

## SKETCH PLAN OF THE SUBJECT.

(1) The universal belief of the modern Gilbertese race is, that its forefathers came from Samoa: they grew on the branches of the ancestral Tree in Upolu, and lived in the land until the Tree was broken. When that catastrophe came upon them, they scattered wailing over the sea, to populate the whole world of islands. The adventures and the canoe-names of a few who reached the Gilbert Islands have been preserved.

The Samoan tradition emanates very clearly from the myths and legends exhibited in chapters ..... , and it must be thoroughly understood that these exhibits are but selected specimens of a huge mass of material indicating that Samoa was the last home of the race before it reached the Gilbert Islands. To have displayed all the versions available would have been a tedious piling up of tales already told. The Nonouti version at page ..., for example, is to be heard in a very similar form on eleven out of sixteen islands, while the Beru version at page ... may be heard, with but slight variations, on any one of half a dozen atolls of the Southern Gilberts.

For the sake of providing a check upon their authenticity, the different tales given have been ascribed to their actual islands and narrators, but there is not one of them that gives details peculiar to itself alone, except that curious account of Na-areau the Absolute at page ... And whether, like the Nonouti version, they have an almost universal support, or, like the Maiana chronicle, they are confined to a single family, they are all bound together by a unanimous doctrine - that Samoa, and Samoa alone, was the birthplace of the race.

(2) There are, indeed, preserved in these versions still a few faint memories of a remoter fatherland: such, for instance, as the opening phrase of the Tabiteuea myth at page ... ; "The First Tree was called Te Bakatibu Taai (The Ancestor Sun), and it stood on the land of Abatoa". But words of this sort, though pregnant with meaning for us, are repeated parrot-wise, without understanding, by modern native chroniclers, whose answer to all queries is, "We do not know what it means; we

learned it from our ancestors", or, at the most, "The lands before Samoa were slave lands and spirit lands". And following upon such digressions almost invariably comes an unqualified statement of the race-creed, "Samoa was the first human land; there grew our ancestors".

(3) But various remarks in the last chapter have exposed my view that the Gilbertese race was in the Gilbert Islands long before it ever reached Samoa; that ere it migrated to Upolu, it became a mixture of brown-skin and black-skin on the atolls of Micronesia. If this was so, then the planting of the ancestral Tree on Upolu was merely an invasion of Samoa from the north by this Taburi-mai - Na-areau folk; and the coming of the Tree-people from Samoa to the Gilbert Group was but a reflux along the invasion track. To show reason for such surmises will be partly the object of the chapters to follow; their whole scope is best suggested by setting forth, in barest outline, the movements of the Gilbertese race as I conceive them to have happened.

(4) The feuds and fusion of black and brown folk, referred to in the last chapter, took place at a median epoch of the people's traceable history. Looking back into the remoter past, we shall see a black people for centuries alone in its occupation of the Gilbert Islands - or, at least, of the northern half of the Group. Yet we shall be able to trace them to the West.

Sweeping down upon this people, also from the west, came a brown folk that, with a force perhaps not much greater than that of the Melanesian indigenes, contrived to win a foothold on the atolls. Then came the rivalries and bitteresses recorded in the Na-areau & Taburi-mai traditions.

The result of this strife, or, more probably, of the overpopulation caused by the amalgamation of the two races, was a general exodus southwards. Down the chain of central oceanic islands sailed a now mixed Taburi-mai - Na-areau folk, searching for new homes, until it came to Upolu of Samoa. There for a great while

they settled; long enough indeed for them to style themselves autochthones of the land; yet not for so long that they had forgotten the way back to their home in the atolls, for when their Tree on Upolu was shattered, and their families were dispersed, some of them were able to return on the old track and repopulate the Gilbert Group. But that was only after a struggle with their own ancestral kin, whose forefathers had not joined in the migration to Samoa.

Such, stripped of all detail, is the series of events in Gilbertese race history which I shall try to illustrate from the fragments of tradition wrung, in six years' delightful toil, from the islanders. Without pausing so early to comment upon its possible connections with general migration movements in the Pacific, I shall pass at once to an examination of the material collected, attempting to assign to each set of traditions its period of origin, and to indicate the inferences that may be drawn therefrom. In this task I shall be obliged to climb backwards into history, proceeding from the modern to the more and more remote, as a geologist with the earth's strata. The surface layer of Gilbertese history is evidently contained within a period lying between the present day and the date of its arrival from Samoa; the age of this layer is best determined by an enquiry into the island genealogies. This will be our first task.

Immediately below the surface layer lies the first substratum, containing traditions of the personages who led the migration or flight from Nuclear Polynesia to Micronesia; of the canoes in which they came; and of the events which attended their voyages and arrivals. These will next engage our attention.

Deeper again, and much more difficult of access, are traditions forming the second substratum, which concern the ancestral Tree of Samoa, its position, its destruction, its age. A study of these points will close our enquiry into the material grouped in chapters .... to ....., in so far as it points to Samoa as the home of the race. The final chapter of this section will be devoted to the collection of such fragmentary references to a pre-Samoan origin as are to be found in the lore of the modern race.

## THE STRATA OF GILBERTESE MYTH.

~~(1)~~ It is evident that the fragmentary theogonies given in the [preceding] Creation myths are composites of more than one system, and that the alternative traditions connected with the Land of Shades and the origin of Fire have been inherited from diverse sources. They have been stratified by the impingement of race on race, and the supersposition of the conqueror's creed upon that of the conquered.

The manner in which two systems blend, and the nature of the resultant stratification, depend upon the circumstances under which they have come into contact. The most complete and wholesale results are, no doubt, achieved by migration, followed by conquest or absorption of races; but striking innovations may be wrought in the religion of a people by accidents, of which history takes no cognisance. The arrival of some far-wandered castaway, who has a tale to tell or a trick of magic to display, may be responsible for the adoption of a new god or a series of new gods. This would be more especially possible in the Gilbert Islands, where priesthood is a purely family matter, and where the matriarchate seems to be so evenly balanced against the patriarchate. A castaway there would only need to take a wife, and teach her all his craft, for the new cult to be established. Their children, both male and female, would inherit and pass it on in their turn, thus launching it on its progress through the generations, as part of the ever-spreading family traditions, and the god or gods concerned would automatically take a place in the village pantheon; further they would follow the women-folk in their alliances with other families, and gradually permeate the race-tradition. This is strikingly illustrated in the Gilbert Group at the very moment of writing. A mere handful of Fijians, imported for constabulary purposes and married to Gilbertese wives, has already succeeded in establishing a new form of medicinal art, with its paraphernalia of magic and mumery, which bear in their train the usual array of deities and devils. One of the gods concerned has been allotted a role in the creation-drama by a chronicler of Abaiang island.

Again, under Mission influence, the persons of Ie-owa (Jehova) and ~~HEHEHEHEHE~~ Ietu-kirito (Jesus Christ) are beginning, even among pagan families, to rank among the deities of the creation myths, though no active parts are yet assigned to them - "They stood on a high place and looked on". But the name of Mary is already being confused, in villages of the North, with that of Titua<sup>h</sup>bine, the blonde ancestral goddess whose creature, the Giant Ray, is believed to have cut heaven and earth asunder. Here we have a curious glimpse at the vicissitudes of the gods, when they are bandied from system to system. Mary, by reason of a chance resemblance to an aboriginal deity, looms larger in her new setting than the Christian Father and Son, though all three were transposed at the same period.

Even the names of the Apostles figure in charms and incantations of modern growth. They are invoked by pagan natives in rites connected with house-building, navigation, agriculture, and even love-making. Given time and the apposite accidents of history, they would have every chance of ultimate promotion to a place in the Darkness and Cleaving Together - that waste-paper basket of beings whose antecedents are forgotten.

(2) So much for fortuitous accretions to island mythology. They are important because they can well prove misleading, by (achieving accidentally) a local salience out of proportion with their origins.

The most fruitful cause of stratification is certainly the war of conquest. A victorious invader in the Pacific is seldom accompanied by his women; therefore, although he may have reduced some aboriginal population to a state of serfdom or outlawry, wherein its traditions are in danger of obliteration, he must still depend upon it for his wives. These wives keep alive in the household of the conqueror many autochthonous rites, customs and traditions that would otherwise have suffered oblivion. This intra-mural process must necessarily be affected by the social relations of conqueror and conquered. If, as might happen on a large island, the beaten

aborigines retired to the interior, and a long period of feud preceded the ultimate fusion of the two peoples, the composite theology of the united folk would in after times reflect the ancestral hatred, and show some very distinct lines of cleavage. The gods of victors and vanquished would not dwell together in unity. The former would usurp the realms of heavenly space and light; the latter would be deposed therefrom and, perhaps, thrust into the infernal regions. A good illustration of both cases is to be found in the single person of Polynesian Tangaroa. In the Western Groups he is a son of Heaven, a sun-god, a lord of light, even light itself - in short, the god of a conquering race. In the eastern Groups he is a spirit of the underworld, a lord of darkness, an evil and fearsome being - the god of a race conquered indeed, but terrible still in conquest.

(3) But if the invasion of an island or group is followed, not by a long drawn feud, but by a more or less peaceful absorption of races, one into the other, the result is likely to be a confusion rather than a sharply defined stratification of theogonies. This is what would almost certainly happen in small islands like those of the Gilbert Group. On such atolls, devoid of geographical accidents, and having no interior to which a conquered race might flee, victor and vanquished must live cheek by jowl, and under such conditions it would take very few generations for the two peoples to interpermeate one another, while their theogonies would suffer a like fusion. As a result, the distinction between gods of heaven and the underworld would lack clearness; a medley of deities would rather be found, vaguely set in chaos, and mutually tinged so strongly, after centuries of association, with one another's colours, that it would be difficult to disengage them into their original groupings.

Yet there cannot exist a complete amity from the outset between two rival races brought thus into intimate contact; however complete the fusion of blood in after days, there must be an initial period of hate and intrigue, perhaps the more

bitter because of the confined space into which invader and invaded are crammed. Such rivalry would almost certainly become the subject of a race-tradition subsisting long after the amalgamation of the conflicting stocks, and an excellent example of it is to be seen in the Na-areau exploits [of Chapter .....

← THE NA-AREAU EXPLOITS.

← (4) In these tales, we have a clear-cut picture of the feuds carried on, up and down the Gilbert Islands, between two entirely distinct races: the one of stunted physique, black skin, strong odour, and wooly head, with huge ears and face "covered with scars", which is to say, cicatrized instead of tattooed - the typical Melanesian, terrible in war and skilled in the black arts; the other of great stature and fair skin, having the hair curly at the ends, and trained to stand high on the head - a Melano-Polynesian type, as it would seem.

In spite of a tendency, which the Gilbertese have in common with most Polynesian races, to confuse the geographical milieu of their ancient traditions, and to relate events as if they had happened locally, I think we need have no suspicion that these feud-stories were transported from some former home to Micronesia. The rivalry between black-skin and brown-skin, as respectively typified by Na<sup>A</sup>-areau and the people of Taburi<sup>A</sup>-mai, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ <sup>across</sup> in the Gilbert Islands, as its intimate association with local place-names alone suggests. Further, all the Gilbertese-speaking communities remember these ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ <sup>Na<sup>A</sup>-areau exploits</sup>, and all ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ <sup>are agreed as</sup> to the names of the particular islands on which the events took place.

[Material to be discussed in a later chapter shows] <sup>The narratives show</sup> clearly that black-skin Na<sup>A</sup>-areau was the original settler, while brown-skin Taburi<sup>A</sup>-mai was the intruder; and these are notable facts, for, in the ultimate blend of race theogonies and traditions, it is Na<sup>A</sup>-areau, the invaded, whose vile tricks upon the invaders are always successful. From this we are to gather that, though Taburi<sup>A</sup>-mai and his light-skinned companions were strong enough to force a footing on the islands, they eventually lost their pre-

ponderance, and were absorbed into the darker indigenes, whose creating spirit thus triumphed over that of the conquerors. Nevertheless, the balance of power could never have swung very violently from party to party, for though the creator of the black people reigned supreme, he reigned in a universe otherwise constructed on a Polynesian model: the Beginning was a darkness ( Bo ) and a cleaving together ( Maki ) of the elements, in true Maori style. Presuming this basic concept to belong to the races classified as Polynesian, it is safe to suppose that Taburī-mai the brown-skin and his people contributed it as their share of the confused cosmogony before us. Further, it was the paradise of the brown men that the amalgamated races eventually accepted, [as will appear more clearly in later chapters;] and it is Taburī-mai, Tabu-ariki and the like, who are now the objects of the ancestral cult from end to end of the Group. Why, then, should the black Na<sup>A</sup>-āreau reign supreme? The answer seems to be, that, the brown folk, having invaded the islands with a power sufficient to establish their religious system, were nevertheless at a later date forced to admit the ascendancy of the Na<sup>A</sup>-āreau people, whose god was then enthroned on the apex of the structure.

Such a process might have been caused by some local upheaval, which reversed the fortunes of the respective peoples; or it may have been brought about by the mere cramping of the two races into the narrow confines of the islands, and the importation of black wives into the households of the invaders.

Na Ubwebwē

← Na Ubwebwē TRADITIONS.

(5) That a black folk was once in subjection to a brown seems to be clearly shown by the Na Ubwebwē traditions, [at page ... in chapter ...] <sup>where</sup> we see a Na Ubwebwē portrayed as one of the bogeys who block the way of the departed souls to the land of Matang. Matang is palpably a paradise of the brown men, for it is inhabited by the blonde Titua<sup>a</sup>-bine, whose fathers were Tangarua and Timirau, well-known as

Gilbertese Timirau is better known as Mangaian Timirau. The characteristics of his home Motu-tapu, or Sacred Isle, in Mangaian myth, are the same as those of Gilbertese Matang: it sinks and floats as the god wills; but in the Gilbertese tales, his daughter Titua<sup>a</sup>-bine usurps his supremacy.



fair-skins throughout Polynesia. <sup>na u</sup> ~~Naubwebwe~~, on the other hand, is an old black man, evidently no relation of the beings in Matang. His look is slavish; his occupation of cleaning up rubbish on the road is that of a slave; he grins and grimaces like an idiot - or a slave, for the word rang applied to him in the context has both significations in Gilbertese; and he is dumb - the first mark of slavery in the estimation of the islanders. Yet evidences of a former greatness still cling about him: his art is the wau, or cat<sup>3</sup>cradle, of which he is the presiding deity, and in the changing patterns of the wau, as old men assert, an expert could portray the successive stages of creation. By his cat<sup>3</sup>cradles, then, we may connect <sup>na u</sup> ~~Naubwebwe~~ with some forgotten creation-myth, and it is quite possible that we have in him the creating spirit (or the high priest of a creating spirit) of a black people, flung into Hades and branded with slavery by the brown Matang-race. Evidently of the same complexion, and probably of the same obliterate theogony, as <sup>na u</sup> ~~Naubwebwe~~ are those dark-skinned, huge-eared, red-eyed, and cannibalistic hags, who collaborate with him in barring the soul's progress to Paradise.

Turning now from the account of the spirit <sup>na u</sup> ~~Naubwebwe~~ to that of the man, or rather the eponymous clan [- Naubwebwe, at pp. ... and ...], we see him first pictured as the uncouth slave of the king of Tarawa, burning his fingers at the cooking fire ( a menial post ), and getting his head broken for his pains. This is very much in keeping with the colour in which the <sup>na u</sup> ~~Naubwebwe~~ <sup>logey</sup> is painted in the Matang-myth; the condition of a god reflects the fate of his people.

But eventually, as the story shows, <sup>na u</sup> ~~Naubwebwe~~ made a lucky marriage, and with the help of his sons threw off the yoke of serfdom; he fled from island to island, relentlessly chased by his masters, until at last, on the island of Tabiteuea, the latter "no longer persecuted them", for the erstwhile slave and his sons "were very strong, and their family was mighty on Tabiteuea. So it is until this day". It would be very pertinent if we could now show the god of the <sup>na u</sup> ~~Naubwebwe~~

folk elevated, by this reversal <sup>in the</sup> ~~of his~~ <sup>of his sponsors),</sup> fortunes (into a position of honour in the Gilbertese pantheon. But we cannot: first, because the successes of the clan were not of a scope far-reaching enough to affect the religious system of the Gilbertese race; and secondly, because the gods of Niwanoa, with whom <sup>Na U</sup> ~~Na U~~ <sup>Na U</sup> ~~Na U~~ made his fortunate alliance, are those which their descendants have adopted. Nevertheless, in Na<sup>A</sup>areau himself, the supreme, I apprehend that we see the god of a people to whom the <sup>Na U</sup> ~~Na U~~ <sup>Na U</sup> ~~Na U~~ clan was originally <sup>related</sup> ~~related~~. His ascendancy, and the amalgamation of the black and brown races in the Group, had been accomplished at a date much earlier than the Niwanoa-<sup>Na U</sup> ~~Na U~~ <sup>Na U</sup> ~~Na U~~ alliance, which happened [(as we shall see later)] in about 1250 A.D; but to just such turnings of the table between the conflicting peoples as those now under discussion, I think we may attribute the pre-eminence of Na<sup>A</sup>areau.

The <sup>Na U</sup> ~~Na U~~ <sup>Na U</sup> ~~Na U~~ clan was, as I believe, a fraction of the black Na<sup>A</sup>areau race, which had been reduced to slavery early in the struggle between autochthone and invader, and therefore had not taken part in the fusion of the two stocks. Thus, it remained of pure blood, and in subjection to the kings of Tarawa, until an alliance with the Niwanoa clan from Samoa gave it power, in the 13th century, to break its bonds, and establish itself eventually on the island of Tabiteuea.

#### ← THE FOOLS AND DEAF MUTES (BA/BA MA BONO).

~~(2)~~ A most interesting litter of personalities is the Company of Fools and Deaf-mutes, who, in nearly every creation story of the Group, are said to have been Na<sup>A</sup>areau's assistants or slave spirits in the lifting of heaven. Their confusion forms a notable commentary on the postulate that inter-permeation rather than stratification of theogonies takes place when two alien races are cribbed together within very narrow areas.

Sandwiched between heaven and earth in the first darkness lie the Ba/ma Bono, huddled, as it were, into that convenient limbo without respect for colour or association. Some are plainly related to the brown-skins, others as clearly to

the dark race. Several have the rage of a former prestige still clinging to them, but of the vast majority all distinguishing features save the bare names have been swallowed up in forgetfulness. Their names are literally legion - hundreds are known to the native historians of the Group; but dark or fair, obscure or distinguished in the parts they are said to have played in creation, they are united by a common brand: they were slaves; they were senseless and inert in their dark places between heaven and earth until their master Na<sup>A</sup>ra<sup>A</sup>ou bade them arise and do his work.

*Mi* The commonest form of tale in which one hears of the Fools and Deaf-mutes is exemplified by the Nonouti creation myth. ~~According~~ According to this typical account, they were not created by Na<sup>A</sup>ra<sup>A</sup>ou, but found asleep by him when he entered between heaven and earth. Their position reminds us at once of the children of Rangi and Papa in the Maori myth, and it is very interesting to note that the epithets applied to them by Na<sup>A</sup>ra<sup>A</sup>ou are precisely Rang and Baba. These words, in modern Gilbertese, mean respectively mad ( or slavish ) and foolish. The inference is, that the names of Rangi the Clear Sky and Papa the Earth Mother have fallen into such contempt with this race that they are now only applied to slaves, madmen or idiots<sup>s</sup> and this seems to point to the subjugation of a Rangi and Papa people at some remote period in the history of one ancestral branch of our islanders. Some faint reminiscence of the grief of Rangi and Papa when separated seems still to lurk <sup>a song of Na Arau,</sup> in ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~story~~ <sup>story</sup> [at page ...] of which the opening words are, "Hark, hark! How it groans".

*Ma* <sup>A</sup> The curious Haisua account of creation [at page ...] which goes nearer to an idea of an absolute Na<sup>A</sup>ra<sup>A</sup>ou than any other version, shows us how the Fools and Deaf-mutes were made from saggots by the creator. The same idea is presented in one

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I think that many of these names are late additions, the imagination and ingenuity of the chroniclers having been applied to the devising of apposite or humorous titles: e.g. Ko-ba - You eructate; Ko-ting - You pass wind; Ten Kaminimin - Mr. Masturbator; and so on. It is, however, possibly significant that these beings with highly indecent names are all reputed to have been black.

of Turner's Suman tales, of how men and women grew from maggots on the creeper planted by Turu, daughter of the heavenly Tangaloa.

~~197~~ Accounts of the Baqba na Bono become confusing in the creation myths remaining for reference. ~~The~~ <sup>A</sup> Beru version [at page ...] makes no mention of them in its rough prefatory cosmology, but places Riiki the Eel, who by all other records was the chief of their number, under the Tree of Abatea as Na<sup>A</sup>preau's earliest ancestor.

In an equally rude cosmology constructed on Polynesian lines, <sup>a</sup> the second Beru version [at page ...] descends the Baqba na Bono from Sand and Water in two successive generations. The elder generation consists of Riiki the Eel, Tabakea the Turtle, two Sting Rays, and an unnamed multitude of others. These are born without sexes, but their senior brother and sister, Na<sup>A</sup>ttibu and Te<sup>A</sup>akea (who are not Deaf-mutes), beget a second generation consisting of Te<sup>I</sup>akawai (The Eldest), Nei Marona (The woman between), Te<sup>N</sup>ao (The Wave), and Na<sup>K</sup>kika (The Octopus), who also remain senseless until raised by Na<sup>A</sup>preau the Younger. The most important of these will now be discussed.

#### NA<sup>A</sup>TIBU and TE<sup>A</sup>AKEA.

(10) Evidently in the account of Na<sup>A</sup>ttibu and his wife Te<sup>A</sup>akea we have a form of the eastern Polynesian myth of Vatea, the noon-day god, whose name is also variously rendered Avatea, Atea and Wakea, according to dialect, and of <sup>whom</sup> the right eye is Sun and the left Moon. But a curious transposition has taken place in the Gilbertese tradition: Na<sup>A</sup>ttibu's eyes make the luminaries, while Vatea, under the name Akea, becomes his sister-wife.

In <sup>another</sup> ~~a~~ myth [exhibited farther on,] we shall <sup>find</sup> ~~see~~ that <sup>the</sup> Sun and Moon are believed by some to have been made from a Sting Ray's eyes, and this concatenates that fish and Vatea for us. Now the Sting Ray in Gilbertese story is essentially the creature of Titu<sup>A</sup>ttibine the blonde, and she was the daughter of <sup>one</sup> ~~a~~ Titirau and Tangarua. Turning to Mangaiian myth, we learn that <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ Titirau was the younger brother of Vatea.

We can hardly avoid the inference that there must have existed a close

relation between Gilbertese Titua<sup>h</sup>+bine and Polynesian Akea, Vatea, Atea, or Wakea. And as Titua<sup>h</sup>+bine and Timirau are the centre of the fair-haired and fair-skinned group of beings, we would attach Akea to the same company, and conjecture that the ideas connected with this personality were a legacy to Gilbertese myth from the brown-skinned folk.

It is worth pointing out that our account invests the persons of Akea and Na<sup>A</sup>+tibu with a particular dignity. They are not classed as Fools and Deaf-mutes; they were the only children of Water and Sand who had senses at birth. They profit by the peculiar prestige of the fair-skinned deities. But it seems probable that Akea as a god was already on the decline when the mythologies of brown and black folk blended, being overshadowed by Titua<sup>h</sup>+bine, the most venerated ancestral deity of the brown race, who has plainly also superseded Timirau, her so-called father, in the sovereignty of Motu-tapu the Sacred Isle or, as it is called by the Gilbertese, Matang.

I think it probable that the brown skinned invaders of the Gilbert Islands arrived with only Akea and Titua<sup>h</sup>+bine in the fair-skinned department of their pantheon; the former as a vague memory, the latter as their most glorious goddess. Timirau was not yet included. Percy Smith seems to show that Timirau (or Tinirau) was an historical personage, who flourished circa 450 A.D., and lived for a time on Upolu. In the view of that great Polynesian scholar, it may have been Timirau's connection with a famous fishpond on Upolu which caused him, when later he came to be deified, to be called King-of-all-fish. But Titua<sup>h</sup>+bine is also called Queen-of-all-fish in the Gilbert Islands; and in view of two further coincidences - the similarity of Timirau's Sacred Isle and Titua<sup>h</sup>+bine's Isle of Matang, and the reputed fairness of skin distinguishing each alike - it seems to me that Timirau's miraculous attributes were inherited by him from no local sources in Polynesia, but from the same ancient race-memory whence Titua<sup>h</sup>+bine derived here. It will appear later

that the race memory of Matang, at least, can be traced back to Indonesia.

When the brown invaders of the Gilbert Group had amalgamated with the black autochthones, they migrated to Samoa, where they will be shown to have stayed for a very long time. There most probably they absorbed the Tinirau tradition, the more easily because of the similarity of its salient features with those of their Akua (Vatea) - Titua<sup>u</sup>+bine records; thus we account for the god's residence in the Isle of Matang, and his position as father or uncle, but still the subject, of the glorious Titua<sup>u</sup>+bine.

#### NA+KIKI THE OCTOPUS.

(11) I cannot with certainty place Na+Kiki. In the Gilbert Group, he is still associated with a white shell (one of the Oyprasa<sup>acac</sup>) used for personal adornment and for garnishing the ridge-poles of houses. This shell is said to ward off evil fortune. In Samoa, the Fe'e or Octopus was a village god of eminence, also connected with a white shell (*Oyprasa ovula*), which was suspended in the house of the priest, according to Turner. If through this link we are to identify Na+Kiki with the Fe'e of Samoa, we have in him a very ancient Polynesian deity, because, rightly or wrongly, the Samoans connect the Octopus god with those archaic megalithic remains on Upolu called he fale o le fe'e, the House of the octopus. But even if this be so, I am inclined to think that Na+Kiki is a deity borrowed from the Samoans during the sojourn of the Gilbertese ancestors on Upolu, because there appears to be no genealogical connection between him and any of the families at present in the Gilbert Islands.

#### TABAKEA THE TURTLE.

(12) Tabakea may almost certainly be classed as one of the chief gods of the black race. It will be convenient to discuss his personality later, in conjunction with that of Na<sup>areau</sup>areau, for anything that may be said as to the origin of the dark-skinned people who first populated the Gilbert Islands will be supported by facts

from the history of <sup>these two</sup> these characters. Tabakea figures rather largely in our texts: he appears in two myths as the originator of the fire-sticks [pp ... and ...]; he is mentioned generally up and down the Group as one of the Fools and Deaf-mutes; he is known as the patron of several forms of divination, formerly much used; and again, by a widespread tradition, reflected in <sup>a</sup> the Butacitani myth [at page ...], he is reputed still to haunt the eastern shore of every island, where the souls of all dead men come to him to be directed to the land of shades. His name is attached to many island land-marks, especially to rocks and stones of more than usual size, which predisposes one to believe that his people were early settlers. In the history of the ancestor Te-mamang [at page ...] we have a pertinent support to such a belief: the tale begins, "The man Nange and the woman Hiaua grew on the island of Beru; they had been there for all time, for they were not of the Samoan breed". The grandchild of these aboriginal inhabitants was the ancestor Te-mamang; to find a name for whom, his parents took him to the various gods of the sea-shore in turn, until they came to Tabakea on the northern tip of Beru.

Tabakea was clearly, therefore, a god of the earliest known inhabitants of the islands. We have seen in one fire myth, and shall see later in many another tradition, that he was called the father of <sup>A</sup> Natireau. I think we may be fairly certain that he was a god of the dark-skinned folk, which is all that need be shown at present.

#### RIKI THE EEL.

~~Now~~ The evidence that we have of Riki the Eel seems to show that he was an ancestral god of the dark race, but I would not care to dogmatise on this. There are hosts of major and minor eel gods all over the Pacific. From Turner's account of Samoa we gather that many village deities, quite unrelated to one another, were associated with this creature, whose widespread cult among the islanders is not surprising: ~~that is because~~ <sup>as a</sup> ~~that they~~ <sup>they</sup> were sea-faring folk ~~and~~ could hardly fail to be

expressed by the qualities of the Pacific conger.

Riiki's affinities with Polynesia are rather vague, but as the lifter of heaven he seems to have some relationship with the eel god of Samoa called Fuai Langi, the Beginner of Heaven. In Ru, the sky supporter of Mangaian myth, there are also some faint reminiscences of his personality. Ru dwelt in Avaiki, the ancestral homeland, and he was the father of Maui. Riiki dwelt in the First Land under the First Tree, and was the ancestor of Na<sup>A</sup>areau. Between the characters of Na<sup>A</sup>areau and Maui, as also between some of their exploits, we shall later observe some remarkable similarities. This, then, is the first affinity between Ru and Riiki. In the myth of Manahiki, Ru and Maui raised the sky by lying, kneeling standing, and pushing with their arms in succession, and this reminds us of the Nonouti account of the lifting of heaven, in which Riiki played so large a part. Maui flung Ru into the sky: Naareau did the same for Riiki. It seems just possible that in the Riiki-Na<sup>A</sup>areau stories we have a set of traditions derived from the same source as the Ru-Maui tales.

~~And~~ North of the Gilbert Group, in the Marshall Islands, there is a belief that the worm Ullip enlarged the vault of heaven by pushing it with sticks; from a swelling in his brow was then born a progeny of star-gods. The form of Ullip the Worm is analogous to that of Riiki the Eel; his instrument for expanding heaven is reminiscent of the beam used by the Foole and Deaf-mutes, according to the Nonouti account; while the birth of his sons from a swelling in the brow is the same as that of Na<sup>A</sup>areau from Tabakea's forehead in the firemyth and other tales. Lastly, Ullip was the father of star-gods; Riiki's body became the Milky Way.

See Beruan creation myth, page ...

See P. Erdland, Die Marshall Inseln, p ...

Page ...

Page ....

Op. also the birth of Tangaroa from a boil in Paps's arm, in Mangaian myth.



But the most considerable information about Ri/ki comes from the Gilbert Group. His name, like that of Tabaka, is attached to many landmarks, which argues, as I believe, a very ancient association with the place. On Beru, Nikmesu and Aranuka are famous fish and eel ponds, of natural configuration, reputed to have been made by Ri/ki's convulsions on falling from heaven. The island of Tarawa is said to have been cut up by him into its numerous component islets when, his work of lifting the skies completed, he wriggled back to the sea; and another tradition relates how, when his task was finished, "he fell slanting, as a coconut tree" and, lying in the ocean, solidified, to become the island of Nikunau.

There is a notable reference to this ancestral being, or his clans, in the opening words of <sup>a</sup>the Beru tale: [at page ...] "When Nat<sup>b</sup>areau had begotten children on the Woman of the South, he went over the ocean and lay with ..... the Woman of the North; and he begot children on her, a slavish breed, Taburimai and Ri/ki, the children of the northern Woman". The tale, it must be remembered, is told by

a modern Gilbertese race whose forefathers were so long on Samoa that they believed themselves autochthons of that land. It is somewhat startling, therefore, to hear from them, a Taburimai folk, that there was another Taburimai in the North, who with Ri/ki shared the brand of slavery. [In my submission this means I hope to show later that it means] that the Taburimai folk of the North were the ancestors of the Taburimai folk who went to Samoa: when the latter were driven out of Upolu, they returned to the Gilbert Islands, fought with their own ancestral kin, enslaved them, and thus stigmatised them in subsequent traditions with a servile name.

The coupling together of Taburimai's and Ri/ki's names in the text is significant: each represents a people. Taburimai was of one racial type, Ri/ki of another - in fact, of the dark-skinned folk who produced Nat<sup>a</sup>areau and <sup>Na U</sup>Lawewe. We seem to find some confirmation of this conjecture in the cosmology introducing the Beru myth [at page ...], which sets Ri/ki under the first ancestral tree on the

land of Abatoa, and names him as the lineal ancestor of Na<sup>A</sup>areau. Taken in conjunction with the suggestion of the Tabiteuean version [at page ...] which descends Na<sup>A</sup>areau from Nano-kai and Nano-maka, the two great eels, it affords reasonable grounds for believing that Riiki the Eel was an ancestral god of the ~~Melanesians~~ dark-skinned race, and possibly a submerged creating spirit of the Na<sup>A</sup>areau clans.

Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the brown people of Taburi<sup>A</sup>mai did not arrive from Indonesia as a pure race; from the description of their physique already commented upon, it is plain that they had a good deal of the Melanesian in them, and therefore their pantheon must have contained an element of dark gods before the intrusion of the Na<sup>A</sup>areau-Tabakea deities. It is possible that Riiki was one of these. If he was, he must have had some affinities with the new gods with whom he came in contact - a likeness of complexion, certainly; a common origin, perhaps - because in the mixture of systems now before us he seems, by his own essential characteristics, to ally himself with the dark-skins.

~~Now~~ From the chaos of the Darkness and the Gleaming together, we have thus in a cursory fashion attempted to allocate to their respective peoples two groups of gods. The Akea-Titua<sup>A</sup>bina-Tangaroa class belongs unquestionably to the brown Taburi<sup>A</sup>mai race, and is essentially Polynesian in character; the Tabakea-~~Na<sup>A</sup>areau~~ Riiki element appears to go to the Melanesians. Of the many Foole and Uof-mites mentioned ~~by name~~ through the Group, some are called plainly be-rora, black, while others are said to have been ura-ura, red or brown. Everything in our evidence goes to show that these colours were characteristic of the races to whom they belonged. If it has not appeared clearly as yet, that black man and brown man did indeed meet, and fight, and ultimately mingle on the islands of the Gilbert Group. [I think that proof of this will not be lacking in later chapters.]