

This material concerning the maneaba and its social divisions is now put together in a literary form in order to collate the various fragments of evidence collected from all islands. It is to be dissected and redistributed in the final compilation, under such sections as Sun-cult, Social organisation, etc.

## The Maneaba.

(a). General. The importance of the maneaba in the life of a Gilbertese community could not escape the most casual observer. This great thatched edifice is patently the focus of social life in every village. It is the meeting house where two, or twenty, or two hundred villagers will naturally foregather to discuss any sort of project; it is the common ground where the conflicting interests of individual households, or factions are debated and arbitrated; it is the dancing-lodge, the amusement-hall, the news-market of the community; and it is the resort of the aged men and women of the race, who daily repair to that sanctuary of peaceful gloom, and there, each seated on his mat with fly-whisk busily flicking, exchange in interminable mumbles their reminiscences of a bygone day.

This is all on the surface. As evidence of the general & social importance of the maneaba, it is not misleading; but as an indication of the special uses of the edifice in past days it is deceptive and inadequate. The gradual decay of native custom, and its generalisation, under the influence of foreign ideas for the last thirty years, is responsible for a change in the maneabas "centre of gravity". While it has gained in breadth of meaning to the modern native, it has lost in depth of special significance. For example, its application to modern uses has enhanced its character of convenience, and reduced almost to nothing its sacred quality. Employed nowadays as an amusement-hall, where crowds of noisy youngsters sit down to cards or skittles, it is robbed of that awe, which not long ago inhibited all loud-voiced talking under the venerable roof. In these modern times, children of all ages run shouting in bands in and out of the building, at any hour of the day; in the old

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I use the term village here to mean any settlement of households concentrated by the government since 1892. But a more exact definition will be formulated in a later chapter.

days, it was unthinkable that a child of any age under puberty should be allowed to set foot even upon the marae, or shingled open space, which surrounded the maneaba. E rawa te maneaba ni matauninga irouia ataei ---"the maneaba refuses to be offended by children", was the expression used by seniors: for all shouting, all unseemly behaviour, every attitude or word that was not marked by decency and decorum, was considered a cause of offence to the edifice, and a danger to the community at large, upon whom some misfortune would fall if the dignity of the maneaba suffered through their negligence.

The maneaba was indeed an assembly room and, in some sense, an amusement-hall before the government; but the assemblies and amusements held therein were of a most formal character, ordained not carelessly for a few people, on a light occasion, but after debate by the senior men, for the whole community of adults, and for some motive that touched the social life of an important group of people. Nne-n te taeka ma te Kimaareirei ae Kakannato te maneaba ----"the maneaba is the container of exalted words and amusements". Games having a definite social significance such as the Katikiao, performed when an important man's daughter had reached the age of puberty, were fit to be shown in the maneaba; feasts at a birth, a marriage, or a death were held there, as were also debates on war or peace; and there would take place any discussions concerning the interests of individuals or groups, which threatened to become troublesome to the community. In the maneaba too would be considered matters of general interest, such as the preparations for a harvest of coconuts or pandanus fruit or the steps to be taken on the stranding of a shoal of porpoise---a most prized delicacy --- on the foreshores of the district. And all these amusements, feasts and debates were conducted in accordance with a fixed and rigid ceremonial. There was only one side, the West, from which the building might be entered. There was a first speaker and a second speaker; there was a hereditary blower of the ~~oo~~ conch that called the assembly; a divider of the feast; a carrier of portions, and so on.

All these duties and privileges were the sacred inheritances of the various social groups which took their seats in the maneaba. Any man who assumed a function that did not belong to his group was believed to be liable to sudden and mortal sickness: the maneaba was matauninga (offended) with him; he was maraia (accursed); he would die before the moon changed.

Everything therefore that took place in the maneaba was subject to the strictist ceremonial rules, under the most definite religious sanctions; and everything that carried with it an informal atmosphere, such as the sports of wrestling, of hide-and-seek, or other games of their nature, was banned from those precincts. It may be said that only such acts as lent themselves to a solemn ritual, and possessed a definite social significance were permissible in the maneaba. And in this narrow sense alone can the building be described as a social hall.

A few remnants of the respect once paid to the maneaba are still to be discovered. A child kicking the kerb of coral, that is set up under the eaves, is reproved by its parents. "Don't offend the maneaba. You will fall sick and die". And not many natives would yet dare to strike with stick or hand any of the posts that support the roof, for fear of the same fate. In the days before the government, if a man were seen to lift his hand against any part of the edifice, it was the duty of all bystanders to thrash him and trample him underfoot. If they failed to perform this duty, they would be considered accessory to the sacrilege, and subject to any misfortune that might result from it. Even were the offender beaten to death, his relations would not dare to object; for it was believed that even had the dead man been suffered to live by his assailants, he would in any case most probably have died later on as a result of his crime.

On most islands of the group there is at least one maneaba used as a barge or common sanctuary, where any man beaten in battle may be safe from his enemies. No aggressor would dare to violate such sanctuary, the belief having been that should he

so outrage the peace of the place his skin would be stricken with tumid swellings. (te rabarabataki) and he would die in pain.

But it is to be observed that the buildings around such a maneaba generally shared this character of inviolability, and even for a man to stand on the ground in their neighbourhood was enough to save him from his persuers. Further, there are ~~in~~ many plots of land in the Gilberts, whereon neither house nor maneaba ever stood, which were common sanctuaries in past times. For these reasons it seems probable that maneabas, which came to be recognized as refuges, acquired their inviolability, not as a result of their own special sanctity, but ~~assa~~ consequence of some tradition connected with the ground on which they stood. On the islands of Butaritari, Abaiang and Abemama, where there were dynasties of High Chiefs, it is certain that extraneous circumstances did actuate the conversion of particular maneabas into refuges for the persued; for on those islands it was always the High Chief's maneaba that served as the asylum; and it acquired this character not because of its inherently sacred character as a building but because it belonged to the Chief, whose peace and clemency must, in theory, be as a covering to all men.

Nevertheless, any and every maneaba was in a more limited sense a sanctuary. Among people of the same settlement, who shared the same maneaba, no violence must be done within the ~~re~~ reverend precincts (with the exception, of course, of such violence as might be visited on an offender against the building itself). And so, if matter of bitter dispute arose within that community, a man or woman in fear of injury might take refuge there. Advantage was often taken of this protection by children who stubbornly set their face against a marriage planned by their parents, and feared the evil (even to the point of being beaten to death) that might result. Wives of jealous husbands would also often escape harm by remaining in the maneaba until their lord's anger was abated. For whatever the strength of the ~~no~~ motive that might incite a man to violence, his awe of the maneaba would certainly inhibit him.

On the islands of Marakei, Abaiang, Maiana, Beru, and Tabiteuea, this duty of seemly and reverential deportment towards the building is explained by Old Men in a single phrase: "Iai Taai i nanon te Maneaba".<sup>x</sup> On Marakei a variant was given by the old man Taakeuta, who said, "Bon roki-n Taai ma Namakaina te Maneaba" --- "The maneaba is indeed the screened enclosure of Sun and Moon". In other words, the maneaba is the House of the Sun, according to the majority; and of the moon as well, according to the report of a single authority. It was believed that all sanctions that might ensue upon an act of disrespect against the structure, were visited upon the offender direct from the Sun himself, who pierced the navel of his victim with fire.

In view of the researches that are being continually being made into the sun-cults of Oceania, and of the only partial success with which they are crowned, this is a vitally interesting series of beliefs. It would be sufficiently arresting if it stood alone, but it is far from being the only evidence connecting the maneaba with the Sun. In the ceremonial and magic used during the construction of this building, which I shall exhibit a little later, we have direct evidence of a most indubitable nature associating it with the Sun. There seems to be little room for doubt that the maneaba, as an original part of the culture of the Gilbertese forebears, was a temple, and a temple of the Sun. Later, it will be my duty, on the evidence brought, to justify such a hypothesis.

(b). Various types of Maneaba.

The usual type of maneaba now seen in the Gilbertese villages is a building, whose breadth is rather less than half its length, having a height not quite equal to its breadth. It consists of an enormous thatch, with gable ends, supported on studs of coral rock from three to five feet high. The eaves come down to within two or three feet of the ground, so that a man has to bend in order to enter the building. The ridge pole

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"There is Sun in the Maneaba".

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is supported by a row of posts running down the centre of the building, (the middle of the interior). In a large maneaba, the rafters are also supported half-way up their length by a beam raised on a row of shorter posts.

In pre-Government days the gables of this building were invariably North and South, the long sides being thus to East and West: no other orientation was ever used. Nowadays, the Government having concentrated the villages along the lagoon shores, the orientation of the edifice varies according to locality. Frequently, indeed, the North-South position is possible, as the islands themselves lie as a rule roughly North and South, with lagoons to westward; maneabas must needs lie East and West in order to follow the line of their villages where the end of the land curves westward. Nevertheless, I shall hereafter speak as if the building was always in its ancient orientation.

Though the usual ratio of breadth to length in the maneaba now seen is roughly as 1 to 2, there was more diversity in the old days. There were three chief styles, each having its own name, and each distinguished by the proportion of its breadth to its length. They were as follows:-

- (1). Tabiang, the narrowest, about half as broad as it was long.
- (2). Maungatabu, with a breadth about three quarters of its length.
- (3). Tabontebike, foursquare, with a "hip" roof, not conical.

It is said that in Beru were built the first three maneabas of historical times, by the newly arrived conquerors from Samoa, some 20 generations ago. Before that date, the inhabitants of the Gilbert Islands had "other sorts of maneaba". Tradition leaves no doubt that the Samoan invasion also affected many other islands beside Beru, but history is silent concerning the maneabas built by the conquerors on them. It was the wholesale conquest of the Group, from Arorae in the South to Marakei in the North, some eight or nine generations afterwards by Beru warriors, which led to the obliteration of most other

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names and styles that may have existed elsewhere, and to the establishment of the three Beru styles now known.

There were, however, three islands of the Group which were left untouched by the Beru warriors, namely Butaritari, Makin, and Banaba, and on these we should expect to find variant types. It is quite certain that the Banaban maneaba had characteristics differing from the Beru styles, although the differences were not so much of construction as of internal economy. But there is not now living a single Banaban native who can give an intelligible account of the maneaba used on this island in the old days. On Butaritari and Makin, though the modern native is now much influenced by traffic with other islands, it is still remembered that the ancient maneaba was a Maungatabu building with a "hip" roof, not a conical thatch, and was called Makua-n-te-rara, the "high tide of blood". Further allusion will be made to this style later on.

The maneabas of Beru were classified not only according to the ratio borne by breadth to length; there were also nine different styles of roof, differentiated solely by the height of their pitch. Of these the lowest was called \_\_\_\_\_, and the rest, in ascending order of height Tokaboua, Tokamamao, Ngaoniio, \_\_\_\_\_, Teietaa, Tabera-n-te-Kai, and Kariamatang respectively. The correct allocation of a maneaba to its particular class is therefore effected by an association of the term connoting its pitch of roof with the name connoting the proportion of its breadth to its length. Thus, the narrowest style of maneaba with the highest type of roof would be called Tabiang-Kariaamatang, and so on.

(c). The maneaba as an index to social groupings.

A survey of Gilbertese social organisation outside the maneaba would lead us to the conclusion that the utu, consisting of blood relations on both the father's and mother's side, is ~~the~~ the unique basis of the structure. Within this group, though inheritance and succession are clearly dominated by patrilineal ideas, an examination of the functional aspects of relationship seems to indicate a development upon which the preponderent



influence has been patrilineal.

In the utu therefore, we have a distinct compromise between the elements of mother-right and father-right. We shall find very little of such a compromise in the social groupings connected with the maneaba. These groupings, which evidence will show to be underlaid by the idea of descent from the totem, are unmistakably controlled by the patrilineal idea.

If one frequents the maneaba, to talk to the old people who are always to be found there, a few visits acquaint one with the fact that the same man always sits in the same part of the building. It was the physical inconvenience of this that first brought the circumstance to my attention. It seemed strangely inconsistent that a few old men, repairing to the maneaba apparently for the sake of companionship, should separate at entrance and habitually assume seats in positions so widely sundered that conversation became difficult or impossible. What stimulated my earliest questions was to observe, on the island of Onotoa, that a particular elder well-known to me would regularly take his place within a few feet of an especial enemy, while his ingoa (namesake), and therefore sworn friend, just as regularly sat at a distance of twenty yards from him.

It was explained that these old men were sitting in their boti, the hereditary sitting rooms of their fathers and fathers fathers, under the prescribed inaki<sup>1</sup> (thatch-rows) of the maneaba. And it appeared that to sit in any other place would be to court sickness and death.

It was unquestionably as mne-n te boti, "the container of the sitting-places", that the maneaba was most vitally significant to the Gilbertese people. Far more than a place of social festivities or a hall of debate, it was a tabernacle of the ancestors in the male line; a sort of social map, where a mans group or clan could be recognised the moment he took his seat,

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<sup>1</sup> The inaki is a single file of thatch, laid in ascending order from the eaves to the ridge of the roof.

his totem and his ascendants known, and his ceremonial duties or privileges discovered.

There is still plenty of information available as to the distribution of the boti. This is one of the branches of knowledge still valued by modern generations, for it is found to be extremely useful in inter-island travel. A native having no near relations on an island where he is on visit, will go to the nearest maneaba and sit in his ancestral room. There he will continue to seat himself daily, until the local members of that boti "lift up the word to him", Then, the following conversation will take place:-

"Sir, whence come you?"

"I come from such and such an island."

"Where are you sitting?"

"I am sitting in such and such a boti."

"Why do you do that?"

"It is our boti."

"Whose boti?"

"My father's and my grandfather's".

"Who is your father".

"So and so".

"Aia". ~~Another silence, and then,~~ (Equivalent to Ah yes, I see).

After a silence, the questionaire proceeds:-

"Perhaps this is not your father's boti."

"Sir, it is indeed my father's boti."

"Aia." Another silence, and then,

"For what was the origin ~~of~~ (riki) of your of your father?"

"So and so was his ancestor."

"Ana-ia (take it up), for we listen."

Then the stranger must tell the tale of his father's generations back to the common ancestor of the boti while his audience gravely attends. Having satisfied them that he has not committed the offence of trespass upon their sitting-room, he is accepted as

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Note. Translation of an actual conversation noted. I accompanied the interrogators when they "lifted the word" to a new arrival.

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tari-ia, their brother, for the duration of his stay on the island; very often, a married couple of riper years, one of whom is a member of the boti, will appoint itself its Karo (parents) and may make him a member of the household. In any case, having established his group membership, he will be fed by his clansmen until he leaves, and probably provided with a respectable present of money at departure.

So keenly were the obligations of boti-relationship felt in past days, that islanders would strip their plantations and empty their babai pits for visiting clansmen from other atolls rather than risk the reproach of having failed in the duty of Karokaro. This spirit is still very strong in the race. Such is the pauperising effect of the native's lavish bounty under its dictates, that the Government has found it necessary to make special regulations for the curtailment of inter-island visits.

It is the utility of the institution, no doubt, which has caused it to resist better than others the inroads of civilisation. Its persistence makes it a fairly easy task on most islands to find the positions of the various boti in the maneaba. These may be far more clearly indicated in a sketch-plan than in words.

(Insert plan).

In this diagram, the shaded margin represents the overhang of the eaves outside the building. The **short strokes crossing the margin are the ends of the rafters projecting over the roof-plates.** The roof-plates themselves are indicated by the straight inner lines of the margin, the small rectangles over which these pass being the studs of coral rock upon which they rest.

It will be noted that some of the studs have names. That in the middle of the East side is called Taai--- the Sun; directly opposite which, in the West side, is Namakaina--- the Moon. At the South-east corner is Nei Tituaabine, who was one of the chief goddesses of the

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Karokaro. Karo in the North Gilberts is collective, meaning parents; in the South Gilberts it is masculine and *faivaiva*/ singular, meaning father. It is used in the latter sense indifferently with the term tama; but while tama takes the suffixed possessive, Karo is preceded by the pronoun. Karo also means throughout the Gilberts, "a member of

Gilbertese pantheon, and an ancestress. At the North-east corner is Tabakea, also a god and ancestor. Teikake, in the middle of the South end, is the representative of the person of that name who appears in the story of Towatu-ni-Matang in another place. Tabiang, in the middle of the north end, takes the name of the boti within which it stands. These named studs were the particular care and pride of the members of those boti possessing them.

The limits of the various boti, each of which is named, are indicated in the diagram by the dotted lines running inwards from the roof plates. Notice that the distribution of the boti is based upon the rafters, in this particular case. Thus, Tabiang has three rafter intervals allotted to it, Te Bakabaka five, and so on. But, if the maneaba were a small one and the rafters consequently fewer, the allocation of sitting rooms would be established upon the inaki (thatch-rows of the roof), or simply "fitted in", according to the space requirements of the various clans. But the actual order of distribution would not change in either maneaba of Maungatabu or Tabiang nor would considerations of spacing ever be strong enough to separate a clan from one of the named studs, if it possessed one. Thus, however numerous might happen to be the representatives of the three boti between Keaki and Karongoa-n-uea at a particular reunion, they would have to crush themselves somehow into that parenthesis, for Keaki remained unshakably anchored to its cornerstone of Tituaabine and Karongoa-n-uea to its Sun stone by the middle rafter.

The actual maneaba, from which this diagram was taken, is a building faithfully constructed in the Maungatabu style, on the island of Marakei. The master-architect was Taakeuta, an old man of about 70 years, who built as he had been taught by his grandfather, and whose knowledge of the building craft brings disciples from islands as far south as Nonouti to learn from him. The authorities responsible for the allocation of the boti in the order pictured

the same boti", evidently connoting the idea of common ancestry. The word Karokaro denotes recognition of clan-relationship and its duties.

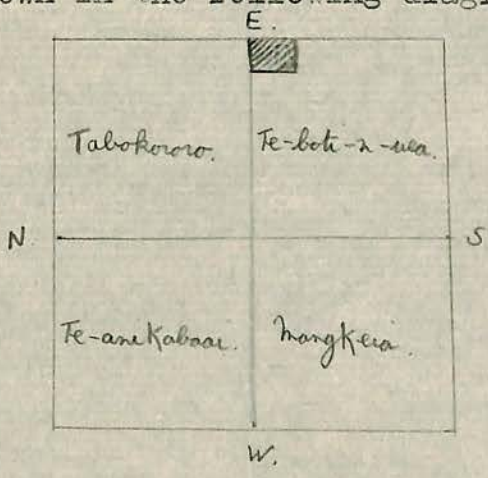
were thirty-five elders of the island, elected by the inhabitants as native delegates on a Lands Commission. The chart therefore represents the collective knowledge of the islands chosen spokesmen, every man of whom was a man of fighting age in the wars preceding the hoisting of the flag in 1892. The distribution of the boti in the Tabiang style of maneaba is identical with that in the the Maungatabu.

It is obvious that all the boti shown may not necessarily be found on every island, and conversely those exhibited in the diagram do not completely exhaust the tale of the divisions discoverable; for a given ancestor may not have descendants in the male line on every unit of the Group. If a gap is made by the extinction of a clan on an island the members of the boti on either side of it will naturally close up and efface the scar, and gradually the name of that clan-place will be forgotten. Some secondary migration, after centuries, may again bring people of this group to the island; they will look for their place in the maneaba. Suppose then that the groups which have drawn together over their sitting room are unfamiliar to the returned people. The result may be that instead of claiming the ancient position between them, the new-comers will take a place to one side or the other, which more or less coincides with the spot they have been used to on their own islands. From causes of such a nature, no doubt, spring the slight variations in relative position of the less known boti, noticed from island to island. But the situations of the better known sitting places in the Tabiang and Maungatabu maneabas are changeless: Karongoa-n-uea is unfailingly under the middle rafter of the eastern side; Te Bakoa always flanks it on the south and Karongoa-raereke on the north. Tabiang, Keaki, Ababou, Te Kua, Karumaetoa, and Kaburara, will everywhere be found in the places allocated to them on the chart. The Tabo-n-te-bike maneaba, however, has a different arrangement of its boti. The most striking point of variation, as will be seen by the chart is that the sitting rooms of Karongoa-n-uea with several of its nearer neighbours are not on the eastern side but under the northern gable of the edifice. Another notable

difference is that the boti of Tabiang, TeKirikiri and Te Ba, which occupy the northern gable in the other two types of maneaba, are non-existent in the Tabon-te-bike building. This is not to be explained by a parellel non-existence of these clans on the island (Beru) where the plan was made: all three are strongly represented on that unit of the Group. There simply is no place for them in the maneaba of Tabo-n-te-bike. It would therefore appear probable that, whatever branch of the race-forefathers it may have been that introduced the Tabo-n-te-bike style of edifice into the Gilberts, it was a swarm which did not contain representatives of these three clans. This probability will be of use in the task of anglysing the traditions connected with the various social groups of the Gilberts, and in attempting to trace a scheme of their origins.

(d) The boti in the maneaba of Butaritari and Makin.

In the maneaba of Butaritari and Makin there are but four divisions, as shown in the following diagram:-



According to local tradition the maneaba was divided into these quarters to provide sitting-rooms for the four different grades of society:-

- (1) Te-boti-n-uea (the-boti-of-kings) was allocated to the Uea, or High Chief, with all the members of his utu descended through male males. It was the S.E. quarter. The shaded spot just South of the middle of the East side indicates the sitting-room especially reserved for the Uea himself with his own brothers and sisters. The position of this spot corresponds with that of Karongoa-n-uea in the maneabas of Tabiang and Maungatabu in other islands, except that it is to south instead

of north of the central stone stud. This central stud is contained in the Uea's sitting place, and is called Nei Tituaabine. It will be remembered that the stone called Tituaabine in other maneabas is in the S. E. corner, being contained in the boti of Keaki. This is important.

- (2). Tabokororo, in the N. E. quarter was reserved for toka (chiefs) and their utu through male lines.
- (3). Te-anikabaai was given over to "people who were conquered", i.e., those of the slave class, through male lines.
- (4). Mangkeia was called "the boti of aba-tera", the boti of "what-land?", which is to say, it was the sitting-place of any stranger who came and settled upon the islands.

It is obvious that, whatever may have been the origin of the grouping revealed, its organisation was fundamentally patrilineal.

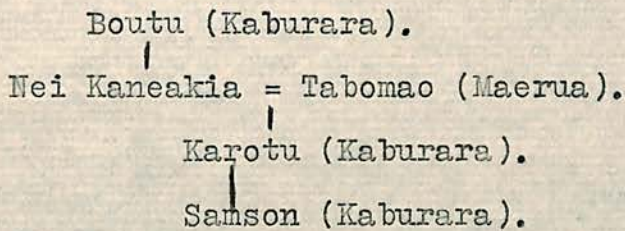
(d). Descent in the boti.

As I have already indicated in a general way, descent, determining membership of the social group possessing a given boti, is reckoned patrilineally in all islands. This was well illustrated by a dispute submitted to my arbitration when I was in Beru. An elderly man named Rioiti claimed membership of the boti Karongoa-n-uea, which had consistently been denied his ascendants in the male line for several successive generations. He provided ~~me~~ me with a list of 20 lineal ascendants, alleged to be males back to his ancestor Kirata the First, a semi mythical Chief of Tarawa, known to be of the Karongoa-n-uea group. None disputed the authenticity of the names he furnished; issue was joined on a point of sex. It was argued by the opposition that an ascendant in the sixth generation back from Rioiti, named Tearoko, was not a man but a woman. Under these ~~as~~ circumstances, it was insisted, Rioiti must ~~account~~ account his boti-descent, not from Tearoko, but from her husband, who belonged to the Ababou group. Rioiti himself admitted that such reasoning would have been perfectly just had Tearoko been indeed a woman; his whole argument was limited to showing that this person had been a man.

This brings out very clearly the predominance of the patrilineal

idea in matters relating to boti-descent.

There are certain exceptions in practice, but one of these at least serves only to emphasize the importance of descent in the male line. If a man have only girl children he may legitimately arrange that one or several of his male grandchildren through these daughters be made a member of his boti. Thus, in the attached pedigree, Boutu was a near relation of the High Chiefs of Abemama, whose boti is Kaburara.



Boutu's sole child was a girl, Kaneakia, who married Tabomao of the Maerua clan. Under ordinary circumstances, the single grandchild of Boutu's male representatives in this group, the grandson Karotu was nominated a member of Kaburara. This, while being an exception to the rule that a man descends into the boti of his father, still lays peculiar stress upon the patrilineal idea, in that it is a special expedient for keeping a male line intact, even in default of sons. Another exceptional practice is resorted to when a man has a large family of children. If the members of his boti are already numerous, and there is danger of overcrowding, it will be arranged that several of his children take the boti of their mother. Te tabo ni Kamaawa boti-n tina-m (A place to make room, the boti of your mother), is a well known phrase throughout the Gilberts. But although occasions are not wanting where sons have been nominated, under such conditions, to their mother's boti, the general practice has always been to transfer the daughters by preference, and in no case would the eldest son be removed from his father's group for the mere purpose of making room. The attendant conditions of this practice again are therefore seen to accent the importance of the patrilineal idea.

A boy or girl adopted either as nati (child) or tibu (grandchild) sometimes, though rarely, takes the boti of the adopter. If, as was generally the case formerly, the adopted was of the utu of the adopter he would often be already a member of the same group; but he



might be a relation descended through a female branch and so into a different boti. In this case, after adoption, he would become in the maneaba to all intents a stranger to his own father's clan and a full member of his adopter's: But if the bond of adoption was broken, as sometimes happened, by some serious quarrel, he could return to his father's group; and such a return constituted the best outward and visible sign of the rupture.

Another case in which the mother's boti becomes of importance must be noted. When a native on his travels comes to an island or village where his father's group is not represented, he will often use his mother's as a "second string", if he desires to establish relations with people of that place. Having proved his mother's right of membership in the given boti he will usually be recieved hospitably by her clansmen, but the obligation will not be felt nearly so keenly by the latter as it would have been felt in the case of a paternal link; the entertainment provided will not as a rule (though there are exceptions) be of a lavish sort, and indeed no great reproach seems to be incurred if the newcomer is entirely neglected. This holds good even though the candidate for their hospitality has on his own island definately gone over from his father's to his mother's boti. The transfer of children from the paternal to maternal groups is therefore seen to be of only local effect, and thus viewed, this modification of the patrilineal scheme seems to have its origin in a motive of pure convenience, namely, the provision of decent sitting-space in the maneaba. No doubt such a modification only became possible ~~d/s~~ as the result of an extraneous influence, which overcame the original conservatism of the patrilineal idea; and this influence was probably the conception of mother-right which seems to have affected the functional aspect of relationship in the Gilbertese utu. But only in this indirect way has the matrilineal system interfered with the organisation of the boti, of which the essentially patrilineal mould seems to contain hardly any concrete relic of the customs of a folk that practised mother-right.

Nevertheless, a fact of apparent significance will be noted from the table of Gods, Ancestors and Totems exhibited a little

later. In this table no fewer than six groups are seen to claim a female ancestry. Te Bakabaka, Kaburara and Keaki have Nei Tituaabine; Tabukaokao has Nei Tenaotarai; Bakarawa has Nei Moaine; and Katannaki has Nei Temaiti. At first sight, this would seem to indicate that matrilineal ideas made themselves felt at some early period in the history of the boti-organisation, which I have supposed to be almost purely patrilineal. But certain considerations suggest that this may not be the true meaning of the facts.

It must be observed that these ancestresses are also regarded as deities, as indeed are all except three or four of these ancestors recorded. In the traditions connected with the early arrivals in the Group from Samoa, the names of Gods are often obviously used instead of the names of the actual persons who arrived. Thus we are told that Taburimai came to Tarawa, Tituaabine to Nikunau, Tabuariki to Beru, and so on, whereas what is meant is that groups of people linked together by a common cult of these beings came from Samoa to the Gilbert Islands. That such a meaning is indeed intended to be conveyed is clear from numerous parallelisms of tradition, where there exist side by side two accounts of the same migration-story, one told in terms of a deity and the other about a man and his followers. For example, there is a well-known story of an ancestor called Baretoka, the son of a man named Kouraabi in Samoa, who fled with his people in very early days to Tarawa after a domestic quarrel, and there married a woman named *Batiauea*. This tale has a parallel version, recounting exactly the same facts, but making the God Taburimai the hero, instead of the human Baretoka. As a result of the same tendency, without a doubt, it is still the common practice among older natives of today, to refer to groups of people, and individuals also, by the names of their deities. "Tabuariki te koraki aei" (this group is Tabuariki), or "Nei Tituaabine teuarei" (that man is Nei Tituaabine) are idioms used to indicate that this group or that individual observe the cult of such and such a God. More pertinently still to our subject, one may hear, "E tekateka

Tituaabine i Bairiki", (Tituaabine sits at Bairiki), meaning that the people who "sit" or live in the village of Bairiki observe the cult of the Goddess Tituaabine. Very clearly in this last example is the name of the deity used to connote a whole group of living people who practise her cult.

A striking and, I think, essential characteristic of the modern use of a God's name to connote a single individual is that the person thus designated is nearly always the senior living representative of his cult. As such, he is the officiator at all ceremonials connected with the worship of the God, and the inheritor of the maaka, or power, which emanates from such a being. As a medium between the spirit and its devotees he therefore assumes the personality of Godhead; for the time being he actually is the God. It is a perfectly natural result of such intimacy of association that he should frequently be designated by the name of the deity. This, I believe, is the explanation of the use in tradition of the name of a God instead of the name of an actual ancestor who performed a given series of feats.

We are now in a position to suggest an explanation of the fact, apparently at variance with patrilineal ideas, that not a few boti in the Gilbertese maneaba claim descent from women. The names of these women are the same as those of the deities of the boti. It seems to me highly probable that just as heroes of tradition are often designated by the names of their Gods, and just as a man of today may be alluded to by the name of a confessedly female deity, so the names of what were in reality male ancestors may be veiled by those of the respective goddesses whom they represented on earth in the early days of boti-organisation. This is the solution which, I feel, certainly applies to the goddess Tituaabine, but an alternative mechanism suggests itself, by which it was possible for women to become boti-ancestresses in

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Nor in view of the frequency with which names of spiritual beings are, and always were, bestowed upon living persons, must the possibility be ignored that the god-names of tradition may in many cases have been the actual names of human ancestors.

a patrilineal organisation without the intrusion of matrilineal elements into the system. We have only to suppose that the people, who introduced the boti-organisation into the Gilberts, brought with them on their migration a limited number of women belonging to their own race (which is in itself a highly probable surmise), and a very simple scheme at once presents itself. If we imagine that several of these immigrant women were given away as wives to men of the indigenous race, and had children by them, we can picture a new problem arising. To what boti should the children be nominated? Their mothers and, without a doubt, the whole immigrant community would naturally wish to see them identified with the social system of the invaders, but yet they could inherit no sitting-room through their indigenous fathers. The only way of retaining them as members of the immigrant group would be to allow them to reckon descent through their mother's, and the natural method of arranging this would be to create new boti in the maneaba with immigrant women as ancestresses.

A circumstance that would conspire to abet a new departure of this sort springs at once to the imagination. If the social system, to which the indigenous fathers of such children belonged, were a matrilineal organisation, it is clear that from the paternal side no place in the aboriginal community could be inherited by the half-blood progeny. By all the precepts of a matrilineal community the child looks to the mother to establish membership of the group. Thus every circumstance would conspire to thrust the children back into the immigrant camp, and to oblige the patrilineal community to think of some expedient to meet the situation.

It is true that if matrilineal ideas thus contributed an impulse towards the establishment of this new feature of boti-organisation, they cannot be wholly ignored as agents in the mutation; but their agency was catalytic, in that they left none of their own elements embedded in the system whose change they stimulated. Thus, if my alternative suggestion to account for the presence of women among the ancestors of patrilineal groups is true, we have before us an example of social modification

under external pressure, rather than the absorption of the constituent parts of one system into another.

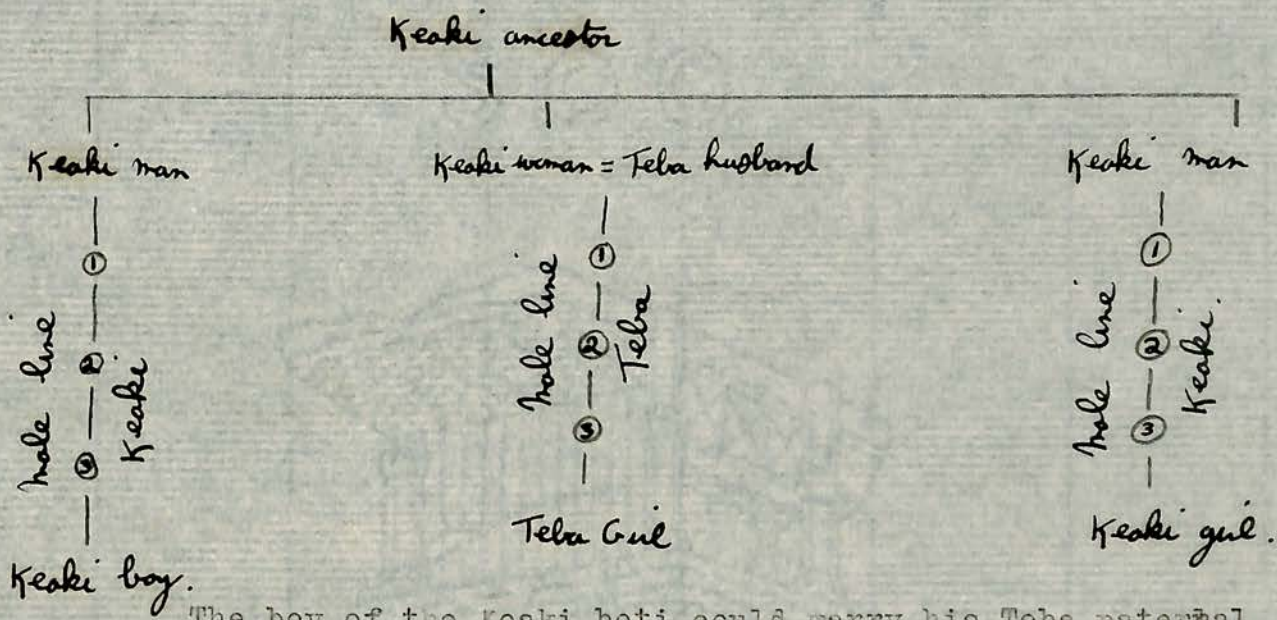
It is possible that this modification of the scheme of male ancestors may be due to a combination of both the series of causation which I have proposed. In some cases it may have been brought about by the substitution of a goddess's name for that of the male ancestor who observed her cult; in others by the problems facing an immigrant people after the marriage of their women with aboriginals. If this double origin is considered probable (and I myself incline to this opinion) we are offered interesting food for thought concerning the cult of the God and the ancestor, for it is clear that in the one set of circumstances the God has become, to all intents and purposes, the ancestor, while in the other the ancestor must have developed into the God. But I shall reserve the discussion of this subject for a later chapter.

Marriage and the boti-organisation.

At first sight it would seem that the only consideration of relationship affecting marriage in the Gilberts emanated from the broad conception of the utu, as a member of which a man reckoned kingship through both his father and his mother. As a generalisation, this surmise would be correct, since the utu of any individual must necessarily also contain all the members of his boti, who are connected with him on his father's side; but it serves to conceal the special importance of the clan in the regulation of marriage. Since we have seen that the organisation of the utu has been plainly affected by matrilineal influence, it is all the more necessary that we should disengage the ideas concerning marriage which are clearly attributable to the patrilineal clan-system alone.

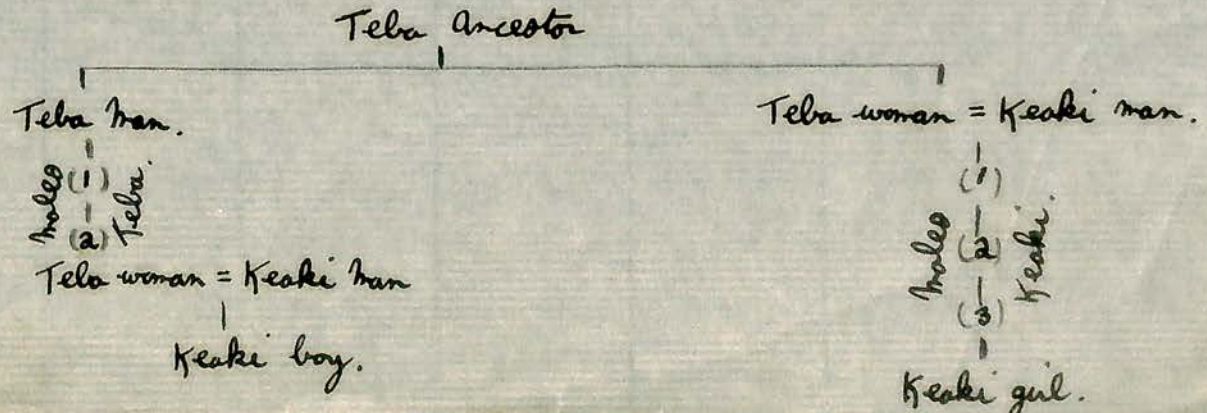
A general dictum throughout the group on the subject of consanguineous marriages is, "E we te <sup>K</sup>Raaroro" --- "the fourth generation goes free". That is to say, persons in the fourth generation of descent from a common ancestor may marry each other. Though the marriage of such close connections was by no means favourably regarded by everyone, the principle of consanguineous alliances was at least so well established that as to make them

everywhere possible in the fifth and sixth generations. But underlying and restricting the application of this doctrine was an absolute prohibition of any marriage between members of the same boti. This did not preclude the possibility of a man's marriage with every relation on the paternal side, for provided that they were sufficiently distant in degree, he could still contract alliances with connections of his father descended through a male ancestor's sister and so into another boti, as the following simplified diagram shows:-



The boy of the Keaki boti could marry his Teba paternal cousin but not the girl who had descended into the Keaki group, although one was <sup>no</sup> more distant from the common ancestor than the other. Similarly, it could easily happen that while he could take as a wife a moderately close paternal relation from another boti he would be debarred from union with a collateral in his own group so distantly removed from him that the common ancestry was a matter of mere tradition. It was membership of the same group that constituted the bar, above any other consideration.

The next diagram will show that relations through the mother also could be disqualified as wives by the boti-organisation:-



But from a native point of view, the important consideration would be the male ancestry of the boy and girl, by virtue of which both had descended into the same group.

There was no impediment under ordinary conditions to the marriage of a man with a woman of his mother's group outside the forbidden degree of relationship. But if a boy, for one of the reasons already described, took the boti of his mother, he was at once debarred from union with any member of it; at the same time, he still remained under the prohibition of contracting alliances with women of his father's clan. These conditions lay particular emphasis on the importance of clan-membership as a regulator of marriage. But it must be remarked that this importance seems to vary in degree from island to island. In the seven most southerly islands of the group it is most pronounced: going northwards, one finds that in Abemama, Kuria and Aranuka it is absolutely non-existent; in Maiana, Tarawa and Abaiang it is again very evident; in Marakei, it seems to lose in strength; while in Butaritari and Makin it again disappears.

On Abemama, Kuria and Aranuka, I think there can be little doubt as to the reason for the disappearance of the clan's importance in the regulation of marriage. The decay and the subversion of nearly every ordinary native standard of sexual morality on those islands is indubitably attributable to a single powerful and sinister individual, not very long dead. This was the infamous Tem Binoka, High Chief of the three atolls, whom Stevenson describes. It is almost impossible for us to conceive the terror which this remarkable man inspired among his people. One of his methods of asserting ascendancy was to ride deliberately roughshod over the customs of his ancestors. He allowed no bar of consanguinity to balk his sexual appetite, and thus laid the foundations of a promiscuity for which the island is famous to this day. And he deliberately disorganised the ceremonials and the rules of precedence in the maneaba, in order that his boti should have a pre-eminence which tradition did not entitle it. These are known facts, and it seems to me

that we have in them the explanation of the disappearance of the clan-regulation of marriage on Abemama and its tributary islands. First, there was the complete predominance of the High Chief, tending to obliterate the significance of all social groupings. This was an influence which had probably been at work through the six generations of the dynasty preceding Tem Binoka. Second, came the subversion of every previous standard of sexual morality, and as a finishing touch, the scrapping of all traditions connected with the boti in the maneaba.

If my proposed explanation is correct, we have a remarkably clear example of the rapidity with which native institutions may under certain circumstances decay, and an illustration of how purely local and individual conditions may profoundly modify a social organisation.

There is no evidence from Butaritari and Makin that the organisation of the boti had any connection with the control of marriage. The four divisions of the maneaba were according to tradition made to provide sitting-room for four respective grades of society, namely, Chiefs, Free-landowners, Slaves and Strangers. One feels that the spirit which led to such distinctions of caste might lean rather towards endogamy than exogamy. But while admitting such a possibility, it must be borne in mind that the purely patrilineal character of boti descent in Butaritari and Makin, and the general underlying similarity of the boti scheme there with that of other islands, suggest that the dissociation of the clan with marriage has been the result of some special modification of the social organisation under influences unknown to us.

On Ocean Island (Banaba) no detailed information about clan-groups is available; but some of the old people can still remember that there were boti in the maneaba. The vagueness that exists cannot be the result of European influences alone, since this island was little visited before 1900. It is probable that the clan-grouping has been in process of



decay for some long period, probably as a result of the tendency towards purely local groupings, of which I shall speak elsewhere. Banaban descent is patrilineal, but succession is an exact compromise between patrilineal and matrilineal methods.

A survey of our material thus shows that eleven out of the seventeen Gilbertese-speaking communities, of which there is evidence, have a system of clan-organisation plainly exogamous in character. Out of the six communities that show no sign of having practised clan-exogamy, three have been shown to have come under a late influence entirely calculated to result in its disappearance; these three have kept entire their patrilineal mode of descent, succession and inheritance, and to a certain extent their boti-organisation, as also have two other exceptional islands, Butaritari and Makin. Only one, Banaba, seems to give no sign whatever of having practised clan exogamy; but this must form the subject of a separate enquiry. In the future, I shall refer to clan-exogamy as an essential part of the social organisation of the Gilbertese people.

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I have no details of the Nui boti-organisation.