Precedence and privileges of the clans in the manceaba.

Many clans had hereditary privileges or duties connected with the ceremonial of the manceaba, which they must jealously prize and guard. Among these, the group of Karongoa-n-Hea (Karongoa-of-kings), as its name suggests, was fairest princeps. Karongoa-n-Hea was King of the manceaba; at all ceremonial gatherings within the edifice, its chief man—that is to say, the senior descendant through eldest son of the original ancestor—assumed the first word and the last word in debate; which meant in practice that none would open the subject of discussion until he spoke the introductory word, while the summing up or judgment, as the case might be, was entirely in his hands. As a badge of supremacy in council and ceremonial, he wore a fillet about his head, made of a single Rakoko or coconut pinnule plucked from the ivory-white topmost shoot of the tree, and knotted above the middle of his forehead. This fillet must be made of a leaflet which bent from facing the sunrise on the eastern shore of the island, and was called Lumina n taxi, the enamulet of the sun. It symbolized the wearer, Kamaraia, which means that he would cause to be marai, (accused or in danger of sudden death) any person who contradicted him or otherwise.

* Note. I begin a new taka, or to note a taka, he was the first word with the subject of words.
offended his dignity while he performed his ceremonial functions. It seems, however, that this quality of "perilousness" was attached to the person of the Senior Kanongoa-n-Hea man even without the presence of the annulet of the sun, as will be seen later. This annulet, sometimes called alternatively to bunna ni Kamaraia, the annulet of making accused, merely enhanced the sacredness which was already inherent in the individual as a consequence of his birth and function.

Having taken his seat in his box a little in advance of the rest of his clan members, as was the practice of all seniors of clans in ceremonial gathering, the elder of Kanongoa-n-Hea first assumed his sun-annulet and then inaudibly muttered a magical-religious formula called taeata, of which the object was to "make clean the path of his words."* I have been unable to obtain a specimen of this formula, but it is said to have been recited with the head bowed while the hands were slowly raised together, palm on palm. After three consecutive repetitions, the hands were thrown out with palms upward and elbows against the body, and lifting his head the performer said, "Araria, ho iv na orogo" (Take it up, for I will hear). The debate on the...
ceremony might then begin.

Attached to Karongoa-n-nea was a very clear-cut doctrine of infallibility concerning certain race-traditions. This clan is considered still to be the only genuine authority on the myths of the people, especially the creation-myth with its appendices, and on the legends of the immigration from Samoa. This does not mean to say that no other clans are in possession of myths and traditions; many people outside the Karongoa-n-nea group can give versions of the creation-story and the arrival from Samoa, which are the more interesting because they sometimes differ considerably from the Karongoa-n-nea rendering; but they would never dream of putting up their versions in competition with those of Karongoa-n-nea, nor indeed even of mentioning them in the presence of an elder of that clan. In the more informal discussion of tradition that a little gathering of old men will often set going, it was, and still is, considered a grave impropriety to question a detail given by a member of Karongoa-n-nea, or to point out an omission, even though it may be glaringly patent to all present. To dispute such a matter in the past was considered to render a man marana, and liable to mental sickness; and this applies whether the discussion took place in the manaeas or in a private dwelling.

This infallibility in matters of tradition seems to indicate that Karongoa-n-nea
may have been an organisation closely allied to 
the wharekura of the Maoris, and the 
priestly colleges of Polynesia, which were 
also the repositories of such knowledge. It 
is far from my purpose to oppose the 
idea that this was originally a priestly 
clan, but one of its principal differences 
from the social organisations of New 
Zealand and Polynesia is that it seems 
never to have performed the office of 
public genealogist. While pretending to 
absolute knowledge of the names of the 
ancestors who arrived from Samoa, and 
of the social groups to which they belonged, 
it does not claim to be an authority 
upon the generations locally descended 
from them. Thus the younger one 
will decide for 
upon the validity of any man’s 
claim to 
belong to the group, and will 
only go to Karangao-n-Hea for information 
concerning their legendary ancestor who took 
part in the Samoan immigration. More- 
thelss, it seems possible that all genealo-
logical information may at one time have 
been in the keeping of Karangao-n-Hea; 
for it is certainly a fact that the only 
meagre details that exist, concerning the 
Samoan forebears of those clans-ancestors 
who took part in the migration to the 
Gilberts, are obtainable from members 
of this clan alone. That it does 
not now perform the function of public 
genealogist may be due to the scattering 
of the clans piecemeal over sixteen islands, 
which was the immediate result of the
migration from Samoa to the Gilbert Group.

At all ceremonial feasts, when the food was divided formally between the clans in the manner to be described later, Karongoa-n-Hea was given the first portion (ti moana tira), which it then shared with the groups of Karongoa-menske, Katamarae, and on Brem, Aute-Kanawa. As seen in another section, these clans had the same totems and ancestors as Karongoa-n-Hea; the other two groups claiming the same protestant and sang family as Bokor and Taunamoe, had their own separate portions.

On the island of Marakei I was told that after the pandanus harvest had been gathered in, which in a normal year would be about the time of the antimeral equinox, no native was allowed to taste of the various products made with the fruit until a feast had been held in the maneaba of his settlement, and Karongoa-n-Hea had eaten the first fruits. But there seems to be some doubt about this on the island named, and I have been unable to confirm it elsewhere.

In the construction of the maneaba, the first pile of thatches to be laid on the roof was that which faced the middle rafter of the eastern side, whereunder the people of Karongoa-n-Hea were grouped.

A native explanation for the presence of this clan in the ceremonial of the maneaba is that "it is Samoan." That is to

* Note: Box Samoa Karongoa. Salud Samoa Karongoa.
say, it represents the victorious immigration from Samoa into the Gilbert Islands. It is not asserted that Karongoa and its allied groups were the only clans whose ancestors took part in the invasion, or the series of invasions, from Samoa; but it is stated that the progenitors of Karongoa-n-Hea were kings on Upolu before the immigration, and the ancestors of those legendary dynasties of kings which were established on Tarawa, Rennell and Nomonde as a result of the successive waves of invasion from the South. That all the evidence of tradition supports this claim will be shown by reference to the sections in which the legends of the coming from Samoa are analysed. What seems to be fairly well substantiated by the analysis of these traditions is that the final immigration from the South was made by a swarm in which Karongoa was very strongly represented. It is true that an earlier movement from Samoa had already implanted on Tarawa a dynasty of kings called Krista, whose clan is also known to have been Karongoa-n-Hea; but this movement seems to have immediately affected only that single island, whereas the later swarm is shown by direct evidence to have settled upon at least eleven out of the sixteen units. Coming as conquerors to the Group, covering so large an area, and having the prestige of a kingly ancestry on Samoa, it is easy to understand how the people of Karongoa-n-Hea were able
to assume all their hereditary privileges in the maneaba of their new homes, and to establish them so securely as part of the imported social system, that even when the political organisation became modified to the extent that the chiefly and chiefly religious developed into something approaching a democracy, as happened on many islands, the clan still continued to enjoy its ancient preeminence in the social and religious ceremonial of the maneaba.

Beside the title of "Samoa", which is known throughout the group, common consent on several islands, especially Marakei and Maiana, also confers the epithet of "Sun" on the clan of Karongoa-mo-Vea. It has already been seen that the fillet worn on ceremonial occasions by the elder of the group is called the amulet of the Sun; that the stone slab of the maneaba which is included within the clan's sitting-place is named Sun; and that an inhibition upon one who behaves in an unseemly manner within the edifice is the expression Iai Iai i manon te maneaba — The Sun is in the maneaba.

In the native mind of Marakei and Maiana the various components of this complex of ideas connected with the Sun are so dependent one upon the other that they must be regarded simultaneously. We cannot afford to examine them separately and individually if we are to obtain a true view of their significance, since the nature himself does not
methodically distinguish between the component parts of any given compound of beliefs, but regards them, however conflicting and contradictory they may seem to us, as one and indivisible. It is their very quality of togetherness that gives them vital meaning to him. For example, in the complex of beliefs connected with the sun before us, he does not classify the features of the sun-totem as applied respectively to a clan and a stone in the maneaba; he does not say to himself, "the stone is so-named because it is a representation of the Sun's body, and the clan because it is a representation of his power"; he does not even "wonder why"; he simply accepts and states what to him is a fact, that both stone and clan are the Sun. And because the fact is so, the one is permanently and unviolably bound up in his mind with the other. Similarly, in his use of the expression, "the Sun is in the maneaba", he does not stop to ask himself whether he refers to the luminary itself, or its invisible emanation, or the clan, or the stone bearing its name. As he speaks, he means all these things; that is to say, the Sun and the clan and the stone are so intimately linked together in his intimations, that just as an unsatisfied mind will view the structure of chemical solutions as one liquid, so will he embrace in a single thought and evoke in a solitary word the triple unity of Sun, clan and stone. Only by making
this do we obtain a true view of the 
significance of the sun-title bestowed upon 
Karongea-n-nea.

On Manase and Niaian, though the Kingly 
ancestry of this clan connected in its 
"Samoa" contributed towards its preeminence 
in the ceremonial of the mansaba, its title 
to precedence is considered to not chiefly 
upon its identification with the Sun. On 
Afaiong and Tarawa this is still apparent, 
though not so generally known; on Tahitæa 
and Reme it is claimed by a few very 
old men who are themselves members of 
The clan; on other islands it seems to be 
the Samoan connection that now entitles 
Karongea-n-nea to its privileges, both in 
the estimation of its own members and 
that of the general native public.

Though there can be no doubt that the 
people of Karongea-n-nea came as conquerors and 
chiefs to the Group, their prestige in the 
mansaba is now entirely divorced from the 
idea of temporal power, and their privileges 
largely independent of political vicissitudes.

On Afaiong, indeed, where the High Chiefs 
belong to the clan of Kaburara, the Aspiti 
Kemaha of fifty years ago, whose particular 
pleasure it was to override all native 
custom and so display his power, because 
fearers of Karongea's ceremonial prerogatives 
and deliberately assumed them to himself. 
Since then, Kaburara has performed all 
the offices in the mansaba, that used to be 
in the hands of Karongea-n-nea. This 
is an exceedingly interesting illustration of.
The modifications in a social system that may take place in a single generation, as a result of local politics. This coup d'etat of the High Chief of Abemama affected also the two tributary islands of Namukoro and Kuria. Had an enquiries been able to conduct his researches only on these three units of the Group, he would have entirely missed the importance of the Karongoa group in the social organisation of the Gilberts; he would have heard nothing of its connection with the sun; and he would have failed to find any of the Karongoa immigration myths, which throw so much light on the coming from Samoa, for these too faded out of memory with the passing of the privileges of the clan.

The deliberate strokes of disorganisation which Brionca was obliged to effect on Abemama, in order to rob Karongoa of its precedence, only serve to throw into greater relief the durable character of its privileges, for before their spoliation they had subsisted intact through six successive generations of powerful High Chiefs. Their eventual loss for political reasons was quite exceptional, being without a parallel on any other Gilbert Island. Elsewhere, whatever may have been the accidents of war or other material circumstance, Karongoa remained supreme in the mameke from

*Note: Owing to the disruptive influence of the same High Chief, he would also have come to the conclusion that the clan system was very weakly developed, and exogamy almost non-existent. Six section on the clan and marriage.
the time of the Samoan immigration, right up to the coming of the British Flag in 1892. A Karouga man might be stripped of all his lands and forced to do menial work for the victorious chief of another clan, but in the maneaba he spoke with all the old authority; his chief listened meekly to his words, and forbore to contradict, lest he should become maraia. This was recognised on every island, except Ahumana and its tributaries) where the chiefly system prevailed. Furthermore, a chief could not save his face by excluding a Karouga menial from his maneaba; for the members of this clan held the sacred right of demanding entry on any ceremonial occasion, to refuse which was to become immediately maraia.

Neither did the accidents of war affect the internal organisation of the clan. It happened several times during the last two centuries of Tanawana political history that a junior branch of Karouga was on the victorious side, while the senior branch had joined the conquered faction, and consequently became the "ratau out of the hand" of its junior. But this had no effect upon its rights of primogeniture for ceremonial purposes; its eldest representative still remained the spokesman of the entire group in the maneaba. The genetical method of enquiring on five islands has shown me no exceptions to this rule.

* Note. i.e. Manakei, Ahiamang, Tanawana, Maiama, and Nonouti. Butaritai had the chiefly or high-chiefly system, but as shown elsewhere, did not possess the same clan-organisation as the
With reference to temporal power, there is a saying current throughout the Groups that only a dynasty of Hēa (High Chiefs) descended from Karongga can stand firm for very long on any island. This theory is but feebly supported by facts on Abaiang, where perhaps the most powerful of the three lines of High Chiefs found in the Gilberts belongs to the clan of Kalura, and is connected with Karongga only through an ancestry of ten generations back. It is true, however, that on Abaiang the Hēa Kēaia, the founder of his dynasty, is of the Karongga-Hēa group, while on Banatani, though this clan is not an entity of the local social organisation, the High Chiefs, of whom an individual also named Kēaia is the founder in succession, are known to be descended in the male line from the ancient Karongga-Kings of Tarawa. Certainly when temporal power is added to the ceremonial prestige of Karongga, as in Abaiang, the respect paid to the clan is most patent; and this is natural, since its functions are no longer confined to the mānabafa but embrace also the duties and privileges of physical kingship. It is natural, too, that where both ritual and temporal preeminence are vested in the same person, a certain amount of confusion should be apparent and exact limits of his title to respect on the one hand, and to the other. On Abaiang, the High Chief’s membership of the Karongga clan seems in the past to have endowed
his person with a sacredness not enjoyed by
the infinitely more despotic Kaburara King
of Abenama. Not only within, but outside
the maceba, it was an offence to discuss
the lightest word of the Hea, and a
man was considered to be maceba if he
made the smallest of impatient references
to his peculiarities of habit or person. Thus it
seems that the accident of temporal Knighthip
on Abenama extended to political and mundane
life the scope of those sanctions by which
Karonga was ordinarily surrounded only
in the maceba, during the performance
of its ceremonial functions. We have
also an example of this in the legend
of Nri Nwianwu and Beia-ma-Ikai, shown
elsewhere. Beia-ma-Ikai were third
Kings and members of Karonga; therefore,
according to the traditions they were
Karangara at all times, and when Ibaduka
on Nononti expressed his impatience
that the heroes should have chased him
and his folk to that island, he fell
dead on the spot. It may be mentioned
here, that all the Karonga clans in
the Group trace their descent from Beia-
ma-Ikai through one or another of the
Berman conquerors, who settled upon their
islands nine or ten generations ago.
The precedence and the privileges enjoyed by Karongga-n-nea appear to have been the same as all the Three styles of maneaba known to the Gilbertese; the functions of the other clans however varied according to the type of building in which the feast or other ceremony took place. The differences between the Tabiang and the Maungatalaba styles, as far as concerned the precedence of clans and the nature of their duties, were not very pronounced; I shall therefore deal with them together, taking the Maungatalaba maneaba as the basis of my description, and noting in the text any divergence noticed in the Tabiang building. The Tabonite bika style I shall treat separately, as the organisation of the ceremonial therein was markedly different in detail, although similar in general character.

Maungatalaba and Tabiang maneaba.

The clan of Karongga-raeske was considered the companion (rae) and the acolyte (tabonibi, finger) of Karongga-n-nea in the ceremonial of both these maneaba; its members carried messages, generally in whispers, from the sacred clan to the other groups, and in the northern islands its elder often "lifed the word" from the lips of the Karongga-n-nea spokesman; which is to say, the latter whispered his oration in his judgment into the ear of the Karongga-raeske man, who then published it to the maneaba at large. The privilege of this group was to “partake of (Katonga) tea..."
portion" of Karonga-n-Mea in the feast, and for this reason it received no individual share in the distribution of food. Its duty was to supervise the laying of the first "inaari" (mats of green plaited coconut leaf) on the shingled floor of the maneaba. The "first inaari" consisted of a single file of these mats, laid end to end from the southern extremity of the building to the northern gable, up against the western side of the central pillars supporting the ridge-pole; and a second file laid from north to south up against their eastern side. While these were being laid by junior men of the clan, the elder stood in the middle of the building, facing east, and recited a magic formula of which the object was to prevent dissension among those who were to sit in the building.

By a stroke of ill-fortune, the only old man of Abaiang who remembered this formula died suddenly two days before an interview at which he had promised to give it to me. From a conversation I had with him in private, it appears that the material used in the ceremony were the leaf of a newly sprouted coconut, whose pinnales had not yet separated (li ba-mi-Kinaima), and a kiau-n-aini, or cup made of half a coconut shell wherein oil had been boiled, and which had subsequently been taken for magical purposes. A potion was made in this vessel and drunk by the officiant before the laying of the inaari; while the work was in progress, he recited his formula, at the
same time waving the coconut leaf towards the four sides of the building. The time for this ceremony was the morning, before the sun had passed his zenith.

The iuai taken by Karongoa were not furnished by members of the clan, but by the women of the settlement at large. After the first two files were laid, the rest were introduced in any order by any clan. The clan of Katamake shared with Karongoa the privilege of partaking of the portion allocated to Karongoa in the feast. Its duty was to fetch this portion from the middle of the meneke, where the food was divided, to subdivide it into three shares, and keeping one for itself, to hand the other two to their respective owners, giving the choice bits always to Karongoa in the payment for this office, it had the privilege of using the nikina (remainder) and the manger (waste) of the food, the nikina being any "odd one out" left after counting round such things as puddings or babai-roots, and the manger the broken bits that might fall during the process of sub-division.

The Tabiang group had the privilege of receiving the second share of the feast. If a pork was included in the food, the head of the creature belonged by right to this clan. In debate, its elder "used the second word," i.e., he spoken as soon as Karongoa had opened the discussion. With reference to three
privileges of following hard on the heels of Karonga-a-n. Now, and to its position in the northern gable of the maneaba, Talian is sometimes called xea-ni-meang, King of the north.

The groups of Te Kirikiri and Te Ba partook of the portion of Talian in the feast; the former fetching it from the middle of the maneaba and setting it before the latter, which subdivided it and handed out the shares. In reward for its office of Subdivision, Te Ba had the perquisites of miki and munga, exactly as Katarahe in the case of the Karonga groups.

The third portion of the feast, and the "third word" in debate, were taken by the people of Te Bakabaka; the fourth by Te Bakoa; the fifth by Taunnamo; the sixth by the clan of Te Kuna, which also took the tail of the porpoise when it was included in the food.

The seventh portion and the "seventh word" belonged to Tabukkaaho. It was the elder of this clan who supervised the collection of food in the middle of the maneaba, making scathing or complimentary remarks upon it as it arrived, in the manner described a little later; and it was he who made the general division from the central point. This was a highly prized function, the officiater being the cynosure of all eyes. He had the right of the most absolute freedom of speech in respect of the donations of the various people, and it was expected of him that he should
pour forth a stream of humorous remarks during the performance of his duties. One of his chief methods of being funny was to make wanton allusions to race traditions, such as the legends of the coming from Samoa, as illustration of his points; the humor lying in the inconsequence or the gross inconsequence of his quotations. It was said of the Tabukakao people that "they knew no traditions but they were clever in cancriug laughter," and it is certainly a fact to this day that the most successful raconteurs of humorous stories on the various islands are generally found to be Tabukakao men.

The young men of this clan did the manual labours of dividing the food, under the direction of the elder, and they handed out the portions to those sent to fetch them. In payment for its work, the clan took the nihiua and the manoa left over from the general division.

The eighth share and "work" belonged to Nukumanea. This group had the very important function of covering the ridge of the maneaba with its capping of plaited pandanus or coconut leaf.

After the eighth portion of the feast had been given, the other clans appear to have followed in any order; and similarly, after the eighth speaker in debate, the discussion became general.

The clan of Karumaetea was architect of the maneaba called Tabiang, its ancestor being Towatu of Natang who built the first edifice of that type on
the north end of Bem, twenty-odd generations ago (see sections on traditions connected with the maneaba). In its possession were all the magic formulae connected with the Tabiang style of construction.

Abalon and Maerne shared between them the method and the magic of the Maungata-Tabu architectural style. But although in theory it was admitted that a Karum-maeto man was the best architect for Tabiang, and a member of Abalon or Maerne for Maungata-Tabu, a certain amount of confusion existed in practice. When the people of a settlement wished to build a new maneaba in a particular style, say that of Tabiang, a Karum-maeto man might not be available; they might then obtain the services of a Maerne or Abalon architect, who would copy the Tabiang style, but use the magic associated with Maungata-Tabu. This would be considered satisfactory, the magic and the ritual connected with it being the essential thing. Takenta of Marakei, who built the Maungata-Tabu maneaba of which I have given the ground-plan, is a Karungoa-maeroke man, and therefore strictly the architect only of the Bbon tobi style. But his constructive ability is so great in the native estimation that he has been called upon to build in all of the three styles, in preference to experts whose claim gave them in theory the prior claim to consideration. In all cases, he used the magic connected with the
maneaba of Tabon-ta-bike.

Te Wiwi had the duty and the sole privilege of blowing the conch, at whose signal the people gathered in the maneaba. The order to sound it was sent by the elders of Karonga-mana, who transmitted it first to the elders of Karonga-mereke, who in turn deputed a junior of his clan to carry the message. As noted elsewhere, the conch was one of the totems of Te Wiwi, being the invention of the clan ancestor and god Te-i-mone, king of the underworld.

Members of Keaki had the right of prior entry into the maneaba, not in the sense that they took their places before anyone else went in, but that when one or more arrived in a crowd at the western side of the building, their companions of other clans would stand aside to let them pass first.
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<td>Buatara the stingray</td>
<td>Buatara</td>
<td>Stingray</td>
<td>Mukaaru (laid)</td>
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<td>Bangauma</td>
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<td>Te Mamaang</td>
<td>Stingray</td>
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<td>Octopus</td>
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<td>Taburinai</td>
<td>Taburinai</td>
<td>Garfish</td>
<td>Kaupoungi</td>
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<td>Mi Ismaiti</td>
<td>'Ni Ismaiti</td>
<td>Stone</td>
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