966 I 192, 195
69 Malinowski 1966 I 190, 295; Malinowski 1922 180–181, 280; Malinowski 1926a 37; Malinowski 1932 108
70 Uberoi 1971 102–104; cf. Brunton 1973 109
71 Malinowski 1932 4; Malinowski 1966 I 200; Powell 1969a 178; cf. Sider 1967 93, 103–107; Weiner 1976 124
72 Malinowski 1926a 35; Malinowski 1932 24, 30, 72, 110, 439; Malinowski 1966 I 202, 206; Harrington 1967 360
73 Malinowski 1966 I 201–202
74 Cf. Malinowski 1966 I 200, 207
75 Weiner 1976 105, 197, 254, cf. 91
76 Weiner 1976 197–198, 208
77 Malinowski 1922 167; Malinowski 1926a 22–27, 33–48; cf. Seagle 1937 275–290; Hoebel 1954 180–190, 203–204, 210
78 Malinowski 1932 105
79 Cf. Malinowski 1922 60–62; Malinowski 1932 109

*The symbolic significance of women
in specific cultures*

Most of the comparative material in this chapter derives from Oceanian cultures. To date there is no single theory of the migration and habitation of Oceania,¹ contemporary opinion inclining to the belief that the people originally came from Southeast Asia, which was also the home of the yam.² Despite diverse environments and relative isolation, particularly of the island cultures, there has been contact (through sailing) and cultural interflow between the peoples of "Melanesia", "Micronesia" and "Polynesia".³ The Trobriand Islands may be regarded as part of the Massim in the Melanesian area, hitherto renowned for its seeming cultural complexity.⁴ It is with Melanesian cultures that we are mainly concerned, and those in which the yam has symbolic connotations will receive particular attention.

Anthropologists have in the past recognized the power and uniqueness attributed to women in non-literate societies by virtue of their procreative capacities;⁵ other scholars have also noticed a relationship between the "maternal womb" and "the symbolic womb of the earth".⁶ There is a prevailing concept that the earth is like a woman's body. The Melanesians of South Pentecost Island (New Hebrides) and the Marind-Anim of New Guinea, regard the earth as female.⁷ The New Zealand Maori believe in an earth mother, in contrast to a sky father.⁸ During the eighth Maori month when plant growth occurs the people say: "Now the Earth Mother embraces her grandchildren."⁹ They use a feminine image to describe an earthquake: "It is the Earth Mother shaking her breasts..."¹⁰ The Polynesian Tuamotu¹¹ and Mangaia¹²

also consider the earth as a woman.

In the Madang District of New Guinea the Tangu regard the earth as female.¹³ Before a Tangu man and woman are fully married they have to live in one another's homes,¹⁴ and the groom's mother's brother deflowers the woman by coitus interruptus. The resultant sexual secretions are mixed with pieces of her underskirt and herbs, and added to the milk of a bisected coconut. The groom drinks the substance. The intention is to "ensure the birth of children and the fertility of garden crops".¹⁵ The fluids of sexual union are seen as necessary for sound crop growth, the coconut featuring prominently as a fertility substance just as it does with the Trobriand Islanders. It thus follows that when Tangu husband and wife set out to form an independent household, the wife should be pregnant so that this event can coincide with the making of a new garden.¹⁶ And when they begin their first independent garden, they have sexual congress, mix the secretions with leaves, soil and coconut milk, and disseminate the mixture over and in the new garden. The practice is usually repeated annually after clearing and before planting.¹⁷

Another widespread phenomenon is the association of woman with the principal crop. The idea of a crop "mother" is frequently accompanied by that of a "child". In the Malay Peninsula a sheaf symbolizes the rice-mother and her child.¹⁸ A midwife sows the first seedling.¹⁹ Then rice is planted early in the morning since this is the time when infants awake;²⁰ the people conduct themselves quietly in the field lest they should frighten the rice soul and cause it subsequently to miscarry.²¹ The rice in bloom is given food regarded as nutritious for a pregnant woman and the rice-ears are given the food of human infants.²² The village midwife²³ usually cuts the rice baby from a bulging "female" part of the field, kisses, anoints, fumigates, wraps it in swaddling clothes and places it in an oval-shaped basket. When it is brought to the field-owner's home, his wife remarks: "Yonder comes One swinging (her) arms; That (methinks) is a child of mine." The rice-child is placed on a sleeping-mat, and the farmer's wife observes post-partum taboos.²⁴ The mother sheaf is reaped by the field-owner's wife and treated as a new mother.²⁵ Frazer remarks that such Indonesian beliefs of rice-mother and child evince "natural and obvious comparisons of the breeding plant to a breeding woman".²⁶

The identification of woman's procreative powers with crops is acknowledged among different peoples and in many ways, as the sub-

sequent section with regard to woman and yam symbolism will illustrate. Amongst the New Guinea Arapesh, But-district people, Kai, Graged, Yabim and Normanby Islanders (D'Entrecasteaux Archipelago), there is a myth of the woman who originally produced yams and other crops from her body.²⁷ Even such Oceanian peoples as the Maori (New Zealand) and Toradja (Central Celebes) sustain the belief.²⁸

Anthropomorphism is attributed to the yam by Dobuans living south of the Trobriand Archipelago in the D'Entrecasteaux Islands. Their yams have ears responsive to the human voice²⁹ and listen to speech attentively. "They grow big for our calling on them."³⁰ They can smell,³¹ and at night, though the vines remain in the garden, the tubers leave the earth and roam around.³² This is why if people approach a garden in the dark they do so quietly lest the yam, like a person, take fright.³³

Like Dobuan women, yams give birth to children³⁴ and "the comparison between human child-bearing and yam seed fertility is in its most literal sense insisted upon".³⁵ In addition each human matrilineage has its distinctive yam matrilineage.³⁶ *Tomot*, a word that refers to man, woman and child, regardless of age or sex, is frequently used for yams.³⁷ Thus, amongst one of the Trobrianders' close trading and ceremonial partners,³⁸ "yams are persons".³⁹

Amongst the Kiwai Papuans of New Guinea an earth-woman gave birth to the yam.⁴⁰ During planting an old woman and man ceremonially promote yam growth by having sexual intercourse in the garden.⁴¹ Fluids from the woman's vulva are smeared over the first yam, on the strings for tying the vine and on the digging-stick.⁴² She also teaches the yam vine how to twine by passing a string and later the vine around her neck.⁴³

Her role as mother is explicit when, to boost yam growth, she and her husband clear away the ground above the principal yam, making it visible. The woman removes her skirt, sits on the tuber, touches it and pushes with her genitals to cause its enlargement.⁴⁴ Then at the harvest of the ceremonially important tuber she stands astride over the yam plant. The man is behind her and proceeds to root out the yam from between her legs. He uses a digging-stick smeared with secretion from her vulva.⁴⁵ The woman takes the yam, places it beneath her skirt, holds it between her legs, walks a few steps, and drops the tuber on the ground.⁴⁶ The intimate association of woman and the gardens is further revealed in a private act in which a woman unties the string holding

her skirt in the garden, fastens it to a yam and pulls out the root.⁴⁷ The skirt string is alleged to symbolize the navel cord.⁴⁸ The Kiwai Papuans thus transparently mime the importance of sexual congress for yam growth, the value of female secretions for embryonic development, and the closeness in identity between the human embryo and yam.

On Frederik-Hendrik Island in West New Guinea live the Kimaam. They have a myth concerning the origin of the yam born of a human woman.⁴⁹ When its mother is about to commit infanticide, the yam child speaks to her in a dream: "Why must I be buried? Am I not a human being?"⁵⁰ Kimaam call the seed-yam tuber "mother" and the shoot "child".⁵¹ The separation of the shoot from the mother-tuber is likened to the delivery of a human child.⁵² During this period the young tuber like the new-born infant is weak and susceptible to harm,⁵³ and men sing:

Namamu [mother⁵⁴], I am not very strong yet
I have only just gone into the earth
Do not approach father too closely
Or else I shall die.⁵⁵

There is a taboo on sexual congress between a Kimaam man and his wife until the child's navel cord has dropped off, for he would be "using the child's road",⁵⁶ and would prevent it from passing "through the first difficult period of its life".⁵⁷ Reference to "the child's road", referring to the woman's vagina, also occurs during the yam planting period.⁵⁸ At this time all Kimaam men must rigorously adhere to a taboo on sexual intercourse lest they impede the cultigen's growth.⁵⁹

The Kimaam draw on the image of human pregnancy in their ceremonial attitude to the yam. As the yam grows to maturity, fertility rites are practised.⁶⁰ The men share a ceremonial feast in honour of the ancestral spirits. They prepare a mixture containing coconuts and bananas, and a bunch of red leaves is waved over it⁶¹ while the men sing:

Mother I am in the earth
You will not see me again
but soon I shall come out
of the earth and then you will eat me.

Mother, I do not come out
of the earth, but presently all
the *kwanda*-friends will

measure me with a stick
and you will see how big I am.⁶²

Beings that are to give birth to the yams are invoked to become pregnant. Other songs referring to foetal growth in the womb, follow.⁶³

The magical mixture mentioned above is made into the shape of a plant mound which the Kimaam call *puri* or pregnant; this signifies a pregnant woman's belly.⁶⁴ A rod-shaped object representing the yam is moulded at the top of the mound.⁶⁵ A bunch of red leaves is placed on top of it and coconut shells now cover the mixture. A man cuts the mound and the others sing:

Why am I being split
Am I not a human being?⁶⁶

Should the tropophyte not grow satisfactorily, then in a certain Kimaam village the planter and his wife break the taboo on coitus during yam development. As Serpenti recognizes, the custom reveals that "sexuality is in itself a condition for the flourishing of the crop... That is why *symbolical* sexuality has to take place."⁶⁷ Ordinary sexual intercourse, however, remains dangerous on account of "using the child's road". When the yam leaves wither, the largest tubers are measured whilst still in the ground. This procedure is executed with great care lest the roots are damaged. It is a hazardous undertaking to loosen the yam from the soil for "the 'child' may not be strong enough yet to undergo this operation".⁶⁸ The largest tubers are never consumed by the planter or his close kin, for the idea repels the Kimaam; instead they are exchanged.⁶⁹ The Kimaam and their yams are so closely identified that a person's tubers are destroyed at his death.⁷⁰

Despite associations of yams and maleness in New Caledonia (south Melanesia), there are also positive indications of womanhood: "everything that appertains to woman is favourable for the yam".⁷¹ The Caledonians equate yam horticultural ceremonies with those of human pregnancy: particularly vivid is the use of a sculpted pole with magical bundle called *koea*. Leenhardt explains that the term evokes thoughts of interlaced lianas or viscera, and pregnancy.⁷² In gestation this bouquet is said to act on the placenta and foetus, the painful body of the mother, and on the liquids ejected at birth.⁷³ It is concerned with the full formation of the child in the womb of the mother.⁷⁴ The *koea* of the yams serves the same function. It acts upon the tuber during its

formation.⁷⁵ When the yams are finalizing their growth the people say they are "making the *koea* of a woman" for they use a bouquet identical to that employed in the therapy of pregnancy.⁷⁶

Leenhardt recognizes that the identity accorded the parturient woman with the fertile earth⁷⁷ is extended to the produce. The New Caledonian lifts a yam with the gentleness afforded a newly-born child. He slips his hand under the end which is called the head in order to support it: "To hold a yam badly is as serious as holding a child badly."⁷⁸ Just as a woman's refinement is assessed by the manner in which she carries a child, so is a person's by the way he holds a yam.⁷⁹

Not only does the magical procedure pertaining to the yam accord it human status, but in Leenhardt's view the identification is explicit: "The yam is a human being, born in the earth where the ancestors have dissolved and remain in a diffused state. It is the flesh of the ancestors."⁸⁰ The tuber dug into the field as seed disappears to the benefit of the new tubers. It is the image of the dead.⁸¹ Further, the bereaved are comforted with a yam.⁸² They are hereby reminded that although part of the yam dies in the earth, new yams are born from it.⁸³ The mourners' yam is thus a symbol of perpetuating life and as such offers people encouragement. "The old yam gives birth to the new yam which strengthens the position of man and confirms his virility. Man returns into the earth at death, with the old yams as his ancestors. Man's cycle of existence is enclosed in that of the yam."⁸⁴ Saussol adds that the yam's biological cycle unites the living with their dead ancestors, thus acknowledging the soil as life's source.⁸⁵

Leenhardt, writing in the 1930's, felt that the already broiling anthropological discussions on parthenogenesis were futile since mythology confirms the indigenes' viewpoint.⁸⁶ He advanced that in New Caledonia "man ignores his real being... His existence is in his eyes identical to that of the yam. And the deep feeling which he experiences of his identification with nature confirms that this cycle corresponds to reality."⁸⁷

The ardent yam cultivators of the New Guinea Sepik and Maprik areas, the Abelam and their neighbours the Ilahita Arapesh, are more male oriented in gardening than are the Trobriand Islanders. They differ too in their total exclusion of women from tending yams of ceremonial significance. This may be due partly to the yam being a symbol of virility amongst these peoples,⁸⁸ partly to the patrilineal system,⁸⁹

while the economic and symbolic importance of pigs in these cultures⁹⁰ and women's care of them may also be relevant factors.⁹¹ It may even be influenced by taxonomic choice whereby *Dioscorea alata*⁹² (the long yam) is the symbolic focus⁹³ and not *Dioscorea esculenta* as in the Trobriands. Even so, there is a fundamental similarity: the yam is personified.

Abelam men grow long yams. These are closely associated with the prestige of men and their clans.⁹⁴ Such yams are often regarded as being "like men":⁹⁵ and the yam is believed to have a spirit for which a term identical to that for the spirit of a man is used.⁹⁶ A long yam can hear and smell.⁹⁷ At harvest each is adorned with a mask, head-dress and male valuables, so that it resembles a decorated man and is identified with his achievements.⁹⁸

The Iahita Arapesh man often refers to the yam as his child and regards it as having a spirit.⁹⁹ Yams may be decorated in the same manner as males during initiation, even with regard to genitalia.¹⁰⁰ Because of their phallic shape and the fact that yams have an aversion to female sexuality, Tuzin, following Kaberry,¹⁰¹ equates the yam with the phallus.¹⁰² This equivalence should, however, not be overemphasized since both ethnographers elsewhere say that there are other long yams regarded as "female";¹⁰³ when these are forked they are said to resemble a female's spreading legs.¹⁰⁴ Female yams are given netbags and embellishments typifying girls' puberty ceremonies.¹⁰⁵ Although in such New Guinea cultures women are not as closely identified with the yams as they are in the Trobriands, some yams nevertheless can have feminine attributes.

It is thus evident that amongst the Abelam, Iahita Arapesh and Dobuans there is general identification of the yam with the human being. Amongst the Kimaam and New Caledonians the association of yam and human being reappears, but there is also specific identification with the child. A similar attitude apparently pertains on Wogeo Island in the Schouten Group. Hogbin draws attention to the islanders' devotion to their land: a man says he "watches over" rather than "works" his allotments, using a word which also means caring for children.¹⁰⁶ The Murray Islanders of Mer (Torres Straits) refer to the seed-yam tuber by the name "mother" and its shoots as "children". They furthermore believe that the yam mother will produce children for as long as she remains uninjured.¹⁰⁷

The identification of yam and child is accentuated by parallels between human pregnancy and yam growth in the ceremonial of the Kiwai and Kimaam, for whom sexual intercourse is relevant to yam growth. There are a number of New Guinea peoples who, like the Tangu of the Madang district, believe in the efficacy of sexual congress for sound crop growth.

An association between woman and the crops is thus present in a number of Melanesian cultures and others farther afield. There is sufficient common ground in the symbolic associations of the yam in Melanesia to lend support to my interpretation that in the Trobriands: a) the garden may be viewed as female and as the belly of woman; b) human and crop generation is considered a similar process; and c) the yam is anthropomorphized as the child of woman.

Notes

- 1 Cf. e.g. Whitmee 1878-79 263-264, 268-273; Fox 1947 58-60; Heyerdahl 1950 14-19; Suggs 1960 212-224; Sharp 1956; Oliver 1961 14-17, 20-23, 40-43, 65-70; Shutler & Shutler 1970 39-46; Howells 1973 208-211, 252-263
- 2 E.g. Skinner 1924 229-230, 242; Luquiens 1931 54; Thompson 1940 18; Lanyon-Orgill 1943 31-32; Keesing 1945 43; Robinson 1960 64-65; Grace 1970 24-28; Gourou 1953 71; Coursey 1972 217, 226-227; Coursey 1967 14-15; Harris 1967 100; Brookfield & Hart 1971 82; Howells 1973 196, 223
- 3 E.g. Beckwith 1940 19; Linton & Wingert 1946 8, 12; Laborde et al. 1952 228; Vayda 1966 296-297; Vayda & Rappaport 1970 5-8; Ray 1919-20 51-53; Hogbin 1940 97-100; Lewis 1945 17, 20; Archey 1949 52; McCarthy [1950] 86; Oliver 1961 41; Chowning 1973 1-2
- 4 E.g. Seligmann 1909 253, 268-269; Haddon 1937 240, 275; Oliver 1961 44; Powell 1976; Ivens 1934 45; Golson 1972 7, 14; cf. Langness & Weschler 1971 10-11; Boutinov 1962 81-89; Vayda 1966 293-298
- 5 E.g. Mauss 1972 120
- 6 James 1959 253-254
- 7 Lane 1965 259; Van Baal 1966 208
- 8 E.g. Best 1905 148-151, 188; Best 1942 1, 339, 342; Best 1954 12-13, 15-17; Te Rangi Hiroa 1950 435, 437-438, 499; cf. Grey 1855 2, 4, 9-10, 13-15
- 9 Best 1959 22
- 10 Best 1959 49
- 11 Emory 1940 77; cf. Luomala 1955 68-69, 177 (Polynesia)
- 12 Piddington 1939 289

- 13 Burridge 1969 474, 486
- 14 Burridge 1969 98
- 15 Burridge 1969 99
- 16 Burridge 1969 83 n.
- 17 Burridge 1969 75
- 18 Skeat 1900 238, 248
- 19 Binder 1972 74
- 20 Skeat 1900 218
- 21 Frazer 1912 183
- 22 Frazer 1912 183
- 23 Endicott 1970 23
- 24 Skeat 1900 225–226, 236–244
- 25 Skeat 1900 248–249
- 26 Frazer 1912 183
- 27 Fortune 1942 134–141, 217–219; Gerstner 1939 260–264; Keysser 1911 222–225; Dempwolff 1925–26 20–26; Zahn 1911 393–394; Róheim 1950a 236; Róheim 1950b 190
- 28 Best 1925 48–51; Best 1942 420; Kruyt 1938 17–18, 272–273; cf. Raats 1969 29–30, 35–36 (Java, Mindanao, Borneo, Flores, Ceram)
- 29 Fortune 1963 109
- 30 Fortune 1963 107
- 31 Fortune 1963 109
- 32 Fortune 1963 108
- 33 Fortune 1963 108
- 34 Fortune 1963 107
- 35 Fortune 1963 108
- 36 Fortune 1963 108
- 37 Fortune 1963 109
- 38 Malinowski 1922 38–39; Malinowski 1963 xviii
- 39 Fortune 1963 107, 109
- 40 Landtman 1927 81, cf. 73; Landtman 1917 41, 324
- 41 Landtman 1927 77, cf. 70
- 42 Landtman 1927 77–79
- 43 Landtman 1927 78
- 44 Landtman 1927 79
- 45 Landtman 1927 79
- 46 Landtman 1927 79–80; Riley 1925 100
- 47 Landtman 1927 70
- 48 Landtman 1927 71
- 49 Serpenti 1965 217–218
- 50 Serpenti 1965 217
- 51 Serpenti 1965 221
- 52 Serpenti 1965 221
- 53 Serpenti 1965 221–222
- 54 Serpenti 1965 292
- 55 Serpenti 1965 222
- 56 Serpenti 1965 147, cf. 179

- 57 Serpenti 1965 148
 58 Cf. Serpenti 1965 222
 59 Serpenti 1965 222
 60 Serpenti 1965 223
 61 Serpenti 1965 223–225
 62 Serpenti 1965 225
 63 Serpenti 1965 225–226
 64 Serpenti 1965 225
 65 Serpenti 1965 226
 66 Serpenti 1965 226
 67 Serpenti 1965 228 (my underlining)
 68 Serpenti 1965 227
 69 Serpenti 1965 229; cf. Gardi 1960 plate 46 (facing 144), 159–160 (Maprik area, New Guinea)
 70 Serpenti 1965 212, cf. 201
 71 Leenhardt 1930 127 (translated from French)
 72 Leenhardt 1930 126–127
 73 Leenhardt 1930 127
 74 Leenhardt 1930 127
 75 Leenhardt 1930 127
 76 Leenhardt 1930 127
 77 Leenhardt 1971 126
 78 Leenhardt 1971 122 (translated from French)
 79 Leenhardt 1971 123
 80 Leenhardt 1971 123 (translated from French)
 81 Leenhardt 1971 124
 82 Leenhardt 1971 124
 83 Leenhardt 1971 124
 84 Leenhardt 1971 124 (translated from French)
 85 Saussol 1971 229
 86 Leenhardt 1971 127
 87 Leenhardt 1971 125 (translated from French)
 88 Cf. e.g. Gardi 1960 158; Kaberry 1965–66 340; Forge 1966 28; Tuzin 1972 232; Harrison 1982 154, 156–159 (Avatip, East Sepik)
 89 Cf. e.g. Meggitt 1969 3 (Central Highlands, New Guinea); Oliver 1942a 35 (Bougainville, Solomon Islands)
 90 Vayda et al. 1961 69–72 (Melanesia); Meggitt 1969 2, 5 (Central Highlands); cf. e.g. Kaberry 1941 351–352 (Sepik district); Bus 1951 813–824; Elkin 1953 177–200 (Wabaga/Enga, Central Highlands); Bulmer 1960 2, 4–7 (Kyaka, Western Highlands); Harrison 1937 24–33, 41–42 (New Hebrides)
 91 Cf. e.g. Kaberry 1941–42 336, 354 (Sepik district); Luzbetak 1954 65–66, cf. 112 (Nondugl area, Western Highlands); Fischer 1968 290 (Jeghuje, Morobo district); Brookfield & Brown 1963 57
 92 Coursey 1967 45–46
 93 Cf. e.g. Lea 1964 76 (Maprik area); Tuzin 1972 231, 233 (Sepik area); Harrison 1982 142–146, 151–155 (East Sepik); Haynes & Coursey 1969

- 93 (New Guinea); Young 1971 147 (Goodenough Island)
- 94 Kaberry 1941 355; Kaberry 1941-42 82, 334, 338, 340, 354; Kaberry 1965-66 340
- 95 Kaberry 1941 356; Gardi 1960 148, 155-156, 159
- 96 Kaberry 1941 356; cf. Jenness & Ballantyne 1920 124 (D'Entrecasteaux Archipelago)
- 97 Forge 1962 10; Forge 1966 28
- 98 Kaberry 1941 356; Kaberry 1941-42 349; cf. Forge 1966 28; Lea 1969 179
- 99 Tuzin 1972 234
- 100 Tuzin 1972 236
- 101 Cf. Kaberry 1965-66 339-340
- 102 Tuzin 1972 232 n., 237; cf. McKnight 1973 199 (Wik-Mungkan, Australia)
- 103 Tuzin 1972 232; cf. Kaberry 1941 357
- 104 Tuzin 1972 232 n.
- 105 Tuzin 1972 237
- 106 Hogbin 1939 164; cf. Hogbin 1938 301-303
- 107 Haddon 1912 146

Women and gardening in the context of Trobriand culture

This analysis of the position of Trobriand women in gardening suggests that it is particularly her symbolic relationship to the garden and the esteem accorded her by the pivotal matrilineal *urigubu* transaction which emphasize woman's unique position in the society as the giver of children and afford her fulfilment. It may be accepted that woman also receives satisfaction from her position in gardening to the extent that this is consistent with, and related to, her position in the rest of the culture. This consistency and the interrelation of different parts of Trobriand culture are the subject of this final chapter.

Opler¹ has demonstrated the significance of dominant and counterbalancing themes as vehicles for cultural integration. He suggests that a dominant theme permeates various aspects of culture but is restrained by opposing factors. The interplay of dominant and counter-theme lends a culture coherence. The foregoing analysis of Trobriand garden symbolism centres around the matrilineal system and woman's motherhood. The emergent question is whether these might be regarded as dominant themes of the culture, and what evidence there is of the presence of counter-themes.

Dominant themes

Matrilineal descent is primarily a principle of social organization. Because descent group membership is established through women, they are important as perpetuators of the matriline² and as members of the matrilineal group. This descent principle channels the roles of the sexes:

e.g. the father-husband is socially negligible for the perpetuation of the matrilineage.³ The Trobriand denial of paternity also emphasizes the matriline.⁴ A woman's children belong to her matrilineal sub-clan. Her brother, who usually represents the minimal matrilineal unit, will be concerned with its continuity despite a constraint on his interest in the sexual life of his female matrilineal partner.⁵

Evidence of the theme of matrilineal descent is also to be found in Trobriand economic life. Malinowski was aware that matrilineal descent reckoning exercises a profound influence on the nature of Trobriand culture and land tenure.⁶ He perceived the matrilineal bias of the myth of human genesis; and that the matrilineal descendants born solely of the eponymous ancestress who emerged from the ground at a particular place, exercise rights over that territory. It is the owning sub-clan which forms the nucleus of the garden team that takes the initiative in the magic and work of gardening, and to which the model standard plots usually belong.

The matrilineal principle, coupled with sub-clan exogamy and virilocal residence, results in Trobriand woman working her husband's plots. It is visible in the institution of *urigubu* (matrimonial harvest gift) which pivots on the relation between female and male sub-clan members. The receipt of *urigubu* enables a woman to retain meaningful ties with her sub-clan and acknowledges her continued, valued membership of this group. As has been seen, woman's role as perpetuator of the matrilineal group is acknowledged in the *urigubu* transaction through the symbol of the *taytu* identified with the child of the sub-clan.

There are hints of the reappearance of the matrilineal principle in other economic activities, particularly the canoe-building and sailing associated with the *kula* (overseas expedition for ceremonial exchange). A Kudayuri (Kitava Island) myth narrates how a Lukuba headman's canoe originally was able to fly by means of the magic he (and his sisters) alone knew, until certain of his clansmen jealously killed him; as a result this magic died with him. His sisters, angered at the murder and loss of the magic, but who also possessed this magical power, flew away from the village.⁷

All these matrilineal heroes of the Lukuba clan emerged from underground,⁸ and were "the first representatives of their totemic sub-clan on the surface of the earth".⁹ Both the gardening heroes Gere'u and Tudava¹⁰ are of this clan, and in Malinowski's myth cycle the Lukuba

are the foremost canoe-builders and sailors.¹¹ Gere'u is also a *kula* hero, as renowned for his magical acumen in procuring vast quantities of *kula* valuables¹² as in producing great gardens.¹³

The seagoing canoe (*masawa*) is therefore mythologically associated with the matrilineal principle and sub-clan. Further, some Trobriand origin myths, notably those from Kwaiwaga, state that the people's original ancestors arrived in a canoe.¹⁴ The owner of a seagoing canoe is usually the head of a village or sub-division of one,¹⁵ such headship being linked with sub-clan leadership. A core of men accompanying the owner of a seagoing canoe as crew usually belong to the same matrilineal sub-clan,¹⁶ as is the case with the gardening team; and Powell makes explicit reference to *kula* canoes being made for sub-clans.¹⁷ In building and sailing, certain rules of propriety concerning the seagoing canoes are observed in respect of particular sub-clans.¹⁸ Significantly, in Kaduwaga (Kayleuna Island), a female clanswoman of the owner stands in the canoe at the end of the maiden voyage;¹⁹ and Gilmour observes²⁰ that Kiriwinan sisters prepare food for their brothers before the latter depart on *kula*. It seems therefore that the seagoing canoe, along with the standard garden plot and the pregnant woman, is associated with the matrilineal sub-clan.

Recurrence of the theme appears in other aspects of the culture as well. Malinowski wrote that "one hole of emergence, one sub-clan, one territory — or a definite part of it — and one headman, runs through the whole social organization of the Trobriands".²¹ That the genesis myth concerning the hole of emergence is relevant to matrilineal descent has already been emphasized. The myth links the theme of matrilineal descent with the magico-religious aspect of culture. The autochthonous founding ancestress of the sub-clan brought with her the system of garden magic which the garden magician, typically her direct matrilineal descendant, applies. The practice of garden magic thus serves as a link between the sub-clan and its ancestress. Besides garden magic there are also other systems of magic vested in specific sub-clans.²²

In the horticultural spells matrilineal forefathers are requested to grant the soil fertility, although paternal ancestors are not excluded. These ancestors are also responsible for the persistence of the sub-clan by the addition of new-born members.²³ There is continuity of the sub-clan in the spirit world²⁴ and the ancestor who is reincarnated as a spirit-child through a woman belongs to her own matrilineal sub-clan.²⁵

The theme is also present in Trobriand political organization. The principle of matrilineal descent is associated with the doctrine of the emergence of the matrilineal group's first female ancestress from a particular hole,²⁶ and this forms the basis of village residence and citizenship.²⁷ The leader of the highest-ranking sub-klan is the headman of the village, which is the significant political unit.²⁸ Heads of lower-ranking sub-klans are consulted at council meetings.²⁹ Matrilineal descent is the basis of succession to sub-klan leadership³⁰ although the typically Melanesian method of determining leadership on the basis of accumulation and distribution of wealth and services is also prevalent.³¹ As a factor in succession, inheritance³² and guardianship, matrilineal descent has legal (and economic) implications. It is apparent that matrilineal descent recurs in various aspects of Trobriand culture and as such emerges as a dominant theme which lends consistency to cultural experience.

Human female sexuality and procreation seems to be another dominant theme in Trobriand culture. As I have shown, the origins of humanity and of gardening coincide in Trobriand mythology, both deriving from the female ancestress who emerged from a sacred spot in the ground. There is an equation between the earth and mankind, especially with regard to the female, for both are able "to burgeon (with) child".³³ By metaphorical ascription of the conditions of motherhood to the soil and through the symbolic activities and attitudes associated with gardening, the significance of female sexuality and procreation is emphasized. This theme is replicated in other economic institutions such as the *kula* in which the canoe plays a dominant role.

There are certain clear pointers to identification of the canoe with woman. The prow-board of the *masawa* (seagoing canoe) is the facial symbol of the canoe-builder's wife.³⁴ The formulae of canoe construction and sailing invoke the canoe to bind its skirt together and fly,³⁵ suggesting that the canoe resembles a flying witch.³⁶ This metaphor seems to lend the canoe immunity from the dangers of the sea³⁷ and ascribes femininity to it.³⁸ Other parallels between canoe ceremonial and that of pregnancy and the parturient female may also be drawn.

When the ornamental prow-boards have been inserted into the seagoing canoe, it is pushed into the water, and men wash the canoe with sea-water to remove any evil influences.³⁹ In like manner women assist the expectant mother and douse her with sea-water.⁴⁰ The pregnant woman is then carried to the village and placed on a platform.⁴¹

Similarly the canoe, once it has been rubbed and washed, is taken ashore and rested on skid logs.^{4 2}

When a woman's confinement is pending, her husband and male matrilineal representatives stand guard beside fires to ward off attacks from sorcerers.^{4 3} In Kaduwaga a guard which appears to be similar to the one preceding childbirth is mounted on the night before the canoe is launched.^{4 4} Before the launching there is a series of acts initiated by the " 'ritual cooking' of the canoe"; substances whose smoke will render speed and have a cleansing effect are burnt under the bottom of the canoe.^{4 5} Likewise an important puerperal custom requires the mother to sit on a bedstead over a fire to hasten the blood-flow, this fire also being associated with protection and cleansing.^{4 6}

The seagoing canoe is covered with a protective plaited covering of coconut fronds to ward off the sun. This is removed prior to the ceremonial launching.^{4 7} For the same protective reason the pregnant mother is said to be covered with a mantle, dispensed with before confinement, though hers consists of another fertility substance, banana fronds.^{4 8}

The ceremonial launching of the seagoing canoe is called the "staining red of the mouth of the canoe".^{4 9} The canoe magician colours its bow and stern (they are interchangeable^{5 0}) with charmed red ochre; a cowrie shell on the prow-board is also painted red.^{5 1} This custom resembles that in the first pregnancy ceremony in which the pregnant woman's face and mouth are painted red and red hibiscus flowers embellish her hair.^{5 2}

In Kaduwaga a house is built around the canoe when it is to be decorated for launching. Montague states that "Kaduwagans liken the seclusion [of the canoe] to that which a woman undergoes after giving birth."^{5 3} While the boat is being decorated men alone may see it.^{5 4} In human procreative ceremony the new mother is secluded for a month: during this period only women may see her.^{5 5} The mother is meticulously beautified in anticipation of her coming-out ceremony.^{5 6} Montague likens the canoe to the new-born child^{5 7} but this conflicts with the above interpretation of her informants namely, that the seclusion is that of a mother. She overlooks the fact that the canoe and mother are decorated and receive similar ceremonial treatment and that the prow-board is likened to the face of the builder's wife.

In Malinowski's day the newly-launched canoes were given a trial run^{5 8}

and then embarked on a maiden voyage of display prior to their departure for *kula*.⁵⁹ The mother also displays herself and her new-born child at the coming-out ceremony following the seclusion period.⁶⁰ In Trobriand procreative ceremony the father's sisters enact the mother's expulsion.⁶¹ At the Kaduwagan ceremonial launching of the canoe, women shy coconuts at it (trying to unseat the crew).⁶² Both rituals of mock expulsion suggest that the matrilineal identity of the woman and her child on the one hand, and the canoe and crew, with its core of matrilineal kinsmen on the other, is hereby established.⁶³

The theme of female sexuality and procreation seems also to manifest itself in the creation of women's wealth. Trobriand men exchange stone axe blades amongst themselves, these being a sign of wealth.⁶⁴ Women have their own type of wealth in the form of bundles and fibre skirts made from banana fronds.⁶⁵ The accumulation and distribution of bundles and skirts is of absorbing interest to women and provides them with renown.⁶⁶ Although she provides no supporting evidence for attributing symbolic significance to red skirts, Weiner proposes that they epitomize "that which is essential to *dala* [the sub-clan] and the regeneration of *dala*... symbolizing the power of being female".⁶⁷ Bundles are "the symbol of milk and nurturance. As bundles are rewoven into skirts, the skirt itself can be analyzed as an embodiment of all that is 'womanness': sexuality, reproduction, and nurture."⁶⁸

The activities following a death have a symbolic structure apparently homologous to that of pregnancy and gardening, in which males assume prominence in the first period, women in the second. After a death has occurred, the funeral workers are males⁶⁹ (although, as in the early stages of pregnancy,⁷⁰ the father's sister plays a distinctive role⁷¹); four to eight months later women organize a female mortuary ceremony.⁷² The hallmark of this ceremony is a massive exchange of bundles and skirts.⁷³ The exchange of these articles, particularly at this time, seems to symbolize the renewal of life — a process intimately associated with womanhood. Since the ceremony lifts a number of restrictive mourning observances such as that of being black and dirty,⁷⁴ an association with cleanliness and the pregnancy ceremony appears. The procreative power of women provides assurance of the regeneration of the sub-clan.

The theme of woman's sexuality and procreation thus occurs in gardening, the canoe and women's wealth, and is also found in aspects of culture other than the economic. There is an association between human female procreativity and matrilineal descent reckoning — which is

so crucial in the social organization. Because woman is sole perpetuator of the matrilineal group, it follows that such a theme may attain cultural dominance. This of course does not imply that in a patrilineal system woman's propagative capacity will not be recognized; rather, that there is greater likelihood of this being emphasized in a system which draws attention to the female principle. In gardening, the theme reinforces the conjugal tie through the symbolic expression of the procreative roles of mother and father; the garden magician's ritual also contributes to the expression of it; spells form an important part of the ritual, thus linking the theme with language; and plot terminology further reinforces it. Although there is little documentation of Trobriand artistic expression, the theme of woman also appears on the decorative prow-board which represents the canoe-builder's wife. And finally, Weiner states that the exchange of skirts symbolizing female sexuality "allows women to play a public role with political implications".⁷⁵ It thus appears that this major theme of female fertility has an important integrative effect in Trobriand culture.

Counterbalancing themes

Opler states that there are usually limiting factors circumscribing the influence of dominant themes.⁷⁶ Trobriand concern with woman in descent reckoning and symbolism appears to be counterbalanced by expressions of patrification, affinal relations, individuality and the theme of male prominence.

Radcliffe-Brown has shown that matrilineal and patrilineal systems are rarely mutually exclusive: one line of reckoning tends to predominate.⁷⁷ Malinowski was conscious of this type of interplay in Trobriand culture, though he tended to view it as a conflict between "matrilineal" and "patriarchal" principles.⁷⁸ Although he tended to underemphasize it,⁷⁹ Malinowski perceptively recognized a counter-theme to matrilineal descent and the dogma of parthenogenesis in the cultural idea, strictly adhered to, that a child resembles its father, a social "outsider", not its mother or matrilineal kin.⁸⁰ Other examples of patrification are that the male garden magician may in practice inherit his magic paternally,⁸¹ and, both maternal and paternal ancestors are influential in granting fecundity to the soil. It is the father, not the mother's brother, who represents his daughter or son in marriage;⁸² and in procreative ceremonial a woman's father and his matrilineal kinswomen ensure the success of her pregnancy.⁸³ And a paternal ancestor may effect the reincarnation of a spirit child in a woman.⁸⁴

The father exercises some authority over his son until puberty;⁸⁵ and residence is virilocal. A male may inherit love magic and that pertaining to canoe-construction from his father.⁸⁶ The father also gives his son a position in the *kula*⁸⁷ and provides him with privileges and gifts.⁸⁸ Malinowski regarded such benefits as an indication of "father-love" (which he viewed as a "patriarchal" principle⁸⁹) pitting itself against the overriding matrilineal descent system.⁹⁰ He has been criticized for confusing emotional with structural issues.⁹¹ Uberoi argues convincingly that the cases of father-love cited refer to high-ranking males;⁹² and that gifts from the father, together with patrilateral cross-cousin marriage, are structural mechanisms with implications for political alliance.⁹³ The importance of these points for the present purpose is to register the cultural recognition of ties through the father, whereby he as a male receives a measure of personal recognition in different aspects of the culture.

Affinal relations add an important dimension to the islanders' lives and tend to counterbalance the emphasis on matrilineal descent. Affines participate in mortuary ceremonial⁹⁴ and are operative in building the seagoing canoe, dwelling and storehouse.⁹⁵ Affines must annually render return gifts for *urigubu* (matrimonial harvest gifts) received: a man's sister provides his wife with "women's wealth", and the man presents "men's wealth" to the wife's brother. By virtue of polygyny,⁹⁶ numerous affines provide a chief with tribute in the form of *urigubu*, thus enhancing his power.⁹⁷ A chief may call on affines for purposes of peacekeeping in war.⁹⁸ Should such duties of affines as pertain to mortuary ceremonial, *urigubu* or war be evaded, the political implications are that relations between the individuals' sub-clans, and hence their respective villages, would become severely strained.⁹⁹ Affinal relations therefore have implications for several aspects of culture.

There is some evidence that a concern with individuality also offsets the emphasis on matrilineal descent as exemplified in sub-clan solidarity. Individual women and men can achieve satisfaction in their ability to garden well. There is a degree of individuality in plot ownership,¹⁰⁰ in growing *urigubu* for a specific recipient,¹⁰¹ and in presenting it for personal as opposed to sub-clan reasons.¹⁰² The existence of private garden magic¹⁰³ points to individuality in the magico-religious aspect. An individual may, by and large, follow her (or his) personal yearnings in selecting a marriage partner.¹⁰⁴ Females and males also individually own possessions.¹⁰⁵ Uberoi suggests that the *kula* counters a partner's sub-clan ties by emphasizing his duties to a person from an opposing

district.¹⁰⁶ The *kula* does provide for a measure of individual self-interest,¹⁰⁷ although sub-clan membership nevertheless affects the composition of the crew of a *kula*-canoe.

Montague maintains that Kaduwagan Trobriand Islanders regard themselves first as human beings, then as males and females,¹⁰⁸ and that they see themselves as individuals.¹⁰⁹ Her findings, like those of Uberoi, are an instructive caution lest we over-categorize Trobriand behaviour and imprison the individual in a cell of matrilineal solidarity.

Expression of the theme of male prominence is found in the active role men play in the various aspects of Trobriand public life. As has been seen, they take the lead in ceremonial activities pertaining to horticulture. They spend more time working in the fields than women.¹¹⁰ *Urigubu* is publicly given from one man to another, and men earn renown from gardening. The most significant person in gardening, the *towosi* (garden magician), is a male.¹¹¹ Males are the "owners" of property associated with the sub-clan, like plots and canoes.¹¹² Men build storehouses and seagoing canoes.¹¹³ They voyage on *kula*¹¹⁴ and procure valuables.¹¹⁵ They dominate the activities associated with the magic of canoe-construction and the *kula*.¹¹⁶ The ethnographic information on fishing is sparse but principally portrays it as the activity of men and boys.¹¹⁷ Men arrange marriages, subsidize feasts¹¹⁸ and deliberate in councils (*kayaku*).¹¹⁹ They act as legal representatives of minimal matrilineal units.¹²⁰ Men attain particular significance in political life by their position in the *kula*,¹²¹ and by the fact that they alone may aspire to roles of leadership.¹²²

Earlier in this chapter I indicated that the dominant themes of matrilineal descent and women's sexuality and motherhood interlink economic and other aspects of Trobriand culture. Similarly the counterbalancing themes of patrification, affinal relations, individuality and male prominence are relevant to different aspects of the culture. It is not proposed, however, that recurring themes alone account for the integration of culture (although the material has not produced many instances of connections between aspects other than those related to the themes discussed). One way in which the economic and social aspects of the culture are linked is by the practical co-operation of wife and husband in gardening, which reinforces the conjugal tie. The garden magician and his rites express the cultural themes, and by directing the gardening activities of women and men, these connect the economic and magico-religious aspects.

The position of women in Trobriand culture

Malinowski periodically mentions, if somewhat vaguely, the "high position" of Trobriand women and remarks that "the freedom, influence and independence of women is clearly manifested in their surface behaviour."^{1 2 3} Such generalizations are usually not helpful, but coming from so sensitive a fieldworker the statement should be noted. In Trobriand culture woman's procreative ability is acknowledged: symbols of propagation permeate the major ceremonies and aspects of culture. That Trobriand descent reckoning is traced through her appears to consolidate woman's position in society further.

Trobriand women and men appear to function on different levels in gardening as they do in the rest of the culture, but both participate whether at a symbolic or practical level. Unlike many of their New Guinea counterparts,^{1 2 4} men do not vie with women in the Trobriands, they function in complementary roles. A balance between male and female is achieved via the symbolic medium in which both are incorporated: the man plays out a more active, the woman a more symbolic role.

Men predominate in the magic and practical work of gardening; there is no reason why woman should play a larger part in gardening than she already does, for it is her procreative ability that is dramatized. Similarly, in the important *kula* institution, her active participation is unnecessary when considered symbolically. The crew of the canoe consists of matrilineal kinsmen and the boat itself is female, these symbolically emphasizing the perpetuation of the matrilineal sub-clan. Male activity pertaining to the canoe is thus a cultural enactment of that which women perform physiologically.^{1 2 5} The position of the male is characterized by greater public prominence: the man acts as the political, social, economic and magico-religious representative of the sub-clan. The position of woman on the other hand is less overt: she is not an organizer but a perpetuator and symbol of the matrilineal sub-clan.

It may therefore be concluded that woman is as crucial to gardening and to Trobriand culture as is the more visible male, but her medium is that of metaphor. These conclusions question the validity of Ortner's theoretical paper, based on limited ethnographic evidence, in which she states: "The secondary status of woman in society is one of the true universals, a pan-cultural fact."^{1 2 6} The Trobriand Islanders reveal that the cultural relationships of women and men are infinitely more com-

plex than her assertion supposes.

General conclusions

The object of this study has been to gain insight into the position of women in the Trobriand Islands with particular reference to horticulture. The paramount importance that the people attach to gardening *taytu* (the small yam) has been examined. It has also been noted that women are relatively inconspicuous in gardening activities, particularly those of a ceremonial nature. But linguistically the garden plot is associated with woman's body and the *taytu* with her child, an equation ratified in the spells and in the myth of primogeniture.

The interpretation that emerges is that Trobriand economic production of *taytu* mirrors the culture's view of the procreation of human beings, both in process and product. The similarity of process is evident in symbolic procedures which acknowledge the significance of woman as procreator. The affinity in product appears in the *urigubu* (matrimonial harvest gift) institution. The males of the matrilineal sub-clan render their creative contribution – the *taytu*, symbol of the child – to their nearest female relative. This seems to draw attention not only to the procreative ability of woman, but also to her enduring position within the sub-clan. Further, the woman assists her husband in producing the *urigubu* destined for a female member of his sub-clan, whilst he aids her in the production and rearing of children for her sub-clan. This is possible within a belief system which denies paternity, which emphasizes the matriline, and which accords a symbolic equivalence to *taytu* and children stemming from the identification of the burgeoning garden with the pregnant woman.

An association of woman and crops is neither an aberration nor an idiosyncrasy of the Trobrianders in the context of Oceania. Widespread, especially in related culture areas, though variously articulated, is the concept of the earth as female, the idea of woman as mother of humans and plants, and a metaphoric equivalence between people and produce. Two dominant themes of Trobriand gardening, viz matrilineal descent, and human female sexuality and procreation, acknowledge the importance and relevance of woman to the economic process. The percolation of these themes into other institutions ratifies their cultural significance. They are intrinsic to pregnancy, are manifested in the symbolism of the *kula*-canoe, and are also suggested in mortuary customs. The themes weave through and integrate different aspects of culture.

Woman's procreativity is acknowledged in the language of gardening and there are indications that it appears in the virtually unexplored artistic expressions of the people. In similar manner the counterbalancing themes of patrification, affinal relations, individuality and male prominence also link different aspects of culture.

Trobian men are in the forefront of numerous activities in addition to gardening: they conduct trade, travel, and establish contacts. Women are incorporated in the principal economic activity of gardening and achieve renown from *urigubu* received. But their physical participation in culturally important undertakings is restricted. Superficially considered, woman seems to have little cultural significance. However, the Trobian woman is structurally significant on account of matrilineal descent reckoning which confers prestige on her, and she is important through symbolism in which she is ever-present. The roles of males and females in gardening symbolically mirror those in procreation.

The complementary nature of male and female horticultural roles is evident. Men and women are neither competitors nor antagonists: the work of one is different from, yet interrelates with, that of the other. There is both direct and indirect involvement in culturally important activities, with woman and man functioning on different cultural levels. The symbolism intrinsic to the activities of males and females raises woman's procreative ability to one of the culture's dominant values. Through the symbolism of gardening, woman's cultural position harmonizes with her biological nature. It is these factors which afford her satisfaction and a large measure of cultural esteem.

Notes

- 1 Opler 1945 198–206; cf. Taylor 1973 43
- 2 Weiner 1976 20; Malinowski 1966 I 345
- 3 Schneider 1961 14–16
- 4 Róheim 1950a 29–30
- 5 Malinowski 1932 170–173; cf. Schneider 1961 13
- 6 Malinowski 1966 I 341–342
- 7 Malinowski 1922 311–316
- 8 Malinowski 1922 317, 321
- 9 Malinowski 1922 317
- 10 Malinowski 1966 I 68–74
- 11 Malinowski 1922 321
- 12 Malinowski 1922 307
- 13 Malinowski 1966 I 69

- 14 Weiner 1976 38
- 15 Malinowski 1922 114, 118, 122–123
- 16 Powell 1956 183; Powell 1977a
- 17 Powell 1956 106
- 18 Malinowski 1922 230–232
- 19 Montague 1974 139
- 20 Gilmour 1905 71
- 21 Malinowski 1966 I 350
- 22 Malinowski 1966 I 348
- 23 Malinowski 1916 405–406; Malinowski 1932 149–150, 152
- 24 Malinowski 1966 I 348; Malinowski 1916 406
- 25 Malinowski 1932 146
- 26 8 above
- 27 Malinowski 1966 I 341, 344; Powell 1956 45
- 28 Powell 1960 121; Uberoi 1971 24–25; cf. Malinowski 1922 57, 62–64;
Malinowski 1966 I 347; 5–6 above
- 29 Malinowski 1966 I 347
- 30 Malinowski 1966 I 345–346
- 31 Powell 1956 468–469; Powell 1960 126–128, cf. 135; Allen 1972 270–271
- 32 Malinowski 1966 I 345
- 33 Malinowski 1966 II 262; cf. 8 above
- 34 Montague 1974 200; cf. Malinowski 1922 plate XXIV (facing 97); Silas 1967
152
- 35 Malinowski 1922 132, 138
- 36 Malinowski 1922 131, 138, 200, 215, 320
- 37 Cf. Malinowski 1922 236–237
- 38 Cf. Margot-Duclot & Vemant 1946 40
- 39 Malinowski 1922 135
- 40 Malinowski 1932 185–186
- 41 Malinowski 1932 188
- 42 Malinowski 1922 135
- 43 Malinowski 1932 194
- 44 Montague 1974 135
- 45 Malinowski 1922 139–140
- 46 Malinowski 1932 194–197
- 47 Malinowski 1922 147
- 48 Malinowski 1932 180–181, 189, 191, 193; Silas 1967 17
- 49 Malinowski 1922 147
- 50 Malinowski 1922 215–216
- 51 Malinowski 1922 147
- 52 Malinowski 1932 187
- 53 Montague 1974 135
- 54 Montague 1974 135
- 55 Malinowski 1932 196–197
- 56 Malinowski 1932 197
- 57 Montague 1974 200

- 58 Malinowski 1922 147–154
 59 Malinowski 1922 163–165
 60 Malinowski 1932 196–197
 61 Malinowski 1932 197 (for "maternal" in line 23 read "paternal"); cf. Malinowski 1932 185–186, 196, 422–423
 62 Montague 1974 136–137
 63 But cf. Montague 1974 200
 64 Weiner 1976 179, 183, 231
 65 Weiner 1976 92–93, 230–231; cf. Saville 1926 168 (Mailu, New Guinea)
 66 Weiner 1976 78, 91, 100, 118–119; cf. Montague 1974 166–168, 176–177, 185
 67 Weiner 1976 119, cf. 117, 120
 68 Weiner 1976 119, cf. 92–93, 193
 69 Weiner 1976 64–65, 69
 70 Malinowski 1932 180, 185–189
 71 Weiner 1976 64
 72 Weiner 1976 62, 98
 73 Weiner 1976 103–116
 74 Weiner 1976 62, 112, 119
 75 Weiner 1976 119
 76 Opler 1945 201
 77 Radcliffe-Brown 1952 39–42; cf. Burrows 1939 1 (Polynesia); Mead 1938 167 (New Guinea); Kaberry 1941 257–258 (Abelam, New Guinea)
 78 E.g. Malinowski 1966 I 359–360, 378; Malinowski 1926a 128; Malinowski 1932 88
 79 Cf. Scheffler 1973
 80 Malinowski 1932 172–177
 81 Malinowski 1927b 121; Malinowski 1966 I 64
 82 Malinowski 1932 72–73, 76–77, 447; Weiner 1976 174–176; Robinson 1962 128–137
 83 Malinowski 1966 I 203; Malinowski 1932 180, 185–190; cf. Robinson 1962 141–144
 84 Robinson 1962 144–145; cf. 27 above
 85 Powell 1969a 184; Malinowski 1926a 108; Malinowski 1966 I 205
 86 Malinowski 1916 389
 87 Malinowski 1932 81
 88 Malinowski 1932 81, 177; Malinowski 1926a 109–110
 89 Cf. Malinowski 1966 I 361
 90 Malinowski 1926a 101, 106–111; Malinowski 1932 81, Malinowski 1966 I 204–205
 91 Fortes 1957 182–183; Powell 1969a 185; Uberoi 1971 103
 92 Uberoi 1971 103–106
 93 Uberoi 1971 100–106; cf. Robinson 1962 125
 94 Malinowski 1932 128–130, 135
 95 Powell 1956 411; Powell 1977a; Malinowski 1922 134, cf. 114, 125; Malinowski 1932 108; Malinowski 1966 I 245–246

- 96 Malinowski 1932 110–111; Powell 1956 564; Weiner 1976 45–46
- 97 Malinowski 1966 I 56, 191–192; Malinowski 1932 69, 107, 111–113
- 98 Powell 1969b 592
- 99 Cf. e.g. Malinowski 1932 103, 108–109, 129, 135; Powell 1960 126–127; Powell 1969b 592
- 100 Malinowski 1966 I 371
- 101 Cf. Malinowski 1966 I 329; Montague 1974 124; Weiner 1976 197
- 102 65 above; Malinowski 1966 I 392–396; Powell 1969b 584; Montague 1974 103
- 103 Malinowski 1966 I 153
- 104 Malinowski 1932 66, 71; Powell 1969a 197
- 105 Malinowski 1932 20–21; Montague 1974 113, 191–192; Uberoi 1971 134
- 106 Uberoi 1971 159
- 107 Uberoi 1971 160
- 108 Montague 1974 191, 194–196
- 109 Cf. Montague 1974 191, 204–205, 211
- 110 Table I 101
- 111 8 above
- 112 7–9, 87 above
- 113 Powell 1956 411; Powell 1977a; Malinowski 1922 114, 125, 134, plates XXV–XXVIII (144–145); Malinowski 1932 22
- 114 10 above; Malinowski 1922 197, 206, 280; Gilmour 1905 72
- 115 Malinowski 1922 81, 351
- 116 Malinowski 1922 126–142, 206, 335–349, 360–361; Gilmour 1905 71
- 117 Malinowski 1918 87–92; Malinowski 1966 I plate 5 (facing 16)
- 118 E.g. Malinowski 1932 69, 111–112; Powell 1960 135
- 119 Powell 1960 132
- 120 Malinowski 1932 110
- 121 Cf. Uberoi 1971 159
- 122 Powell 1956 267–268, 270
- 123 Malinowski 1966 I 35; cf. Weiner 1976 229
- 124 Nilles 1950 37, 48–49; Read 1951 157, 162; Read 1952 5–16; Langness 1967 161–177; Langness 1974 189–210; Hogbin 1970 86–91, 95–99; Meggitt 1970 125–143; Strathern 1972 163–164, 169, 182; Weiner 1976 118
- 125 Cf. Mead 1940 350 (Arapesh, New Guinea)