SKETCH PLAN OF THE SUBJECT.

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

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

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

(2) There are, indeed, preserved in these versions still a few faint memories of a remoter fatherland: such, for instance, as the opening phrase of the Tabiteuea myth at page ...; "The First Tree was called Te Bakatibu Taai (The Ancestor Sun), and it stood on the land of Abatoa". But words of this sort, though pregnant with meaning for us, are repeated parrot-wise, without understanding, by modern native chroniclers, whose answer to all queries is, "We do not know what it means; we
learned it from our ancestors", or, at the most, "The lands before Samoa were slave lands and spirit lands". And following upon such digressions almost invariably comes an unqualified restatement of the race-creed, "Samoa was the first human land; there grew our ancestors".

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

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

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

The result of this strife, or, more probably, of the overpopulation caused by the amalgamation of the two races, was a general exodus southwards. Down the chain of central oceanic islands sailed a now mixed Taburi-mai - Na-areau folk, searching for new homes, until it came to Upolu of Samoa. There for a great while
they settled; long enough indeed for them to style themselves autochthones of the land; yet not for so long that they had forgotten the way back to their home in the atolls, for when their tree on Upolu was shattered, and their families were dispersed, some of them were able to return on the old track and repopulate the Gilbert Group. But that was only after a struggle with their own ancestral kin, whose forefathers had not joined in the migration to Samoa.

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

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

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

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

The manner in which two systems blend, and the nature of the resultant
stratification, depend upon the circumstances under which they have come into contact.
The most complete and wholesale results are, no doubt, achieved by migration, followed
by conquest or absorption of races; but striking innovations may be wrought in the
religion of a people by accidents of which history takes no cognisance. The arrival
of some far-wandered castaway, who has a tale to tell or a trick of magic to display,
may be responsible for the adoption of a new god or a series of new gods. This
would be more especially possible in the Gilbert Islands, where priesthood is a
purely family matter, and where the matriarchate seems to be so evenly balanced aga-

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

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

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

The most fruitful cause of stratification is certainly the war of conquest. A victorious invader in the Pacific is seldom accompanied by his women; therefore, although he may have reduced some aboriginal population to a state of servitude or outlawry, wherein its traditions are in danger of obliteration, he must still depend upon it for his wives. These wives keep alive in the household of the conqueror many autochthonous rites, customs and traditions that would otherwise have suffered oblivion. This intra-mural process must necessarily be affected by the social relations of conqueror and conquered. If, as might happen on a large island, the beaten
aborigines retired to the interior, and a long period of feud preceded the ultimate fusion of the two peoples, the composite theology of the united folk would in after times reflect the ancestral hatred, and show some very distinct lines of cleavage. The gods of victors and vanquished would not dwell together in unity. The former would usurp the realms of heavenly space and light; the latter would be deposed therefrom and, perhaps, thrust into the infernal regions. A good illustration of both cases is to be found in the single person of Polynesian Tangaroa. In the Western Groups he is a son of Heaven, a sun-god, a lord of light, even light itself - in short, the god of a conquering race. In the eastern Groups he is a spirit of the underworld, a lord of darkness, an evil and fearsome being - the god of a race conquered indeed, but terrible still in conquest.

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

Yet there cannot exist a complete amity from the outset between two rival races brought thus into intimate contact; however complete the fusion of blood in after days, there must be an initial period of hate and intrigue, perhaps the more
bitter because of the confined space into which invader and invaded are crammed. Such rivalry would almost certainly become the subject of a race-tradition subsisting long after the amalgamation of the conflicting stocks, and an excellent example of it is to be seen in the Na-areau exploits [of Chapter ..................................................]

THE NA-AREAU EXPLOITS.

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

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

Material to be discussed in a later chapter shows clearly that black-skin Na-areau was the original settler, while brown-skin Taburi-mai was the intruder; and these are notable facts, for, in the ultimate blend of race theogonies and traditions, it is Na-areau, the invaded, whose vile tricks upon the invaders are always successful. From this we are to gather that, though Taburi-mai and his light-skinned companions were strong enough to force a footing on the islands, they eventually lost their pre-
ponderance, and were absorbed into the darker indigène, whose creating spirit thus triumphed over that of the conquerors. Nevertheless, the balance of power could never have swung very violently from party to party, for though the creator of the black people reigned supreme, he reigned in a universe otherwise constructed on a Polynesian model: the Beginning was a darkness (A0) and a cleaving together (Maki) of the elements, in true Maori style. Presuming this basic concept to belong to the races classified as Polynesian, it is safe to suppose that Taburimai the brown-skin and his people contributed it as their share of the confused cosmogony before us. Further, it was the paradise of the brown men that the amalgamated races eventually accepted, as will appear more clearly in later chapters; and it is Taburimai, Tabuariiki and the like, who are now the objects of the ancestral cult from end to end of the Group. Why, then, should the black Nauruan reign supreme? The answer seems to be, that, the brown folk, having invaded the islands with a power sufficient to establish their religious system, were nevertheless at a later date forced to admit the ascendancy of the Nauruan people, whose god was then enthroned on the apex of the structure.

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

**NOTEWEBBE TRADITIONS.**

(5) That a black folk was once in subjection to a brown seems to be clearly shown by the Notewebbe traditions. At page ... in chapter ... we see a Notewebbe portrayed as one of the bogeys who block the way of the departed souls to the land of Matang. Matang is palpably a paradise of the brown men, for it is inhabited by the blonde Tiumau-bine, whose fathers were Tangaroa and Timira, well-known as Gilbertese Timira is better known as Manganan Timira. The characteristics of his home Motu-tapu, or Sacred Isle, in Manganan myth, are the same as those of Gilbertese Matang: it sinks and floats as the god wills; but in the Gilbertese tales, his daughter Tiumau-bine usurps his supremacy.
fair-skins throughout Polynesia. Heuwehwe, on the other hand, is an old black man, evidently no relation of the beings in Matang. His look is slavish; his occupation of cleaning up rubbish on the road is that of a slave; he grins and grimaces like an idiot - or a slave, for the word pang applied to him in the context has both significations in Gilbertese; and he is dumb - the first mark of slavery in the estimation of the islanders. Yet evidences of a former greatness still cling about him: his art is the way, or catocradles, of which he is the presiding deity, and in the changing patterns of the way, as old men assert, an expert could portray the successive stages of creation. By his catocradles, then, we may connect Heuwehwe with some forgotten creation-myth, and it is quite possible that we have in him the creating spirit (or the high priest of a creating spirit) of a black people, flung into Nades and branded with slavery by the brown Matang-race. Evidently of the same complexion, and probably of the same obliterative theology, as Heuwehwe are those dark-skinned, huge-sared, red-eyed, and cannibalistic hags, who collaborate with him in barring the soul's progress to Paradise.

Turning now from the account of the spirit to that of the man or rather the eponymous clan - Heuwehwe, at p. . . . and . . , we see him first pictured as the uncouth slave of the king of farawa, burning his fingers at the cooking fire (a menial post), and getting his head broken for his pains. This is very much in keeping with the colours in which the (is painted in the Matang-myth; the condition of a god reflects the fate of his people.

But eventually, as the story shows, Heuwehwe made a lucky marriage, and with the help of his sons threw off the yoke of servitude; he fled from island to island, relentlessly chased by his masters, until at last, on the island of Tabiteuea, the latter "no longer persecuted them", for the erstwhile slave and his sons "were very strong, and their family was mighty on Tabiteuea. So it is until this day". It would be very pertinent if we could now show the god of the Heuwehwe
folk elevated by the reversal of fortunes into a position of honour in the
Gilbertese pantheon. But we cannot first, because the successes of the clan were
not of a scope far-reaching enough to affect the religious system of the Gilbertese
race; and secondly, because the gods of Nimaena, with whom Neubwebwe made his fort-
unate alliance, are those which their descendants have adopted. Nevertheless, in
Neubwebwe himself, the supreme, I apprehend that we see the god of a people to whom
related the Neubwebwe clan was originally MEME. His ascendency, and the amalgamation of
the black and brown races in the group, had been accomplished at a date much earlier
than the Nimaena-Neubwebwe alliance, which happened (as we shall see later) in about
1250 A.D., but just such turnings of the table between the conflicting peoples as
those now under discussion, I think we may attribute the pre-animism of Neubwebwe.

The Neubwebwe clan was, as I believe, a fraction of the black Neubwebwe
race, which had been reduced to slavery early in the struggle between autochthonous and
invader, and therefore had not taken part in the fusion of the two stocks. Thus, it
remained of pure blood, and in subjection to the kings of Tarawa, until an alliance
with the Nimaena clan from Samoa gave it power, in the 13th century, to break its
bonds, and establish itself eventually on the island of Tabitieve.

THE FOOLs AND DEAF MUTES (BA’BA MA BONO).

A most interesting litter of personalities is the Company of Fools and
Deaf-mutes, who, in nearly every creation story of the group, are said to have been
Neubwebwe’s assistants or slave spirits in the lifting of heaven. Their confusion
forms a notable commentary on the postulate that inter-penetration rather than
stratification of theogonies takes place when two alien races are gribbled together
within very narrow areas.

Sandwiched between heaven and earth in the first darkness lie the Ba’ba
ma Bono, huddled, as it were, into that convenient limbo without respect for colour
or association. Some are plainly related to the brown-skins, others as clearly to
the dark race. Several have the rage of a former prestige still clinging to them, but of the vast majority all distinguishing features save the bare names have been swallowed up in forgetfulness. Their names are literally legion—hundreds are known to the native historians of the Group; but dark or fair, obscure or distinguished in the parts they are said to have played in creation, they are united by a common brand: they were slaves; they were senseless and inert in their dark places between heaven and earth until their master Napierana bade them arise and do his work.

The commonest form of tale in which one hears of the Fools and Deaf-mutes is exemplified by the Mokouhi creation myth. According to this typical account, they were not created by Napierana, but found asleep by him when he entered between heaven and earth. Their position reminds us at once of the children of Rangi and Papa in the Maori myth, and it is very interesting to note that the epithets applied to them by Napierana are precisely Rangi and Papa. These words, in modern Gilbertese, mean respectively and (or servile) and foolish. The inference is, that the names of Rangi the Clear Sky and Papa the Earth Mother have fallen into such contrast with this race that they are now only applied to slaves, madmen or idiots and this seems to point to the submission of a Rangi and Papa people at some remote period in the history of one ancestral branch of our islanders. Some faint reminiscence of the grief of Rangi and Papa when separated seems still to lurk in Maorid speech of which the opening words are, "Bark, bark! How it grows!"

The curious Maiana account of creation which goes nearer to an idea of an absolute Napierana than any other version, shows us how the Fools and Deaf-mutes were made from mangles by the creator. The same idea is presented in one

I think that many of these names are late additions, the imagination and ingenuity of the chroniclers having been applied to the devising of apposite or humorous titles: e.g. Ko-ra - You eructate, Ko-tine - You pass wind; Ten Kaminin - Mr. Masturbator; and so on. It is, however, possibly significant that these beings with highly inelegant names are all reputed to have been black.
of Turner's Samoan tales, of how men and women grew from maggots on the creeper planted by Tuna, daughter of the heavenly Tangaloa.

Accounts of the Basha ma Bono become confusing in the creation myths remaining for reference. The Boro version at page ... makes no mention of them in its rough preatory cosmology, but places Riiki the Bel, who by all other records was the chief of their number, under the Tree of Abatea as Na∗reau's earliest ancestor.

In an equally rude cosmology constructed on Polynesian lines, the second Boro version at page ... descends the Basha ma Bono from Sand and Water in two successive generations. The elder generation consists of Riiki the Bel, Tanakea the Turtle, two Sting Rays, and an unnamed multitude of others. These are born without sensory senses, but their senior brother and sister, Na∗tibiu and Tanakea (who are not Descendants), beget a second generation consisting of Te∗kahai (The Eldest), Nei Marena (The woman between), Te∗ño (The Wave), and Na∗tike (The Octopus), who also remain senseless until raised by Na∗reau the Younger. The most important of these will now be discussed.

NAGATIBIU and TE†AKEA.

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

In a myth [exhibited farther on] we shall see that Sun and Moon are believed by some to have been made from a Sting Ray's eyes, and this concatenates that fish and Vatea for us. Now the Sting Ray in Gilbertese story is essentially the creature of Tuitaibine the blonde, and she was the daughter of Timiriu and Tangeroa. Turning to Mangalea myth, we learn that Timiriu was the younger brother of Vatea.

We can hardly avoid the inference that there must have existed a close
relation between Gilbertese Tituaa-bine and Polynesian Akea, Vatea, Atea, or Waka. And as Tituaa-bine and Timirau are the centre of the fair-haired and fair-skinned group of beings, we would attach Akea to the same company, and conjecture that the ideas connected with this personality were a legacy to Gilbertese myth from the brown-skinned folk.

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

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

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

NA•KlKA THE OCTOPUS.

(11) I cannot with certainty place Na•Kika. In the Gilbert Group, he is still
associated with a white shell (one of the Cypraeae) used for personal adornment and
for garnishing the ridge-poles of houses. This shell is said to ward off evil fortune.
In Samoa, the Fe'o or Octopus was a village god of eminence, also connected with
a white shell (Cypraeus ovula), which was suspended in the house of the priest, ac-

(12) through this link we are to identify Na•Kika with the Fe'o
of Samoa, we have in him a very ancient Polynesian deity, because, rightly or wrongly,
the Samoans connect the Octopus god with those archaic megalithic remains on Upolu
called ha•aleo o la Fe'o, the House of the octopus. But even if this be so, I am
inclined to think that Na•Kika is a deity borrowed from the Samoans during the
sojourn of the Gilbertese ancestors on Upolu, because there appears to be no gene-
alogical connection between him and any of the families at present in the Gilbert
Islands.

TABANA THE TURTLE.

(13) Tabana may almost certainly be classed as one of the chief gods of the
black race. It will be convenient to discuss his personality later, in conjunction
with that of Na•Kika, for anything that may be said as to the origin of the dark-
egioned people who first populated the Gilbert Islands will be supported by facts
from the history of these two characters. Tabakes figures rather largely in our
text; he appears in two myths as the originator of the fire-sticks \[\text{(pp ... and ...)};
he is mentioned generally up and down the Group as one of the Fools and Deaf-mutes;
he is known as the patron of several forms of divination, formerly much used; and
again, by a widespread tradition, reflected in the Buatairu myth \[\text{(at page ...)}, he
is regarded still to haunt the eastern shore of every island, where the souls of all
dead men come to him to be directed to the land of shades. His name is attached to
many island landmarks, especially to rocks and stones of more than usual size, which
predisposes one to believe that his people were early settlers. In the history of
the ancestor To-scanning \[\text{(at page ...)}, we have a pertinent support to such a belief:
the tale begins, "The man Toanga and the woman Kiona grew on the island of Bera; they
had been there for all time, for they were not of the Samoan breed". The grandson
of these aboriginal inhabitants was the ancestor To-scanning; to find a name for whom,
his parents took him to the various gods of the sea-shore in turn, until they came to
Tabakes on the northern tip of Bera.

Tabakes was clearly, therefore, a god of the earliest known inhabitants of
the islands. We have seen in one fire myth, and shall see later in many another
tradition, that he was called the Father of Hataereu. I think we may be fairly cer-
tain that he was a god of the dark-skinned folk, which is all that need be shown at
present.

Riki the Eel.

The evidence that we have of Riki the Eel seems to show that he was an
ancestral god of the dark race, but I would not care to definite on this. There
are hosts of major and minor eel gods all over the Pacific. From Turner's account
of Samoa we gather that many village deities, quite unrelated to one another, were
associated with this creature; whose widespread cult among the islanders is not sur-
prising: there are so many that they were sea-faring folk and could hardly fail to be
impressed by the qualities of the Pacific conger.

Rikiki's affinities with Polynesia are rather vague, but as the litter of heaven he seems to have some relationship with the eel god of Samoa called Fuai Langi, the beginner of Heaven. In Ru, the sky supporter of Mangaian myth, there are also some faint reminiscences of his personality. Ru dwelt in Avaiki, the ancestral homeland, and he was the father of Maui. Rikiki dwelt in the First Land under the First Tree, and was the ancestor of Na'areu. Between the characters of Na'areu and Maui, as also between some of their exploits, we shall later observe some remarkable similarities. This, then, is the first affinity between Ru and Rikiki.

In the myth of Monahiki, Ru and Maui raised the sky by lying, kneeling, standing, and pushing with their arms in succession, and this reminds us of the Nounou account of the lifting of heaven, in which Rikiki played so large a part. Maui flung Ru into the sky; Na'areu did the same for Rikiki. It seems just possible that in the Rikiki-Na'areu stories we have a set of traditions derived from the same source as the Ru-Maui tales.

North of the Gilbert Group, in the Marshall Islands, there is a belief that the worm Ullip enlarged the vault of heaven by pushing it with sticks; from a swelling in his brow was then born a progeny of star-gods. The form of Ullip the Worm is analogous to that of Rikiki the Eel; his instrument for expanding heaven is reminiscent of the beam used by the Poole and Peaf-mutes, according to the Nounou account; while the birth of his sons from a swelling in the brow is the same as that of Na'areu from Tabakea's forehead in the fire-myth and other tales. Lastly, Ullip was the father of star-gods; Rikiki's body became the Milky Way.

See Samoan creation myth, page ...
See P. Erdmann, Die Marshall Inseln, p ...
Page ...  
Page ....

Op. also the birth of Tangarea from a boil in Papa's arm, in Mangaian myth.
But the most considerable information about Riki comes from the Gilbert
Group. His name, like that of Taoske, is attached to many landmarks, which argues,
as I believe, a very ancient association with the place. On Bora, Nikumau and Aran-
aua are famous fish and eel ponds, of natural configuration, reputed to have been
made by Riki's convulsions on falling from heaven. The island of Tarawa is said to
have been cut up by him into its numerous component islets when, his work of lifting
the skins completed, he wriggled back to the sea; and another tradition relates
now, when his task was finished, "he fell slanting, as a coconut tree" and, lying
in the ocean, solidified, to become the island of Nikumau.

There is a notable reference to this ancestral being, or his clan, in
the opening words of the Bora tale: "When Nafuenu had begotten children
on the Woman of the South, he went over the ocean and lay with ...... the Woman of
the North; and he begot children on her, a slavish breed, Taburismanai and Riki, the
children of the northern Woman". The tale, it must be remembered, is told by
a modern Gilbertese race whose Forefathers were so long on Samoa that they believed
themselves antecedents of that land. It is somewhat startling, therefore, to hear
from them, a Taburismanai folk, that there was another Taburismanai in the North, who
with Riki shared the brand of slavery. (I hope to show later that it means) that
the Taburismanai folk of the North were the ancestors of the Taburismanai folk who went
to Samoa: when the latter were driven out of Upolu, they returned to the Gilbert
Islands, fought with their own ancestral kin, enslaved them, and thus stigmatised
them in subsequent traditions with a servile name.

The coupling together of Taburismanai's and Riki's names in the text is
significant: each represents a people. Taburismanai was of one racial type, Riki of
another - in fact, of the dark-skinned folk who produced Nafunuan and Taoske. We
seem to find some confirmation of this conjecture in the cosmology introducing the
Bora myth (at page ...) which sets Riki under the first ancestral tree on the
and of Abaeo, and names his as the lineal ancestor of Na-Area. Taken in conjunction with the suggestion of the Tabiteuan version [at page ...] which descends Na-Area from Noao-kai and Naau-imaia, the two great gods, it affords reasonable grounds for believing that Ri'i'ki the Eel was an ancestral god of the dark-skinned race, and possibly a submerged creating spirit of the Na-Area clan.

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

From the chaos of the darkness and the clearing together, we have thus in a cursory fashion attempted to allocate to their respective peoples two groups of gods. The Akes-Titua-Tangaroa class belongs unquestionably to the brown Taburi-nai race, and is essentially Polynesian in character; the Tabakea-Na-Area-Ri'i'ki element appears to go to the Melanesians. Of the many Feela and Nuku-maiis mentioned MME by name through the Group, some are called plainly ha-ama, black, while others are said to have been u'a-ura, red or brown. Everything in our evidence goes to show that these colours were characteristic of the races to whom they belonged. If it has not appeared clearly as yet, that black man and brown man did indeed meet, and fight, and ultimately mingle on the islands of the Gilbert Group, I think that proof of this will not be lacking in later chapters.