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The Clan and the Totem.

Each clan in the Gilberts is connected with some plant, animal or object which it holds in particular esteem. For convenience of reference, I shall at once apply the term Totem to these creatures & things; I do not think that the epithet will be found to have been misused after the exhibition of my material.

A few clans have only a single creature or object associated with them, but most have a minimum of two, some three or four, and one even five. Sometimes several clans share the same Totem or Totems; in such cases the clans concerned, although having different names, are seen to possess the same ancestor and god.

The following is a list of the Totems which I have been able to identify:

Clan.	Totem.
Karongoa ^{n uea} raereke	Shark; Kanawa-tree; Cockerel; Wind;
Taunnamo	Shark, Kanawa-tree; Cockerel; Wind;
Karongoa ^{raereke} mama	
Antekanawa	Shark, Kanawa-tree; Cockerel; Wind;
Katayprake	Shark. (Tabuariki)
Te Bakoa	
Karumaeloa	Shark. (Bakoa)
Te Bakabaka	Giant Ray; Shark;
Keaki	Tropic Bird; Giant Ray; Bêche-de-mer.
Kaburara	Giant Ray; Creeper called Tarai.
Kaotirama	Stingray (small grey) called Buatara.
Banqauma	Stingray (called "man-headed").
Te Ba	Sand-snipe; a Carangoid fish.

Te Kirikiri	:	Sandsnipe; a Caranoid fish.
Tabiang	:	" "
Namakaina	:	" "
Te O	:	Tern; Pemphis tree.
Umanikamauri	:	" "
Abahou	:	Porpoise; Sun; Coral called zirona ^{zirona}
Maerua	:	" " " "
Tekokona	:	Porpoise.
Ōei Ati	:	Octopus; Garfish.
Benuākua	:	A Red bird of myth called Aromatang.
Katannaki	:	A stone called Ōei Temaiti
Te Wiwi	:	Fraxinea tree; conch.
Ōukumāhea	:	Eel; centipede.
Bakarawa	:	Brittle starfish.
Tabukavkao	:	Crab called Ōei Tenatārai.
Teborāhea	:	Turtle; noddy; ladybird; a bush called ibi ^{ibi} ; and a legendary creature called keheni ^{keheni} , which is described as a "lizard three fathoms long with a very hard skin almost certainly alluding to an alligator or other saurian.

Information about the totems is difficult to get. It is by no means every old man who can tell one the animal or object associated with his clan; from which it appears probable that totemism as an institution was falling into decay for some long period before the arrival of civilization in the Gilbert Islands. This is emphasized by the comment of many old men, when asked whether all the members of their clans in former days rejoined from

eating the flesh of their sacred animals. Their usual answer to this question is, "Those who took notice of such things were afraid to eat". This implies that many disregarded the restriction. There were one or two clans, however, in which respect for the totem seems always to have retained its full force. Of these, the most striking example is the clan of Neaki. This social group has preserved even to the present day an unconquerable aversion to eating the flesh of the Giant Ray or the Red Tailed Tropic Bird. Its members will still refuse even to share a pipe or a drinking vessel with a person who has been known to partake of the flesh of either of these creatures. The belief is that an offence against the totem will be visited by swellings of the skin, called te sabarabataki. Among all the clans which have a variety of Ray as a totem, esteem for the sacred creature seems to have preserved its full strength, while those groups whose totem is the shark are also notable in this respect. The regard for other creatures varies from island to island. For example, the Carangoid fish called te xereba, a creature associated with four of the groups listed above, is still held in the greatest deference ^{on} ^{Bezu} Bezu, Tikunau, and other southern islands, while in Abaiang, Tarawa and the Northern Islands generally, it is hardly remembered in connection with these clans. On the other hand, the Sandpiper, a second totem of the same groups, retains a good deal of esteem in the North, while more or less disregarded (though still remembered) in the South.

The cause of such local inequalities as these may perhaps be found in the marked tendency of all the clans

to pitch upon one particular creature or object among a group of perhaps several associated totems for especial veneration above the others. With this eclectic tendency working towards the classification of totems into principal & subsidiary grades, it would need nothing more than some purely local circumstance to sway the preference in favour of this totem or that, ^{and} in such a way it might happen that mere accidents of environment would establish the precedence of the Sandempe (to take a concrete example) over the Rereba in the North, ^{and} reverse the order of prestige in the South.

The form of respect paid to the totem naturally differed according to its nature. A living creature must not be eaten, killed or injured; an edible creature must not be eaten. The theory about eating the totem was that it resulted in incest. The totem was flesh of a man's flesh, it was a permanent member of his clan; it was, in fact, the clan. If a man was sufficiently shameless to eat his own clan, he would not scruple afterwards to have connection with his own sister. This is the explanation exactly as given to me by the old man Teata of Abouang, and corroborated by about thirty others present at the same time.

If the totem were a tree, it must not be climbed, for fear of offending it; nor must its flowers be picked.

A stone or a piece of coral must not be trodden upon. The wind or the sun must not be alluded to disrespectfully by those who claimed them as totems. For example, in waiting at sea for a breeze, a Karongoa

man must not make an impatient remark about its tardy arrival. And this obligation of respectful speech also applied to such mythical totem-creatures as the bird Aromatang of the Beniākura clan, & the ~~kekeni~~ ^{kekenu} of Jeboanea, which necessarily had to be ~~honoured~~ honoured in absence.

In accordance with the patrilineal nature of descent in the clan, it was the father's totem which received the greatest deference, but a man would also respect the totem of his mother, & generally that of his wife too.

Although one might not pick the flowers of the totem / tree, it was permissible to gather up those which fell to the ground & to make wreaths of them. Such wreaths constituted in fact the badge of a man's social group, since no other clan was permitted to use the flowers of that species of tree for personal adornment. This rule was, however, modified on the northern islands to the extent that the right to use such flowers could be inherited through the mother. But no such relaxation of the custom was made in respect of the feathers cast from the tail of the Red-tailed Tropicbird, which might only be worn by the clan of Keaki.

There seems to have been no occasion in the life of a Gilbertese native when the totem was ceremonially eaten or sacrificed.

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The physical connection between the clan & the totem varies in degree. It has been seen above that in connection with edible creatures it is very evident, the animal being flesh of the clan's flesh. Sometimes there is

a direct tradition of descent from a totem; at other times there is a belief in descent from some person closely allied to it; in a third class of cases there is only a vague ancestral link with the creature or object; and occasionally there is none at all discoverable.

(a) Of the four totems of the Karongva groups, although the Shark seems always to have been the most universally prominent, it is from the Kanawa tree that direct descent is the more explicitly traced. Tradition states that in the darkness of chaos grew two ^KKanawa trees, a male & a female. Their branches intertwined in the darkness, & from the union sprang the first ancestors of Karongva, who eventually migrated from Samoa to the Gilbert Islands.

Another tradition which clearly reflects a belief in descent from the totem is the migration story of the Tropic Bird folk, which is examined in the section dealing with the origins of the various maneka. After relating the manner of the invasion of Makin by the Tropic Bird from Samoa, & the death of this creature, the tradition describes the birth of Koura & his red-skinned brothers from its decaying head. It is from the Koura breed that the clan of Keaki is descended, & the Tropic Bird is one of the totems of this group.

A third clear case of totem-descent is that of the Abatopi & Maeria clans. The ancestors of these groups were Bue & his brother Turungo, who were themselves the sons of the Sun by their mother Mata-misa. The Sun is the most important of the three

totems of these two clans.

(b) In a slightly different category are the five clans of Nukunapea, Teboraua, Te Bakoa, Karumaelia and Buatara. The ancestors, ^{and} at the same time the gods, of these groups are respectively Riiki-the-Eel, Tabakea-the-turtle, Tabuariki-the-shark, Bakoa-the-shark, and Buatara-the-singray. These ancestor-gods are anthropomorphically conceived by natives of the present day, but they are reputed to have had the power of assuming the forms of the creatures connected with their names. In every case, the least thus physically associated with the ancestor is the totem of the clan, thus clearly suggesting a fundamental belief in descent from the sacred creature, or to be more exact from the ancestor in the form of the sacred creature.

Tabuariki-the-shark is also the ancestor-god of the Karongoa groups, and it is in conjunction with this being that the shark totem is venerated by them. As I have already shown, these groups have also a tradition of direct descent from the Kanawa tree; we therefore have here an example of duplication of beliefs, in which the same clans trace lineal descent from two separate & distinct totems.

(c) The tradition of the clan of Benua-kura gives us an instance in which the sacred creature, while not a lineal ancestor, is believed to have been a close relation of the group-progenitor. The following is a translation of the myth as given to me by the old man Parawete of Beru:

^{indirectly quoted from} Tei Parobu was a woman of Nakanaba in the west. She lay with the man Tangata; their first

child was the bird Aromatang, the man eater, & their second child was Tebriaro. Tebriaro was born before his time & his mother threw him away into the sea with the afterbirth. He floated away, and was stranded on the island of Roro. He grew up & lay with a woman of Roro, whose name was ^{Arotang.} Tei Arotang. She bore him two children, Komwenga, a man, & Tei Arotang's ranga, a woman.

When Komwenga & Tei Arotang's ranga grew up, a canoe was built for them, & they sailed eastwards away from Roro. As they went, the woman was snatched away from the canoe by a great fish called $\text{Ka} + \text{tine} + \text{aba}$; and she went to live in ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~sea~~ ^{the} under the sea. But Komwenga sailed the southern sea & ^{and} came to the land of Samoa. There he lived, and he caused his hair to be cut ^{and} ~~so~~ he did magic to make him a fierce fighter. And when he was ready, he sailed back to Nabanaba, where his grandmother lived; and there he slew the bird ^{Aromatang} Aromatang, the man eater, ^{who was} his father's brother. And he took its feathers, which were red, and ~~he took~~ its head also, as a crest for his canoe. He called his canoe crest Te qinta-wawa : it is the crest of the people of ^{Benakura} ~~Benakura~~; and their totem (Atua) is the bird Arotang; and their ancestors are Komwenga, ^{and} ~~Te~~ Tebriaro the brother of Arotang. ^X

^{Benakura} According to this tradition, therefore, the totem of the ^{Benakura} ~~Benakura~~ clan is held to have been the own brother of the ancestor, a form of belief which still clearly emphasizes the physical connection between the creature & the social group.

(d) The next category of totems consists of those creatures or

objects which are said to have been particularly beloved or esteemed by the ancestor gods of the various clans, but from which there is no tradition of direct descent.

These are as follows:—

Giant Ray / of Keaki and Tebakabaka; ^{the} creature of the ancestral Goddess ^{Tikagline} ~~Tikagline~~ ^{Tikagline} ~~Tikagline~~

Cockeel of Karangoa clans; beloved of the ancestor-god Tabuariki.

^{Tea} Fern of ^{Te} ~~Te~~ ^o ~~o~~ ^U ~~U~~ ^{ma} ~~ma~~ ⁿⁱ ~~ni~~ ^K ~~K~~ ^{am} ~~am~~ ^{auri} ~~auri~~ groups: belonging to ^{the} ancestor-god Auriaria.

Sandstone ^{and} Garangoid fish (^e ~~scriba~~) of Te Ba, ^{Tekirikiri} ~~Tekirikiri~~, ^{Tabiang} ~~Tabiang~~, and ^{Namakaina} ~~Namakaina~~; the messengers of the ancestor-god ^{Tabuariki} ~~Tabuariki~~.

Crab of Tabukaokao; beloved of ^{the} ancestral goddess ^{Nei} ~~Nei~~ ^{Tenatarai} ~~Tenatarai~~.

Wind of Karangoa clans: one of the instruments of Tabuariki the ancestor-god. It is difficult to understand why, on the same grounds, thunder & lightning are not also totems of this clan, since they too were believed to be directed by Tabuariki.

Conch of Te Uiuvi: held as a totem because the ancestor-god ^{Te} ~~Te~~ ^I ~~I~~ ^{mo} ~~mo~~ ^e ~~e~~ ^{ne} ~~ne~~ ^{ne} ~~ne~~, who is sovereign of the region under the sea, is believed to have made the first conch & to have used it for summoning to assembly the spirits of the underworld.

Doddy, ^{and the} ~~the~~ ^{mythical} saurian called Kekene of ^{Te} ~~Te~~ ^{boranea} ~~boranea~~; used as messengers by ^{the} ancestor-god ^{Tabakea} ~~Tabakea~~ ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{Turtle} ~~Turtle~~.

Ladybird of the same group; supposed to be the terrestrial counterpart of the turtle, which is the principal totem of this clan.

Ibi-bush of the same group; reputed to have been the favorite plant of Tabakēa-the-Turtle.

(e) We now come to a class of totems, which tradition vaguely connects with a god or an ancestor, but concerning which any suggestion of physical association with the clans that might once have existed, has been finally submerged. To this class belong:

Porpoise of Ababou & ^{Maezua} Maikūa. This creature is associated with the ancestor Bue, the story of whose visit to his father, the Sun, is exhibited elsewhere. One of the gifts made by the Sun to Bue was a ringstraked staff called the Kai-ni-Kamate (the staff-to-kill), together with a complete set of incantations for the subjugation of the porpoise at sea. Since then, the descendants of Bue have refrained from killing the porpoise, & have made it one of their totems.

Brittle Starfish of Bakarawa. Tradition says that this totem was taken in commemoration of the foolishness of the twin ancestors Bata-na-Boro (Fool-and-Beaf^D ^Mmute).

On a day when the people of Samoa were indulging in the sport of Kauni-Batua,^{Batua} i.e. the matching of small fierce fish called batua, these two ancestors brought a Brittle Starfish (Kiko-ni-ang) to fight for them; since when, their descendants have used this creature as a totem in reminiscence of the ancestral foolishness.

Pemphis-tree of Te O and Uma-ni-Kamauri.

To the native mind, the small wryened leaves of the Pemphis^P
Gilbertese

acidula (te ^{Ngaea} ~~praea~~) are comparable to the hair of the ancestor-god Aurioria. The hair of this god and his companions, Taburimāi and Taburiki, is described in tradition as standing out from the head with small thick curls at the tips. The praea ^{ngaea} is taken as a totem in commemoration of this.

(f) The last category of totems is composed of creatures + plants which seem to have no connection at all with either gods or ancestors. I have no doubt that defective enquiry and the forgetfulness of informants are at least partly responsible for this lack of association. The following list may serve as a guide to others more skilled in eliciting facts: 3

Bêche-de-mer (Kerehoki) of Keaki /.

Centipede (Roata) of Nukumāhea /.

~~Tree~~ ^A creepers ^(Tarai) of Kaburara /.

Uri tree (Fraxinea, sp.) of Te Wiwi /.

Stingray (atū / n/aomata or man-headed) of Bangauma /.

Porpoise of Tekokona: In connection with this, it may be remarked that the clan-ancestor, Kotua, is said by tradition to have accompanied the ancestor Bue of Ahabou on a migration from Tarawa to Beru. As we have seen, the porpoise is one of the totems of Bue's descendants. It may be that Kotua was a member of Bue's group & established a separate clan on Beru, taking the porpoise of Bue as a totem.

Octopus & Garfish of Tei Ati;

This survey of our material has therefore shown us three totems from which direct descent in the clan is explicitly traced ^{and} five more which are hardly less clearly to be recognized as group ancestors. Of a recognizable

type very closely allied to these eight is the totem of Bennāteura from whose own brother the clan shows descent. Ten other creatures & objects venerated by various groups were seen to be closely attached by tradition to the person of ancestor-gods, while a further group of three was found, though more vaguely, to be associated with clan progenitors. Only eight remain out of thirty, which cannot in one way or another be connected with the ancestor idea. It is thus abundantly ^{clear} manifest that the totemism of the Gilberts was underlain by the belief in descent from the creature, plant or other object that was the object of esteem, or from some person or being to whom the totem stood in an intimate relation.

The services, if any, expected from the totem by the clan, were usually of a negative order, & in all cases were supposed to be conditional upon the individual's observance of a proper respect towards the creature concerned. A man of Gukumaiea, who habitually refrained from injuring the centipede, expected exemption from the sting of this creature, & would even claim the power of handling it without harmful results to himself. In like manner he would be fearless of injury from the eel, another totem of his clan, while swimming in a conger-infested part of the lagoon. Members of clans possessing the shark² totem had not the horror evinced of this fish evinced by other folk & the immunity from its attack to which they pretended seems to have extended to all the species of man-eating sharks known in these waters. Abatou, Macua and Tekokona clans similarly believed that they were not liable to the assault of the porpoise on the high

seas; they also claimed the faculty of calling the sacred mammal to swim by their canoes & protect them from other fierce creatures of the ocean. This protective capacity of the porpoise is an example of active services rendered by the totem. Another illustration of direct help is seen in the story of Nareau's voyage to Samoa, with his three sons, exhibited elsewhere. In this story, the heroes were given as food by the people of Samoa a heap of coconuts, husks & stalks, & were told that if they failed to eat it they would be killed.

To surmount this difficulty, Na Alean said to his sons, "Hide it until tonight, & then the Kekenu will eat it". When night came the Kekenu consumed the unsavoury food & so saved their lives. As we have seen, this mythical creature is described as a "lizard three fathoms long with a very hard skin", i.e. that is almost certainly an alligator or other saurian, and is the totem of the clan Teborauca.

Another example of totem helpfulness is shown in a belief of three clans, whose creature is the Sandemipe. These groups claim that the bird constantly watches their coconut plantations, & will fly to warn them when any thief comes to steal their nuts or toddy. But of all the creatures, which are supposed to help their clansmen in danger or trouble, by far the best known is the ^RRay.

It is still emphatically claimed by the people of Keaki & Tebakabaka (Giant Ray), Kaotiamama (small grey stingray), & Bangauma ("man-headed" stingray) that if one of the clan members is in danger of drowning, an immense Ray will float to the surface beside him & after he

has taken his seat upon it, will carry him safe to shore. There is hardly a native in the Gilberts who does not know of this belief, though there are ^{a great many} ~~substitutes~~ who are ignorant of the totems of their own clans.

There seems to be no trace in the Group of a belief in the entry of the ghost after death into the body of the totem, but throughout the islands there is a very intimate association of the sacred creature with death. It was believed that, providing the proper ceremonial for "straightening the path" of the departing soul had been performed, it would be met by the ancestral shades & the clan totems, and conducted by them safely to the otherworld of Bouru and ^XMatang. Some of the sacred creatures - the three species of Ray, the Turtle, the Eel and the Reveba - were considered to be the actual vehicles of the ghost, upon which it was transported to the land of shades; others - the Tern, the Noddy, the Sandpiper and the Tropic Bird - did not carry the departed, but flew before him as he followed in the company of his ancestors.

These beliefs only applied, however, if the body was buried in the extended position with feet to westward. And this orientation of the body, on the great majority of islands, was only permissible when the relations of the deceased knew how to perform, or could pay an expert to perform, the magic take-ati (lifting-the-head) by which the path of the ghost was "straightened". The orientation of the body with feet to westward enabled the departed to arise from his grave facing the west, ^{and} so to proceed without confusion to the western horizon where the totems & ancestors awaited him. Those who were buried with feet to north were not met

by the totem. We thus seem to have evidence of a culture complex, in which belief in the totem is associated with internment of the dead in an extended position, with feet to Westward, and with the magic called Tabu-ati. To this complex we may also add the organisation of society into exogamous clans with patrilineal descent, and the cult of the ancestor. This will be of material help later, when the attempt will be made to disengage the elements of the various systems which seem to have interacted one upon the other, to form the resultant culture of the present Gilbertese race!

A striking feature of the totemism of the Group is the frequency with which several clans together are seen to share the same set of totems. Thus, no fewer than five groups - the two Karongwa, Taunrama, An^hti^hkanawa, & Kataneake - share between them the Shark, Kanawa, Cockeel, & Wind totems. A sixth, Te Bakoa, links itself with these by its possession of the shark.* Three other clans - Te Ba Te Kiriiki & Tabiang - have in common the Sand snipe & the Carangid fish called Pelehe; while two more - Ababou & Maerua - share Porpoise, Sun & Coral. To these latter a third attaches itself by its Porpoise totem, namely the

* ^{Fin} Note. The shark totem of Karumaetwa cannot be bracketed with that of Te Bakoa. The two creatures are distinguished traditionally by their names, the former being called Bakewa - the - Shark, the latter Tabu^hreki - the - Shark. ~~the~~

clan of tekōkōna. And lastly, the two groups called Te ① + Uma + ni + Kamaui have in common the Teēx or the Pemphe + tree.

Almost invariably, when the totems coincide, the names of the clan-ancestors are the same. The five groups having the Shark, Kanawa, Cockerel, & Wind totems in common, all claim Tehuariki & Mawa Matawarehwe as their progenitors. Te Bakoa, which shares the shark totem with these clans also shares the ancestor-god Tabuariki. The three groups linked together by Sandnipe & Pereta all claim descent from the same ancestor-god Taburimai. Those sharing Porpoise, Sun or Coral also trace their lines back to the same pair of brothers, Bue & Rirongo. While the two Tern & Pemphe groups have the common god-ancestor Auaria. There is, in fact, only one exception to this rule - that of the clan Tekōkōna, which has the Porpoise-totem of Abatou & Maewa, but a different ancestor. But in this case, too, tradition supplies an ancestral link, for the progenitor of Tekōkōna, Kotua, is named as a companion of Bue & Rirongo, Abatou & Maewa (forefathers^{of}), on their migration from Tarawa to Bevu. (see story exhibited in another chapter). It seems evident therefore that some close tie existed in early days between these groups.

Another noticeable feature connected with clans which share the same totem is that their sitting-places (tōti) in the maneaba are almost invariably grouped together. This becomes clear by reference to the sketch plan of the tōti in a Marake's maneaba,

Nauyatabu-style

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This was found to be the case, for instance, in a Marakei maneaba checked by me where, however, the sitting-place of Antekarawa did not appear, as that clan had no representatives on the island. In a Nauyatabu maneaba on Beu Antekarawa had its loti on the north side of Katanrake and the five clans Karuza on Beu, Karuza rurehe, Katanrake, Antekarawa and Taunramo - which share the same totems and trace their descent from the same ancestors - have their sitting-places ranged in a solid and continuous block along the eastern side of the edifice. The sixth clan of Te Baka, which has the shark totem in common with these is also included in the compact array.

array.

In the same manner ~~it is seen on the plan that~~ the three clans of Tekirikiri, Teba & Tabiang, descended from a single ancestor & venerating the same creatures, sit in an unbroken line under the northern gable; while Maerua & Ababou, whose totems & ancestors are identical, cleave together in the middle of the western side. The loti of the clan Tekokona is ~~not shown on the sketch~~ ~~as it is~~ ~~unrepresented~~ on Marakei, but in the southern islands it is placed on the ~~northern~~ ^{nor} flank of Ababou, which is what we should have expected, in view of the fact that it shares the Porpoise Totem with Ababou & Maerua. Last of all, the clans of Teo & Uma + ni + ^kKamawiri, who share the ancestor god Auiriaria, & their Tem + Pemphis totems, though not side by side in the Marakei ^mmaneaba are separated only by the clan of Keaki, while in

the ^{6.} Tapilānea & Beru manabaf they may be seen actually united, the Uma + ni + ² Kamauri group on those islands taking its seat between ^{Te O.} ~~Te O.~~ & Keaki.

The possession of common ancestors, gods & totems obviously indicated that the closest of relations once existed between the clans concerned. It seems a reasonable inference that whencesoever a group of two, or three, or more clans thus intimately associated may have come, they came from the same place, shared the same culture, & took part in the same migration. The compact arrangement of their sitting places in the ~~manaba~~ suggests further the most deliberate intention of keeping together, in order to show, as it were, a solid front in all public or ceremonial gatherings; and this of course connotes a clear recognition of common ties & a definite will to keep them in mind.

It is therefore rather surprising to find that each of these groups is an independent exogamous unit. One would have expected that marriage would be prohibited between members of clans sharing the same totems & ancestors. But there is no such restriction. A man of Karongoa + ni + ōea may as easily marry a woman of Karongoa + raeke as a woman of some group with totally different ancestors & totems.

This is so much at variance with the ideas underlying the strict organisation of society into exogamous totemic groups, that it would seem at first sight to indicate that these ideas in the Gilbert Islands were in an advanced stage of decay. But this certainly does not agree with the facts. For although the totemism of the group is not so clear-cut as it may have been originally, in that

a certain laxity with regard to the sacred creatures or objects is sometimes apparent; the information collected in this section shows ^{that} it still ~~to~~ have retained a considerable force of social significance up to the arrival of European civilization; & the dominance of the idea of clan-exogamy in the regulation of marriage is still one of the most striking features in the organisation of the ^{totem} ~~totem~~ system.

Yet it is obvious that intermarriage between clans using the same sacred creatures must ^{b.c.} the result of some modification of the original system - that is to say ⁱⁿ if, as I am assuming to be the case, the original system of Gilbertese Totemism was generically the same as the most typical examples to be found in Oceania, & particularly in Melanesia. There are three primary processes through which such modifications might possibly have arisen. One is the fusion of cultures, in the course of which a certain number of the elements of two systems blend to form a hybrid structure, while a certain number are discarded & lost. A second possible process is that of the progressive decay or abrasion of a system under the external influence of a foreign mode of thought, which while acting as the catalytic agent giving impetus to the change, leaves no concrete elements embedded in the organisation thus affected. And a third process of social modification may take its inception from the action of material & physical necessity upon the organisation of a migrant people.

It seems to be just within the range of possibility that the intermarriage of clans having

The same sacred creatures may have come about, under rather special conditions, through the fusion of two social systems. Suppose the Gilbert Islands to have been overrun by an immigrant people having a culture very similar to that of the invaded folk, and being, in fact, a branch of the same original race, with its social institutions only slightly differentiated by residence elsewhere: in such circumstances, both invaders & invaded might be found to acknowledge the same ancestors and gods, to venerate the same totems, and to have preserved approximately the same sitting-places in their respective manaba. In the sitting down that would follow the immigration, a reorganization of the toti in the manaba would take place; the conquering immigrants would wish to keep their own hereditary stations, and they would also desire to keep their clans ^{at} separate and distinct from the corresponding clans of the conquered; at the same time, it would be the aim of the conquered to retain as far as possible their ancient toti, and they would take places as near to them as the space needs of the immigrants permitted. In this way it might happen that groups of several clans having identical totems & ancestors would be found sitting side by side in the manaba. Intermarriage between such clans would be rendered possible by the refusal of the immigrants to recognize such close relationship with the clans of the conquered as would be implied by an admission of the strict prohibitions of Exogamy.

(follow on) →

An incentive to such an attitude of the immigrants would be their need for a wide scope in the selection of wives since probably but few women would have accompanied their migration.

That such an explanation of the problem is within the range of possibility appears from an examination of Gilbertese tradition, which ~~in another section has~~ ^{leads} us to the conclusion that the Samoan invaders of the Group, some twenty-five generations ago, were but the returning remnant of a swarm which had passed through and colonised these islands centuries earlier on its way to Samoa. Such a return after some centuries of separate social development, of a people having the same ancestry as the invaded, gives us the conditions postulated in the foregoing hypothesis.

^{never known} Nevertheless, although a duplication of clans owning identical totems, accompanied by a possibility of intermarriage between them might be satisfactorily explained by such a combination of circumstances as I have suggested (and actually did take place), it is difficult to see how the same conditions can have been wholly responsible for a multiplication into six, as illustrated by the Karangoa and associated groups. While bearing

bringing in mind, therefore, that the return from Samoa of a body of people having a social organisation closely related to that of the Autochthonous Gilberts, may have been one of the causes of an increase in the number of clans reverencing the same totems, and may at the same time have contributed towards the facilitation of inter-~~tribe~~ marriage among them, we cannot regard it as the sole cause of such social phenomena, not indeed, I think, as the principal one.

The second process suggested by which the modification of Totemic exogamy might have been set in motion is that of the progressive decay of a social scheme under the external influence of a foreign mode of thought. But as I have already pointed out, the rigour of Totemic ideas in the Gilberts up to the coming of European civilisation seems to put this proposal out of court.

We are left with the third suggestion, that the condition under our observation came about in answer to the pressure of material and physical necessity ^{upon the social existence} of a migrant people. If it was indeed due to such causes, it seems to follow that it must have been a deliberately adopted social expedient — in fact, a primitive sociological experiment — since a material

and physical necessity is consciously felt, and as consciously remedied.

The suggestion that I offer is that the multiplication of social groups having the same totems and ancestors, together with the permissibility of marriage between them, were modifications of the social system deliberately adopted to evade difficulties connected with marriage. Two difficulties of this kind would face a not very numerous swarm of people with a marriage system based on totem exogamy, such as I suppose the immigrants of Samoa into the Groups to have been. First, it is almost certain that only a limited number of women would accompany them; and second, if ~~for our~~ traditional evidence analysed in another section leads us to suppose such immigrants were only a fragment of the race that was dispersed from Samoa, it is also probable that only a limited number of clans reached the Group. A strict adherence, under such conditions, to the rigid system of totem-exogamy would render it impossible for many of the young men to find wives at all. This difficulty would ~~find~~ ^{have} an easy solution if the people found by the immigrants were of another race, with a different social organisation; for in this case there would be no restriction on the choice of wives from among autochthonous folk. But our traditional evidence has led us to the conclusion that the invaders from Samoa were a returned branch of the same race as that which inhabited the Gilbert Islands: they therefore must have found on arrival many of the exogamous clans which they themselves represented, ^{and} with which they consequently could not contract marriages, if they

adhered strictly to custom. It may be argued that this again would constitute no real difficulty, as there were probably plenty of other local clans with which alliances would be permissible. But in answer to this particular emphasis must be laid upon the point that the present clan system, of which we are analysing the peculiarities, is essentially a one-island system: it was developed on the single atoll of Beru, & spread through the whole group (with the exception of Butaritari & Makin), by the Beru swarm which, ten generations ago, established conquering chiefs on every unit of the archipelago. - Without a single exception, the clans of the 13 islands thus conquered trace their descent from a Beru conqueror. Our task is thus to search for the possible causes that led to certain social modifications on a single unit of the group, namely Beru, as a result of the immigration from Samoa some 25 generations ago.

Within the narrow limits of a single island, it is easy to conceive that only a restricted number of the social groups then existing (if many did exist) up & down the group ~~was~~ ^{were} represented. We have only to imagine the arrival on such an island of a relatively numerous body of immigrants, whose own women were very few, & whose social groups coincided with most of those found in occupation, in order to discover a possible reason for the multiplication of clans having the same totems ^{and} ancestors, and for the breaking down of prohibitions of inter-marriage between them. First, the large addition to the male population would create an immediate local shortage of potential wives: there would not be enough

women to go round invaders & invaded. And second, among the few local clans into which marriage, by strict custom, would be permissible, the immigrants alone would find little scope for the selection of wives. If the principles of rigid totem-exogamy were adhered to, there would be no cure for the difficulty.

I suggest, that deliberate expedients were adopted to meet the emergency. The first may have been that suggested earlier in this discussion, namely, the refusal of the immigrants to recognise such close relationship with the clans of the invaded as would prohibit the members of their own corresponding clans from intermarriage with them. Such a resource would result in the duplication of intermarriageable totem-groups; and these groups would probably acquire different names in the course of time, if indeed their separate local histories had not already resulted in a disparity of names at the epoch of the return from Samoa.

This artificial enlargement of the scope in which a wife could be ^{sought} ~~found~~ might possibly satisfy the immediate wants of the immigrants; but only if they monopolised the women of the island at the expense of the marriageable men among the autochthones. And we can hardly suppose that it was only the newcomers who entered into a marriage relation at this time. Further, even if they did create such a monopoly, the great surplus of men over women would make itself felt not only in that but in the succeeding generation, while the prohibitions attaching to consanguinity, as a concept entirely distinct from that of clan organisation, would