

Gilbertese traditional texts

(A) Butaritari series,

(B) (1) ^{story} The tale of the Voyage from Te**+**bongi**+**roro,
 Te**+**bongi**+**roro was the line of lands in the West which grew on the overside of Heaven when it was not yet separated from Earth. The lands of Te**+**bongi**+**roro were the first lands, and their number was uncounted, and Ancestors grew upon them. They stretched from Beberiki [Butaritari] to the Western edge of Heaven; their names were indeed a hundred, more [than a hundred], for they were many. These were their names - Maiawa, and Tabo**+**n**+**noto, and Pa**+**n**+**tongo, and *Katatake***+**i**+**eta, and Kabi**+**n**+**tongo, and Biksara, and Aba**+**oraora; and there were many others of which count has not been kept. Those lands were the homes of the birds of Heaven, and man-eating fish, and the turtle. And Heaven was not yet separated from the Earth.

There came a time when the people arose and voyaged. The woman Te**+**ma**+**nga**+**ni**+**buka ~~branch of the buka tree~~, the daughter of Nakuauwai, set forth in her canoe and sailed Eastwards; she carried with her ^{a ~~branch of the~~ *Ma**+**nga**+**ni**+**buka*} ~~a branch of the~~ ^{MANGANI} ~~tree~~ ^{BUKA}, and three coconuts to be her food as she voyaged. She sailed Eastward until she came to Aba**+**riaria (an islet of Little Makin), and there she drank her first nut. When she was appeased, she threw the husk of the nut into the sea beside Aba**+**riaria, and behold! it became the Gannet which is called Kabukororo.

From Abariaria she sailed Southwards. When she came to Marakei, she broke open her second nut, and threw the husk into the sea. Behold! it became the ^{the} Tropic-Bird.

And again she sailed Southwards, and did not lower her sail until she came to ^c Nukunau. On that island she landed, and planted the ^{*Ma**+**nga**+**ni**+**buka*} ~~branch of the~~ ^{MANGANI} ~~tree~~ ^{BUKA} which she carried. The branch grew roots and became a Tree, and one of the branches of the Tree was Te**+**ra**+**pa, the navigator.

Bikaraa
 1. *Bikaraa* is the only name now identifiable on the chart. It is the most northerly island of the Eastern Marshalls.

A time passed, and Nei Te+maŋga+ni+buŋa arose, for she was about to leave Iŋunau. She mounted on her canoe and voyaged Westwards to the island of Banaba. When she came to Banaba, she landed on the Eastern side, at the place called Te+ngca+baŋke. She went up on shore and dwelt on Banaba, and she called the land whereon she dwelt by the name of Tamoā. That was indeed the first Tamoā, and it was named by Nei Te+maŋga+ni+buŋa.

She lay with a man of Banaba, and Koruruo was her child, a man. He was a navigator. He took his canoe, Te Ruruo, and sailed Eastward to the island of Beru. When he arrived there, he dwelt on the land; and behold! a crack grew in his forehead, and from the crack came forth a man, whose name was Na Areau.

Na Areau lived on Beru and Tabiteuca; he begot children in those places, whose names were Batuku and Au+te+tabanou. As for Koruruo, he left Na Areau and returned to Banaba.

(B)

(2)

^{story}
The tale of the Voyage to Tamoā-the-namesake,

Heaven was not yet separated from Earth, but there came a time when Auriaria, the giant of Banaba, separated them. Auriaria called Na Areau and Riŋki to help him in that work, and when Heaven stood on high he smote the rock of Heaven with his staff, and behold! the lands of Te+bonŋi+~~roŋ~~, which stood on the overside of Heaven, fell into the sea. Those lands were indeed chips of Heaven.

When that was done, Auriaria went Southwards from Banaba; he voyaged in no canoe, but walked upon the sea. When he came to the South, his foot struck a reef rock in the sea: he raised the reef on high and made mountains upon it, but he gave it no name.

Then Koruruo set forth from Banaba on his canoe to voyage over the South, and he came to the land that Auriaria had made. He went ashore; he dwelt in that place; and he

called it by the name of Tamoā-te-īngoa [Samoa-the flamesake], for he remembered the houseplace [Maqina] of his mother on Banaba. He begot children on Tamoā in the South.

Then also did Batuku and Au+te+tabanou, the children of Na Areau, set forth: they voyaged from Tabiteuea and Beru to Tamoā, for they desired to dwell with their grandfather Koruruo. They came to Tamoā and were gathered with their grandfather; they begot children, Te+aro+matang and Kanii. Te+aro+matang and Kanii were the ancestors of the breed of red men, the Breed of Tamoā, and they were Kings on Tamoā. They lived under the Tree Kai+n+tilu+taba.

⑧ (3) The Breaking of the Trees of Tamoā

But when Auriaria of Banaba heard that Na Areau's children had left their homes, and were living in Tamoā, he was angered: he arose and went down to Tamoā; he took the children of Na Areau and flung them Northwards. Batuku fell on Tabiteuea, and Au+te+tabanou fell on Beru.

Then Auriaria planted a second Tree on Tamoā. Out of that Tree sprang men: out of the crest sprang Te+Taake [the Tropic-Bird], and Te Ngutu [the Yellow-billed Tropic-Bird], and Te Koro [the White-tailed Tropic-Bird]; and from the roots sprang Te+Imone; and from a crack in the trunk sprang Taburimai; and from the first bloom [tabaa] sprang Koura.

And behold! the people of the Tree's crest made filthy the ground beneath the Tree, and Koura was angered; so he arose and burned the Tree. Then the people of the Tree scattered. They fled. Te Taake flew with Te Ngutu and Te Koro to Beberiki [Butaritari] and Totoronga [Makin], and Koura voyaged to Beru, where he became a King.

Te Imone