A Mythological Charter for "Making a Boy Wild" in the Gilbert Islands

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Introduction

PRECEDENT, DISCIPLINE, AND EDUCATION are some of the reasons that in the 1940s led a few families in Tabiteuea, Gilbert Islands, Micronesia, to put their sons secretly through as much of an old initiation ceremony of "making a boy wild" as was known from hearsay or personal experience and adapted to a changing society. The ceremony, months but formerly years long, is a rite of transition to change the status of a *roronga* (youth) in his early twenties to that of a *rorobuaka* (warrior), an able-bodied, fully mature man.[1]

In earlier times a boy was regarded from birth as a potential participant in inter- and intra-island feuds and battles. Consequently from the time he was weaned, his male relatives conducted rites of passage at various developmental stages to prepare him for the final ceremony that would qualify him as a *rorobuaka.* Some of these early rites, like the *rorobuaka* ceremony, continue in modern times.

Of special interest for this paper are five myths and a passing mythological reference that I hypothesize constitute, among other functions, a mythological charter to justify this process of physically, emotionally, and mentally training and hardening a youth to accomplish a man's work courageously and correctly on atolls of limited resources and many hardships. Two myths are Tabiteuean; the others come from Beru, Tarawa, and Banaba (Ocean Island), the last an isolated island occupied by people closely related to the Gilbert islanders. All are set in the era of creation except for the myth from Beru, which is set about five generations later.

Within a day or so of my arrival in Tabiteuea in 1948 to do ethnographical fieldwork I

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heard what was to be the first of many variants to become familiar to me from narrators, manuscripts, and publications recounting all or parts of the career of the god who to narrators in Tabiteuea, Tarawa, and Banaba was the first to go through a ceremony that one Tabiteuean explicitly equates to that of a human youth's initiation. The initiate was Na Areau, like Adam a universal ancestor for everyone and the great-great-grandfather of the wife of Te Mamaang of Beru who went through a comparable ritual and was later deified by his descendants.

It is not surprising that the first initiation should be projected back to the period when Na Areau played an active role in creation. I found his spirit, and those of certain of his contemporaries and descendants, invoked in Tabiteuea in chants accompanied by offerings on various occasions. When village Old Men (clan elders or community leaders) explained to me serious matters about customs or events preceding the historical period, and even during it, they often began by describing the beginning of all things when there was nothing—no earth, no sky, only Na Areau—or, in some variants, not even Na Areau. Sir Arthur Grimble, who collected much information when he served the British Government in this former Crown Colony, reported that in Beru an aged chronicler[2] said, "It is fitting that I should begin with the Beginning of Things. Then there shall be no going back and no confusion of heart" (Grimble 1922:97). The archipelago shares a general framework of tradition but each chronicler narrates his clan's variant of the particulars. If an Old Man plunged directly into telling me about a certain event he hoped that I knew where it fitted into his clan traditions. He expected too that after comparing his narrative with that of other clans I would perceive that his was the one and only truth and substantiated his group's claim to certain privileges and duties in the *maneaba* (village assembly house).

Narrators differ as to whether there is one Na Areau or two of that name, each with a special role, personality, and epithet. Talking to Grimble, two Old Men—Taakeuta of Marakei Island and Mareko of Beru (who also told of Te Mamaang's initiation)—identified two Na Areaus, the Elder and the Younger (Grimble 1952:165–172).[3] A native Hawaiian missionary in the Gilberts during the latter part of the nineteenth century, who labelled Na Areau "Creator of the earth," added that there are Na Areau Ikawai (Elder) and Na Areau, "these (names being) applied now to Jehovah and Jesus, like Kane and Kanaloa" (in the Hawaiian Islands) (Hyde [?], n.d.).[4] Myths about Na Areau's initiation, however, name only one Na Areau, who combines cosmic and mischievous roles, personalities, and sobriquets that in some other myths are assigned to two Na Areaus.

Although his name means Sir Spider, Na Areau is seldom thought of as an arachnid except in calling a large spiderweb *maneaba-n-Na Areau* (Na Areau's assembly house). A Tabiteuean, hearing that the Hawaiian missionary had described Na Areau as "a god with the form of a fly, a mud wasp," corrected it to spider. Narrators naming Tab'akea (Hawksbill Turtle) and not Na Areau as the first of gods say that Na Areau came forth, sometimes as a lizard, from a boil or cleft on Tab'akea's forehead; Tab'akea, by a rite of passage described below in the initiation myth by Te Itirake of Banaba, transformed the lizard into a small but powerful man. On Maiana Island, Na Areau the Younger sprang out, it is said, as a little man from a swelling on Na Areau the Elder's forehead as he sat on a mud seat he had made (Grimble 1922:106).[5]

Whether a narrator interprets Na Areau as a preexistent or a later god does not determine, it seems, whether he classifies him as an *anti* (god) or an *anti-ma-aomata* (god combined with human being). The terms shade into each other and are loosely used for a god,

a demigod, or a human-but-extraordinary ancestor (perhaps deified) who may assume the *rabata* (body) of a nonhuman creature or an inanimate object, which may become an *atua* (totem) of a clan tracing descent from the supernatural being. Na Areau, despite his powers of transformation and prominence in genealogies, rituals, and myths, is not, so far as I know, the *atua* of any clan.

THE HUMAN CEREMONIES

Before taking up myths about Na Areau's and Te Mamaang's rites of passage I shall summarize what a Gilbertese young man would endure during a liminal period to qualify as a *rorobuaka* before and during some of the historic period. One may then well ask if Na Areau and Te Mamaang suffered more than their descendants!

Three Tabiteuean names for the ceremony, also used in the myths, are *te kaunaki* or *te kaun* (the making "wild" or "angry"—aggressive, courageous, high-spirited); *te koreaki* or *te korean atuna* (the being cut or the cutting of the head); and *te bekua* (the working-at). Grimble (1921:38) called it *te kana-ni-m'aane* (the diet of a full-grown man) because for the first time the youth—presumably when the ritual ends—receives a man's diet.[6] The Reverend Father Ernest Sabatier (1954:973), without naming the ceremony, defined *kana-ni-m'aane* as the meal, recalling that eaten by the gods Tabuariki, Taburimai, Auriaria, "and others," which a warrior at the end of initiation eats alone outside his hut while seated on a flat stone called *te ati-ni-kana* (the stone for eating). One inevitably wonders if the gods named were also initiated like Na Areau.

To Sabatier, *te ati-ni-kana* is also "truly the stone where fire is eaten" because earlier in the ceremony the initiate sits on it, looks without wincing into a blazing fire, eats scraped coconut meat, and stoically bears his mentors' showers of hot coals and blows (Sabatier 1954:66). Grimble, who understood the name of the stone to refer to feeding the fire, also gave it as the name of the third in a series of rites in initiation and a synonym for *te ati-ni-kaioro* (Grimble 1921). According to Nei (Lady) Tearia, a woman of Tabiang village, Banaba, *te ati-ni-kaioro* was among things washed away with the roots of the Ancestral Tree when it fell at Taamoa (Samoa). The things were "*Te kai-ni-kaewaewa, Te kai-ni-kakiki* (two forms of magic ritual used by composers of dancing chants), *Te ati-ni-kaioro* (one of the forms of ritual used for the initiation of youths into manhood), *Maa-n-Na Areau* (Na Areau's Fishtrap), *Te kere* (the Female Organ), *Te kabanga* (the Male Organ)."[7]

Grimble's description (1921:37–41—the only one published) of the Gilbertese and Banaban initiation of a *rorobuaka* did not identify sources either as to informants or specific islands. The pattern is probably similar throughout the Gilberts, for it is discernible in the generalized account told to me by a middle-aged Tabiteuean, a Christian convert, who, without letting me know if he had been initiated, said that he "had seen it done" when he was young; as unauthorized persons are excluded from the rites, he had most likely been the initiate. I did not learn how many Tabiteueans he knew had been initiated and if in a family with several sons only the most favored, usually the eldest, is initiated. Grimble implied that all youths, being potential warriors, are initiated.

According to Grimble (1921), when a youth is between the ages of 20 and 25 and his older male relatives decide that he is fully mature physically, they meet to choose the day to start the youth's initiation, which may last at least three years. The meeting takes place at sunset, when *Rimwimaata* (Antares) begins to appear in the east.[8] For about fifteen years the youth has lived meagerly as the adopted son of his paternal grandfather or the

latter's brother whom he calls *tibu* (guardian). Tibu, a general term for any ancestor, is also used reciprocally between grandparent and grandchild, adoptive parent and adopted child. The youth serves his *tibu* in return for acquiring his knowledge and skills, and eventually a large piece of land.

The first rite, *te kauraa* (the reddening or scorching), begins before sunrise east of the youth's father's house. After a meal of coconut the neophyte sits facing east toward a huge fire, while his father cuts his long hair with a large shark tooth. On either side is a paternal uncle to mock and beat him with fans if he winces from the pain of the fire or the shark tooth. At dawn a small portion of his hair is thrown into the fire, the remainder saved.

In the second rite, *te kabue-ari* (the burning of the eyebrows), the guardian shakes sparks from a burning, shrivelled coconut leaf over the initate's shorn head and shoulders, while the uncles brush off larger pieces but leave the smaller, again taunting and beating him if he flinches. They repeat this rite twice more at the same (undesignated) phase of the moon.

In the third rite, *te ati-ni-kana* (the stone for feeding), at the beginning of the fourth moon, the youth sits on a flat stone before sunrise, again facing east toward a large fire of fiercely burning ironwood *(ngea, Pemphis acidula).* He drinks, with undescribed effects, a potion of equal parts of fresh water, sea water, and coconut oil stirred in a coconut shell with a stingray barb, in order to gain courage for the next ordeal and for the rest of his life. With an uncle on each side of him, the youth's father lacerates his scalp with a shark tooth until blood streams down his face. Then they leave him seated on the rock but return occasionally to replenish the fire and beat him if he droops or turns away. They repeat this rite twice more at the same phase of the moon. Six months have now passed.

In the unnamed fourth rite, beginning in the fourth moon in the same phase, the initiate, attended only by his guardian, moves to a specially built pandanus-thatched hut on the eastern beach to live there until the thatch rots and leaks—at least two and a half years but in a series of dry seasons as many as five. Only his guardian and older kinsmen who bring food may come near him. He has to obey his guardian implicitly, never leave the hut without his permission, perform every assigned task of endurance, and hear about a man's duties and value system, his ancestors' courage and strength, and the importance of thinking only of deeds befitting a warrior. Demands on his strength and endurance increase as the thatch decays. If he fails he has to try until he succeeds. As in all four rites, numerous spells (not quoted by Grimble) and his family's magic and ancestral spirits usually insure success. Otherwise a second hut is built and training continues as before.

When he returns home he is a *rorobuaka,* permitted now to marry and to receive his first real weapon, which his guardian has made for him during the third rite. It is a coconut-wood lance, 10–12 feet long, with shark teeth along each edge and each tooth fastened with a strand of coconut fiber twisted with a strand of the youth's hair cut during the first rite. The *rorobuaka* is now between the ages of 25 and 28.

On Banaba, a boy's head is shaved three times, Grimble (1921) continued. The first, as in the Gilberts, is at weaning; the second when he is about ten, when ashes of his ceremonially burned, shorn hair are rubbed on his body; the third in his early twenties when he eats the ashes of his hair mixed with coconut meat, and carries, if he can, a large rock from his hut to the shore. If successful, he sits facing the sea while his father strikes him on the chest three or four times with the butt end of a coconut leaf and sets a little fire of twigs burning on his shaven scalp. Either his paternal grandfather or an uncle, yelling loudly and brandishing a warclub, sweep off the embers. It is a good omen if the club glances on

his skull to stun him and draw blood. If he flinches at any time the ceremony stops, to be renewed when his hair is long again.

A Gilbertese boy's first haircut *(te kabaka-ira)* is at about age two when his father or other paternal kinsman cuts his hair with a shark tooth. Then, while a kinsman (no women may be present) holds him near a fire, the haircutter burns the shorn hair. Spells during the ceremony are to harden the boy's heart against love of women, for, until he is a *rorobuaka* and ready to marry, women will make him cowardly.

So far as Grimble knew, Gilbertese do not have a second haircutting rite like that on Banaba, but Parkinson (1889:36) had earlier described a series of haircutting rites on unidentified islands in the Gilberts. From the first cutting at weaning, until age six, a boy's head is kept shorn to the scalp. Then after about a year an old man, perhaps a famous warrior, cuts it and lacerates the boy's forehead to make blood flow; he accompanies each cut with the same spell to make the boy valiant in war and lucky in fishing, able someday to win a young maiden, and to become the hero and pride of his village. Then, with his mutilated head anointed with coconut oil, the boy enters his hut to fast until sunset, when he joins the dance and feast honoring him. Every time his hair grows long this rite is repeated except to spare one tuft at the back. When he is about thirteen this is cut off and his hair shaped into a man's coiffure—a "Dutch bob" or, as Parkinson said, something like a helmet of the Middle Ages.

Parkinson, who reported no rite for an older youth, indicated that a warrior's later haircuts are important occasions, for he said that when De Bagunini (Te Rakunene), a great warrior on Abaiang Island, was having a haircut with friends and relatives seated around him, he and his wife, Nei Kaura, were suddenly snatched away to become spirits. Parkinson (1889:102) wrote: "De Bagunini is implored when it is proposed to perform the previously described ceremony of haircutting; by it he makes the youth grow up into a courageous, capable warrior."[9]

Each Tabiteuean family performing the *kaunaki* ceremony "to make the boy wild by magic" does it differently; some families, I was told, were doing it in the 1940s. Formerly it took place before a youth married but now this is not always the case. In the past a boy did not marry young because he was busy having magic performed over him. He might be 27 or 28 or older before he married, his bride between 19 and 20. Now boys marry as young as 15 or 16 and the result, added my informant, is that young people today are not as strong or good-looking as their late-marrying forebears.

Any *tibu*—grandmother or grandfather on either side who knows the magic—becomes the boy's guardian-magician. Or someone outside the family who knows the magic is asked to take charge. The magician isolates the boy in a thatched hut and performs magic until the thatch decays. In the only rite described, the boy sits on a large rock outside his hut, with a small fire before him and his magician on the opposite side of the fire. The boy may not brush off sparks that fall on him; men who have been through the ceremony still have scars from the burns. The magician puts a young red coconut, its top opened, on the fire; as its husk burns the nut's juice heats. The magician puts devilfish (stingray) barbs into it with "proper words."[10] After the boy has one drink the magician reheats the nut, adds more barbs, and recites more spells. After three drinks the boy must work on land without food or drink all day until about three or four in the afternoon. He may not fish. He may clean land, burn rubbish, work in the *Cyrtosperma* pit-gardens, or do other tasks. In the evening he may eat a little of "hard things" like *kabubu* (coarse flour made from processed pandanus drupes), but not fish. Meanwhile the magician has prepared for him a

drink of water, perhaps sea water, using "words" and magic in mixing it. The boy may go near no women, or they near him, unless, of course, his wise grandmother is also his magician. If, as in modern times, he is already married, he must not go near his wife.

The same rite is performed three days in succession, again the next month for three days, and so on for a total of nine months. If the boy disobeys the magician about food and drink, he is told that he is not a proper man and will have trouble "keeping" his food, that is, he will never have a reserve. If he is obedient about the diet he will be able to save. If he flinches when sparks fall on him he will be unable to endure hard fighting; he will retreat when other warriors advance. That some Tabiteuean magicians treat the initiates more severely and lacerate their heads is suggested by Kabata, one of the men describing Na Areau's ceremony, who always refers to initiation as the head-cutting.

Values, traditions, and behavior expected of a mature man are stressed, rather than technical skills; the initiate is taught and tested under severe physical and psychological pressure. Before Pax Britannica started in 1892, when the islands became a British Protectorate and then a Crown Colony, a man had to be ready for unceasing quarrels and feuds. Tabiteueans fought among themselves to prevent any village or clan leader from becoming paramount over the island and to resist outside invasions. The new political authority did not end violent aggression and retaliation. In World War II the Japanese invasion and occupation brought new hardships and dangers. A new *rorobuaka* of modern times, if he follows old custom to delay marrying until late, adds to his life the labor, uncertainty, and hazards of getting a living from land and sea for his wife (more than one is now illegal) and children and of meeting demands from his paternal, and sometimes his maternal, kinfolk and clansmen to help maintain or advance their prestige in the assembly house and share with them whatever he acquires.

That the achievement of the status of *rorobuaka* is a man's most important milestone is evident from the length and elaboration of the ritual compared to any for earlier statuses; I know of none for a man reaching a later age. As every activity has its ritual, a man goes through many rites, sometimes alone, sometimes with others, to gain success, courage, energy, and the help of the gods in a specific venture and to ward off failure. He "angers his heart" with components familiar from initiation—bonfires, spells, stone seats, isolation at dawn on the weather side, lifting of heavy rocks, and the like. No ritual, however, is as harsh or as long as his initiation into manhood.

The Myths

Of the five myths about Na Areau's and Te Mamaang's initiation, I obtained two in Gilbertese from two men on Tabiteuea—Moaua of Tewai village and Kabata (also called Ambo) of Eita and Tauma (Luomala 1956:35–36).[11] The third myth about Na Areau's ceremony, which I have also translated, was written down, undated, in Gilbertese by Tirora, a man of Buariki, Tarawa, for Miss Beatrice E. Simmons, a London Missionary Society trained nurse and teacher.[12] The fourth myth about Na Areau consists of Grimble's undated notes in English of a myth by Te Itirake, a man of Tabiang village, Banaba (Grimble Papers).[13] The fifth, which is about Te Mamaang's initiation, came to Grimble from Mareko, the initiate's descendant; I give Grimble's translation.[14]

As each myth is part of a series, I include enough of whatever immediately precedes or follows it to clarify the context. All, except Tirora's series, which is only about Na Areau's tricks, narrate memorable adventures of the speaker's ancestors and often his genealogy.

Although it does not refer to initiation, I also quote part of my translation of another ancestral tradition, unquestionably an older variant of the same one told by Kabata. Cryptic and elliptical, in the style of elders who expect listeners to understand its meaning, it is an example of creation as told without reference to Na Areau's initiation. In 1918 Grimble transcribed it in Gilbertese as told by Te Kawakawa of Tabiteuea, a man then perhaps in his eighties with a six-year-old great-grandson, whose name is not given (Grimble 1934:97–103).[15] Internal evidence suggests that his village was Tauma, Kabata's birthplace. Kabata's genealogy, as brief and incomplete as the old man's, does not list Te Kawakawa but their kinship is clear from some of the names each lists.

Following Te Kawakawa's myth are the four about Na Areau's initiation and that about Te Mamaang's.

TE BOMATEMAKI AND NA AREAU

Te Kawakawa, Tabiteuea

Te Bomatemaki (the Meeting and the Cleaving Together):[16] The first tree and its name *Te Bakatibu-taai* (the Ancestor Sun).[17] Name of the land upon which the tree grew: *Abatoa* (Great Land). Residents upon it: *Te B'a* (the Hard Coral Ledge), *Te Atibu* (the Solid Stone), *Te Atinari* (the Limestone Block), *Nanokai* (Ingenious Character), *Nanomaaka* (Firm Character). Nanokai and Nanomaaka [they are eels] marry; their child, Na Areau. *Te Bo* (the Meeting) together with *Te Maki* (the Cleaving Together) had just come [into existence] when Na Areau originated. Nothing at all at that time except just the giant Na Areau. No gods, no people except just the giant Na Areau. This man's continued work: he keeps on seeking out ways of *Karawa* (Heaven) as well as *Te Aba* (the Earth) in order to open [separate] them. And he [chants] as follows:

I just stamp upon Heaven upward toward the north.
How about it? O! You—Te Bo together with Te Maki—do not know the giant Na Areau.
No gods, no people, except just the giant Na Areau.

He is going to open up Heaven. The Whiteness goes but The Blackness remains. He opens it up thus:

Yes! Treading of Heaven with raising it up.
Striking of Heaven with making it stir.
Striking of Heaven with putting it upon its pillar *Kai-n-tikua-aba* (Tree of Resting Place of Lands).
They will disturb roots of my Tree Samoa.
It leans away to the south. Brace it up!
You are not able to do it yet!
Behold! Lady *Au-maiaki* (South Season) there,
O! Let south come into being.
Behold! Lady *Au-meang* (North Season).
North comes into being.
Behold! Lady *Au-mainiku* (East).
East comes into being.

Behold! Lady *Au-maeao* (West).
West comes into being.
Yes! Heaven together with *Mone* (Underworld) [originate].
O! It is finished, for The Land has come into being.
O! It is finished because The Land is stable.
O! Speak, for we are going to speak.
O! Talk, for we are going to talk.
Where do you come from?
From the south, or from the west, or from the east, or from the north?
Whose are the words spoken? Na Areau's of course!

Heaven comes into being by this magic. And the names of the residents below, the people of Mone: *Riiki* (Eel), *Rorontika* (Vigorous Generation), *Uka* (Blower), *Karitoro* (Roller), *Na Bawe* (Sir Yellow Snapper, *Lutianus vaigiensis,* figuratively Sir Ancient), *Ngkoangkoa* (Long Ago), *Tenirikana* (Once Encircled), *Tengangana* (Innumerable Fathoms), *Tem'atana* (One Coil of Rope), *Uam'atana* (Two Coils of Rope), *Reireitia* (Fine Fishline), *Rouroutia* (Digger of Roots), *Tabetabekia* (Persistent Raiser), and *Te Ukeuke-n-anti* (the Whirlwind Spirit). And when he has lifted up Heaven, Riiki goes along with it. Yes, it is he who lies in the middle of Heaven and is known as *Na Iabu* (Sir Milky Way). The first land, namely *Kai-n-tikua-aba* (namesake of the Tree), comes into being. And after that Tarawa, and the second, Beru, and the third, Takoronga, which is [an islet] in the lee of Tabiteuea.

And after this Na Areau goes to live on Tarawa, but, it seems, he is wicked. . . .

Na Areau's Head-Cutting Ceremony and Sky-Raising

Kabata, Tabiteuea

No *Ao-n-te-aba* (Surface of the Earth), no Heaven, not even Na Areau. After this Na Areau is just about to be created by Te B'a and Te Nari. After Na Areau's coming into being he is going to have his head cut, which we imitate in our head-cutting. After this his fire is kindled, but previously the tree which is The Ancestor Sun had come into being. Its branches are cut as fuel for his fire, but its top part is left behind. His fire is made to blaze and Na Areau is lifted up by Te B'a and Te Nari to be thrown into the fire, and he remains within the fire several moons, and Na Areau burns up in the fire. They do not find his body but they obtain some of the ash from that fire. That ash is obtained and placed in a *kumete* (wooden bowl)—yes, like what we use now. And that ash is mixed with fresh water [rain] from under Heaven.

They leave that ash inside of that wooden bowl and they keep on watching it during the day, and they go to see it and *n te bongina* (on a certain day) they see that he moves along like the *tawa* (milkfish small fry, *Chanos chanos*). After this he grows up to maturity inside of the wooden bowl. When he is mature Na Areau leaves the wooden bowl. He himself questions Te B'a and Te Nari thus: "What do I do now, you men? And what are you doing?" Te B'a and Te Nari answer, "Don't ask questions, because your fire is again going to be fueled as before." [Na Areau says] "Well, that is all right, hurry up!"

He is once again thrown into the fire—yes, the second cutting of his head. He falls again inside of the fire. They watch him. Truly he is sitting down inside of the fire, and he is not

burned. The first new moon, the second new moon, the third new moon. He is burned up three times.[18] They make him stand up, and Te B'a and Te Nari dance because they are going to make Na Areau stand up, one man on the east side and one man on the west side. And their song:[19]

Ho! Striking of Heaven and lifting it up.
Striking of Heaven and raising it up.
Set it upon Kai-n-tikua-aba.
They will disturb roots of thy Tree Samoa.
Swaying of its top and breaking in two.
It leans. O! Ah!
South comes into being.[20]
Behold Lady Au-maiaki!
Swaying of its top and breaking in two.
It leans. O! Ah!
North comes into being.
Behold Lady Au-meang!
Swaying of its top and breaking in two.
It leans. O! Ah!
East comes into being.
Behold! Lady Au-mainiku.
Swaying of its top and breaking in two.
It leans. O! Ah!
West comes into being.
Behold! Lady Au-maeao.
Heaven and Underworld!
O! Ah! It is finished,
For the Land has come into being.
O! Ah! It is finished,
For the Land has stabilized.
O! Speak, for we are going to speak.
Talk, for we are going to talk.

"Where is east?"—"There!" "Where is west?"—"There!" He points at them with his hands when saying east and west. "Where is south?" Na Areau answers "There!" "Where is north?"—"There!" Te B'a and Te Nari question Na Areau as to where south, west, east, and north are. He stretches his arms and his legs and he also stands up from inside of the fire.

And he is going to ponder about the ways of Heaven. He speaks to Te B'a and Te Nari, "And now what are its ways? No land. And what do we do now?" Te B'a and Te Nari answer Na Areau [that] Na Areau is going to raise Heaven; he is going to walk around to seek the center of Heaven.

And so he treads (*toua,* kicks with his foot) the center of Heaven in order to encourage it to rise. And there [inside] is a crowd of people all lying down. So he is going to summon this company: *Tetannakina* (One Coil of Rope), *Uatannaki* (Two Coils of Rope), *Tenirakina* (Once Encircled) together with *Uaniniraki* (Twice Encircled), and, yes, *Te Ukeuke-n-anti* (the Whirlwind Spirit). Those people always dwell in the air; therefore Tetannakina

and Uatannaki, Tenirakina, and Uaniraki [alternate pronunciation], and Te Ukeuke-n-anti are summoned because they are going to cut away the roots of Heaven, and Riiki will lift it up.

When Riiki raises Heaven that company hastens away to cut away the roots under Heaven. And when Riiki says to Na Areau, "How is that now?" Na Areau keeps on answering Riiki, "Carry it away more!" "How is it now?" And Na Areau: "Lift it up more" because Riiki's body is [still] bent. Perhaps by the third time Riiki's bend is completely gone. And Na Areau tells Riiki, "Lift it up more!" But Riiki is too short to reach so Na Areau just jumps on his neck and cuts his body into several pieces. And, yes, its several pieces now are the eels. And Riiki now stays in Heaven crosswise in the middle of Heaven. He is readily visible on a moonless night. And Riiki died. Na Areau killed him. . . .

[Having finished telling the above account, Kabata remembered something that should be included. It explains the failure of the five root-cutters to do more than shift Heaven a little and the reason for calling in Riiki to finish the work.]

Na Areau tells that company [of five] that they are going to go to cut away the roots under Heaven. When they have budged Heaven a little all these men just sit down, whereupon they speak to Na Areau, "Have you finished lifting it up some more? We are abandoning lifting it up any more. Perhaps if it goes this high it is then enough."—"Yes, fellows!" "Why we can't lift it up is because we are too short to reach." So then they are going to recall to mind a certain man, Riiki. And Na Areau goes to talk to him as to whether or not he is able to lift Heaven. Riiki says that he is unable to lift it because he is hungry. There is also lying down [inside of Heaven] a certain one who is *Te Kika* (the Octopus). So they take two tentacles from Te Kika as food for Riiki. Therefore the eel always craves to devour the octopus. Riiki was asked by Na Areau, "How are you?" Riiki said, "I'm full up!" . . . .

Na Areau Te Toa (The Giant)[21]

Moaua, Tabiteuea

Te Bomatemaki

Na Areau truly an *anti-ma-aomata* (god combined with human being) and truly only he anciently. He reflects in his mind and he says that he ought not to be alone but that everything including men and *anti-ma-aomata* and creatures ought to originate. Therefore he first creates Abatoa together with Te B'a and Te Nari and Te Bomatemaki. The manner of their location is not scattered, for indeed their five bodies are assembled in this way: Te Bomatemaki, prostrate; and over it, Abatoa; and on either side Te B'a with Te Nari, thus: [a simple sketch was included].[22] This company is assembled, and Na Areau examines them, and he gives them much *m'aka* (mana, supernatural power) in order to be able to make everything by their *kukunem'aan* (virility, creativity, inventiveness). They indeed were given the knowledge for it by Na Areau together with the knowledge of the nature of things together with curiosity (or, the seeking of knowledge) about things.

Story of Te Bomatemaki

What is over Te Bomatemaki is called Abatoa, and under that which is Abatoa is Te Bomatemaki. Thereby Te B'a and Te Nari indeed are made to meet opposite each other

from opposite directions, made to clash against each other. And by their meeting each other from opposite directions they appear back to back. And Na Areau the Giant sits down upon Abatoa—which is over Te Bomatemaki. He sits down on its top and he grasps each of its sides.

Working-on of Na Areau the Giant by Te B'a and Te Nari

They *beku* (work on) him in the fire and they three times make his fire.

The First Fire: They burn up his body in the fire and they collect his ashes in order to make him again, and he originates as *Na Areau Te Ikawai* (the First, or Eldest, or Adult). They examine him and they say that his body is not ready yet so they will make him again.

The Second Fire: Again they burn up his body in the fire as before, and again they collect the ashes of his body as before, and again they make him, and he originates as *Na Areau Te Tei—Te Ataei* (the Younger, Baby, Child, Junior). They examine him and they say as before that he is not ready yet so they will make him again.

The Third Fire: Again, in the same way, they burn up his body and they seek his ashes in order to make him again. But no! He is not found. They call to him and he responds. Te B'a and Te Nari turn their faces to each other to look for him, and they call him and he responds. So both gaze around to look at one thing after another, and they call to it and he responds as before. If while looking at a tree they call it he responds as before. If a stone, and they call it, he again responds as before. If they look at the place where they burned up his body and they call him he responds as before. Likewise in the same manner when he stays in every place inside *Te Akea* (the Void). Therefore they again change the name of that one originating yonder to *Na Areau Te Kikinto* (the Searcher) or *Te Kikitei* (the Investigator) or *Na Areau Te Rabakau* (the Skillful).[23] These words mean the same, namely, *rabakau* (skillful, wise, clever, expert, etc.).

In these three seasonings of Na Areau with these three alterations of his name Na Areau reveals his nature to Te B'a and Te Nari because he will indeed assume these names of his, for occasionally he will originate as an adult man and occasionally he will originate as a little child and occasionally he will originate as the Void in a form that is only a word or a voice and not a visible man. Te B'a and Te Nari have finished the ways of Na Areau together with his forms, and now he is going to begin performing his work which is indeed the opening of Te Bomatemaki. . . .

STORIES ABOUT NA AREAU AND TABUARIKI

Tirora of Tarawa

Stories of one kind or another about Na Areau and *Tabuariki* (Tabu Chief) are numerous. And here is one of their stories.

One story in the lore about Tabuariki says that he apparently had been a resident of *Karawa* (Heaven) but he began to reside upon the earth on account of his wife who was Lady *Teiti* (Lightning), a resident on the earth. It is told that Tabuariki resided continuously at Maiana (Island) for the greater part of his days. Well, he also resided in every place at one time or another! Narratives about Tabuariki are not consistent among all the people because they certainly are very different in one way or another. And here is a narrative about him by some of the Old Men.

Tabuariki took Lady Teiti as his wife. And Na Areau was really a man who was the

child of Tab'akea. And Tab'akea was certainly the man who was the most skillful among men. His heritage is not known and his place of residence is not known either. Some, but not all, Old Men say that Na Areau, the child of Tab'akea, resided in Tem'aiku on Tarawa. Apparently, in due time, when he was an infant his body was finished by *kabuokaki* (being burned up) by his father Tab'akea in order to be the skillful one and the warrior. Tab'akea burned him up at Tem'aiku. His firewood when he was burned up was *ngea (Pemphis acidula)* which is very hard. His body was completely burned except for his ashes which Tab'akea collected to restore him to life, and he originated as the man who is Na Areau.

Tabuariki and Na Areau are going to confront each other. One day Tabuariki is sleeping under his house, the coral ledge, and he does not allow anyone to make noise near him because if he is wakened by noise he gets up and kills the man who made the noise because he is cross if he cannot sleep in peace.

His wife Lady Teiti indeed sits down near him when he sleeps in order to watch out for the man who is always noisy. Lady Teiti is considerate of people, for she walks over to tell people that they must not go making noise near Tabuariki lest they die because Tabuariki is cross when his sleep is broken by noise.

Now, Na Areau has heard the news that Tabuariki is cross, and he follows Lady Teiti, ostensibly that she give him fire. And he repeatedly calls Lady Teiti noisily, and he says, "Teiti! What about a little of your fire?" And when Lady Teiti hears his voice she is extremely anxious about it since it is loud, and she presses down her hands [signals] to him that he must not shout, for it would be unfortunate if Tabuariki were to wake up.

He again shouts as before, thus: "What about your fire, Teiti?" And Lady Teiti hastily gets up to go out to meet Na Areau with the fire because she hates Tabuariki waking up. And Na Areau gets the fire from Lady Teiti, and that lady, Teiti, says to Na Areau, "Here it is, your fire, but I tell you that you must not come back again shouting lest Tabuariki kill you when he wakes up from sleeping."

Na Areau replies and he says, "Tabuariki really gets cross?" And Lady Teiti says, "You just do not know the strength of Tabuariki! Now, why do you keep on chatting with me?"

Well, after this Na Areau goes away with the fire, and he dunks it in the water in the pond, and he again goes back to Lady Teiti, and he says, "Teiti, alas! My fire has died out again. Maybe it was even out when you gave it to me!" And Lady Teiti again, as before, scurries to fetch the fire, and she most emphatically asks him not to come back again because Tabuariki is a source of worry. And Lady Teiti goes back, and Na Areau stays behind Lady Teiti, and he again puts out his fire, by burying it in the sand.

And Na Areau again, as before, shouts: "Teiti! Teiti! My fire has died out again because the thing you put it in was certainly damp. Look! It has died out!" Lady Teiti is very afraid because she knows for sure that Tabuariki is going to wake up.

And while Na Areau is busy calling and calling to her, Tabuariki gets up when he hears the noise, and he says as he stands up, "Who is the noisy man? Tell me! Tell me! Because I am going to kill him!" And Tabuariki sees Na Areau, and he gets up because he is going to kill him. And he lifts up his weapon because he is going to strike him but Na Areau mounts on Tabuariki's right hand and he grabs Tabuariki's arm to break it in two. And the weapon falls from Tabuariki's hand and he wails because his arm hurts.

And Lady Teiti arrives because she supposes that Na Areau has died since the weapon falls from Tabuariki's hand. And Tabuariki says to Lady Teiti, "I suffer because he has broken my right arm where I am powerful." And Lady Teiti sees him and she is much ashamed of her husband Tabuariki because she has supposed that her husband is powerful, yet he has been overwhelmed by Na Areau.

The story says that when Tabuariki strikes now, the rumbling of the thunder is weak because it is really his left hand which is striking and not his right hand. This one also says that because Lady Teiti is the guard over Tabuariki when he sleeps, the lightning, of course, goes on ahead and then the thunder rumbles afterwards. The roarer is Tabuariki himself. Because Lady Teiti acts as Tabuariki's eyes, that is, his guard, the lightning for that reason first lights up in the midst of the darkness before the rumbling of the thunder; and afterwards comes the rumbler Tabuariki who is the thunder in the sky.

This is finished. . . .

BANABAN CREATION STORY AND SEQUELS

Notes Taken from the Account by Te Itirake, of Tabiang, Banaba (Grimble Papers)

In the beginning Heaven and Earth stuck together; it was called Te Bongiro or Te Bomatemaki; all was dark. Banaba was Te Buto (the Navel); there lived Tab'akea and Nakaa. Imprisoned between Heaven and Earth lay the company of *Baaba-ma-Boono* (Deaf Mutes together with Fools). Auriaria, Aorao, Nawai, Tabuariki, Taburimai lived on the overside of Heaven. Of all these only Tab'akea, Nakaa, and Auriaria were sensible; the inhabitants of Heaven were half foolish and half sane.

Nei Taangannang of Heaven married one of the male spirits (name not mentioned). The bird *te kunei* (the noddy) was born of the union. It went to sea and brought back a small *rereba*-fish to its parents.[24] They put it in a bowl and brought it up. It grew into an *urua* (adult *rereba*), and at last it was a fathom long and could not swim in the bowl. Nei Taangannang then threw it into the sea for she feared it. Soon the news came of a multitude of fierce fish which were accompanying the rejected *urua* toward Banaba from the southeast. They were reported to be *aomata,* that is men folk, swimming in the sea.

Then Na Areau was born. For three days the forehead of Tab'akea swelled; something moved within the swelling. On the fourth day the skin burst and from the tumor crept a *beru* (lizard). It was very ugly to behold. Tab'akea caused a fire to be made on the top of Banaba and cast the lizard into the flames. When it was consumed he took its ashes, a mere pinch, and mixed them with water in a clamshell. After three moons there crept from the shell a semblance of a man, but very small and ugly. Tab'akea burned him in a fierce fire and again mixed ashes with water. After three more moons a man again emerged, but still very small though more human in looks. He was then burned a third time in a vast fire of ironwood *(Pemphis).* This time the flames did not touch him, for he stood in the midst, playing on a pinnacle of flame. On the second day he emerged from the fire and was named by Tab'akea Na Areau.

They told Na Areau of the fierce fish-men who were with the *urua* thrown away by Nei Taangannang. He went down to the reef's edge at the southeast end of Banaba and hid behind a rock awaiting the coming of the *urua.* It came on the crest of a wave; Na Areau put out his hand and seized it by the right fin. He dragged it ashore and killed it. Nei Taangannang and her husband came to claim its body, but Na Areau and Tab'akea first ate the flesh; they returned the bones to the owners. The latter put the bones into a clamshell with water and covered them over; after three months they uncovered them again, and at once a flash of lightning burst from the shell and it thundered mightily.

Na Areau was amazed at the miracle but feigned not to know whence the lightning came; he told one of his people to go and ask for a firebrand from Nei Taangannang, who sat by the miraculous shell and bones. When asked for the fire she said, "Hush! Here is

your fire, but gently, make no noise, or the bones will be angry." So Na Areau himself went again and asked for more fire. The same warning was given to him, so he raised his voice and roared aloud. Immediately the bones lightened and thundered so Na Areau took them and broke them into pieces.

Then Heaven was lifted. Auriaria walked over the overside, tapping, until he found a hollow place. Then he went and told Tab'akea, who gave him a small piece of wood and showed him how to break the rock and get underneath. When it was done Auriaria entered and found the company of Fools and Deaf Mutes lying in the narrow space between Heaven and Earth which was filled with the noise of their breathing. Riiki the eel was among them; to the rest he gave names. By himself he then lifted Heaven to the height of a coconut tree. Then Tab'akea told him to make Riiki the eel uncoil himself and push the skies higher. Coil by coil Riiki rose with the heavens on his snout until his body was taut and straight. Auriaria struck off his tail, his body sprang to the highest Heaven and became Na Iabu, The Milky Way; his tail scattered into fragments and became the eels of the sea and land. . . .

The Tale of Te Mamaang

Mareko, Beru

There was a woman of Beru whose name was Riaua, who lay with the man Naunge; their children were Bintong and Kieura. Bintong lay with Tiwaiwai; their child was Te Mamaang, but as yet he had no name. The sisters of his grandfather Naunge sought a name for him. They sought his name going northwards along the eastern beach. They came to the rock which stands at Banga-n-te-bure, and asked the rock what name they should give the child.[25] He answered, "I know not." So they came to the rock which is called Te-i-nikunau; he also knew not. They came to the rock B'a-neneaba; he also knew not. They came to the rock on the east side of Terang; he also knew not. They came to the rock on the east side of Te-toa-toa; he also knew not. Only when they came to the rock Tab'akea did they get a name for the child. Thus said Tab'akea: "Ye shall take him and call him Te Mamaang."

They brought him up in the neighborhood of Te-uri at Beru. When he was full-grown he went to the beach on the western side to play a game of *kauni-batua* (contest between fighting fish), but Tabuariki of Beru came up from the south to beat him, for that beach was forbidden to all save Tabuariki. But Te Mamaang took no heed of the blows; they were as nothing to him. When his game was finished, he went and told his grandfather's sisters, and they took him to Tab'akea on the eastern side.

So Tab'akea made a fire, and he threw Te Mamaang into the midst of the fire. Soon the body of Te Mamaang was but a little ash, and Tab'akea took the ash and buried it beneath his rock. In the evening he looked at it, and said, "It is not yet human." In the morning he looked at it again. And behold! It had grown to be a man. That man sat on the end of the rock where the waves broke upon it; the waves beat upon him, and the wind, and a mighty rain, but he said not a word; he sat on. Then Tab'akea took up a boulder and pounded his head and shoulders, and beat his chest, but he said not a word; he sat on. So the place was called *B'a-kare-n-Te-Mamaang* (the Stoning of Te Mamaang). Again he went to the western beach to play a game of *kauni-batua,* and behold! Tabuariki came up from the south to smite him, but he said not a word; he sat on, looking at his *batua.* But when Tabuariki had

done, Te Mamaang put out his hand and held him. He pressed him down, he lifted him up again, he held him aloft, he threw him down, and when that was done he bit off his ears and threw them away into the bush. There they remain to this day—the thing that is called *Taninga-n-Tabuariki* (Ears of Tabuariki, a red fungus probably *Polyporus sanguineus*). Then Te Mamaang drove out Tabuariki from that part of Beru which lies to the north of Te-rawa, and set his limits at Te-teirio. Afterwards he himself went to Te-manoku, where he took to wife Te Nano-ni-matang, the sister of Maaui.[26]

COMPARISON OF MYTHICAL AND HUMAN INITIATION CEREMONIES

Only Kabata explicitly relates Na Areau's initiation myth to later-day initiations and implies that it is a myth of origin and justification for them. Malinowski's famous theory is that myths of "the origins of rites and customs . . . never explain in any sense of the word; they always state a precedent which constitutes an ideal and a warrant for its continuance, and sometimes practical directions for the procedure" (Malinowski 1926:33). I shall first consider the matter of the practical directions in the myth, a point which Malinowski reiterated, occasionally without qualification. To what extent are these five myths a practical guide? How are the mythical rites similar to each other in practical procedure, how different, and how do they compare with their human counterparts?

A kinsman older than the neophyte conducts the mythical ritual except in Moaua's account where Na Areau being the First Cause must first create his magicians, Te B'a and Te Nari, and endow them with the supernatural power, wisdom, and creativity to conduct the "working-on" rites for him. To Kabata, these magicians are Na Areau's creators who also conduct his head-cutting ceremony. To Tirora, Te Itirake, and Mareko, the magician is Tab'akea, Na Areau's father to Tirora and Te Itirake and Te Mamaang's god or adoptive father to Mareko. Older kinfolk also conduct the human ritual, usually led by the initiate's paternal grandfather (who may be his adoptive father) with aid from his uncles and biological father. In more recent times, his grandmother acts if no older male knows the magic. But note that Te Mamaang's paternal grandaunts are the ones who decide he should be initiated and take him to Tab'akea for that purpose. But in theory women are extremely taboo in the human ceremony and conspicuously absent also from the mythical.

The mythical and the human ceremony is always for one initiate only, never for a group of age mates. The ceremony is very personal.

The mythical ceremony begins soon after the initiate's birth except on Beru where Te Mamaang is already *ikawai* (adult, fully-grown, as Grimble said) and on Tabiteuea, in Moaua's account, where Na Areau is a preexistent, ageless giant. In Tarawa, Tab'akea begins when Na Areau is a *merimeri* (infant) and cuts short the normal growth process; on Banaba when Na Areau is born as a lizard but after three fires is fully human but small. The magicians begin, states Kabata, soon after creating Na Areau. The first fire always renders the mythical initiate *ikawai* to some degree; on Tarawa and Beru only one fire is needed, on Banaba and Tabiteuea two more are necessary to satisfy the magicians. The human youth's ceremony begins in his second decade when he is physically mature but earlier anticipatory rites from infancy on have helped prepare him.

The precise duration of Na Areau's ceremony is specified only on Banaba where it lasts six months and two days—each of his first two reconstitutions from ashes requires three months and he walks out of the third fire on the second day. Kabata emphasizes duration of the burning, not of the restoration—"several months" in the first fire, apparently three

in the second, an unspecified time in the third. Moaua like Tirora does not refer to duration of fire or reconstitution. On Beru the fire "soon" consumes Te Mamaang who is then restored in about a day and a night. Kabata and Mareko report that the magicians, on checking the development of the ashes too early, find Na Areau and Te Mamaang unfinished; Na Areau looks like a little fish, Te Mamaang is somehow not yet human, so each is left to develop longer. On Banaba, Tab'akea, it appears, waits until the beginning of the fourth moon after the first two fires to inspect the developing ashes and finds a manlike being but one requiring another burning.

A human ceremony lasts longer than the mythical one but like it has two divisions, a strenuous period with bonfires and a quiet period of recovery. For a mortal the first period is always shorter than the second. On Tabiteuea the first lasts three successive days, the second until the same lunar phase the following month when the first is repeated; with three repetitions the whole ceremony takes nine months. Grimble described four different strenuous rites, the first three with fires. The first two as a unit last one day, like the third rite. Three months of recovery follow each day-long rite. The sequence is repeated three times, with each new rite beginning in the fourth moon at the same lunar phase, to make a total of six months while the fourth, combining ordeals with rest, requires from two to five years. Myth and reality emphasize the number three with the number four to mark a change. The Banaban mythical magician, like the human in Grimble's description, requires six months to reach the final stage of initiation. Myth and reality differ on Banaba, however; Na Areau has three fires in a ceremony lasting six months and two days; the human initiate has one fire, and that on his head, with initiation completed in one day if he successfully carries a large rock the required distance.

Na Areau always has three fires (*Pemphis* wood twice specified) and two restorations from ashes, except on Tarawa where one fire is enough. The ashes mixed with water (freshwater according to Kabata) develop in a container (clamshell or wooden bowl). Ashes from Te Mamaang's sole fire are buried under his magician's rock.

In the more elaborate human ceremony, also with emphasis on bonfires (some of *Pemphis*), the initiate must silently and without flinching endure eyestrain, heat, and painful, scar-producing burns from these fires, and sometimes from fires or embers on his newly shaven, lacerated, and bleeding head. The Tabiteuean mortal, it appears, endures 27 fires—one on each of three successive days in each of nine successive months. Judging from Grimble's description, there may be six, one in each of six successive months.

Other ordeals sometimes include beating—for the mortal with fans or coconut-leaf butts, for Te Mamaang a boulder as well as natural elements, but for Na Areau none. Mythical and human initiates submit passively and, except in Kabata's account, silently to the magician and the ordeals. Unmentioned for the mythical ceremonies but noted for the human are incessant spells; a noxious drink stirred with stingray spines; negative and positive food taboos; avoidance of women and thoughts about them; increasingly demanding physical tasks; a flat stone for a ritual seat; directional emphasis on facing east to the dawn and the weather side; isolation there with the magician; and lectures on traditions, proper thinking, values, and an adult man's role in life. Te Mamaang's rite is also on the eastern side.

The general purpose is to develop the mythical and the human initiate's physical, psychological, and supernatural powers needed for his future functions as an aggressive, adult man. On Banaba Tab'akea's immediate specific aim is to transform the infant lizard into an adult warrior able to kill a monstrous fish endangering the community. On Tarawa

he quickly transforms an infant into a warrior, judging from subsequent events, in order to insult, attack, and outwit rulers of spheres other than Tab'akea's. On Beru he makes Te Mamaang into a warrior able to defeat Tabuariki and restrict his land claims. That the unnamed, slain Banaban fish's bones emit lightning and thunder after Na Areau's noisy demands for fire from its guardian indicates how closely related the Tarawan, Beruan, and Banaban variants are and suggest strong conflict among the gods, particularly between Tab'akea and Tabuariki, or their worshippers, with one of them, like Na Areau or Te Mamaang, defeating Tabuariki for Tab'akea.

Moaua, besides reversing custom by having two juniors conduct an elder's initiation, reverses the normal growth process to achieve what seems an adaptation of the Christian Trinity. The first fire produces The Adult, the second The Child, and the third The Skillful, an invisible being but not an embryo since it is nonmaterial, omnipresent in nature, and possessed of a voice, curiosity, and cleverness. Although islanders change names frequently, no such change has been noted for a human initiate. Actually Moaua describes additions and not changes of names, and remarks that Na Areau through the ceremony and his changes thereby reveals his nature to Te B'a and Te Nari. From a narrative point of view the ceremony provides the rationale for Moaua's somewhat structured series of narratives in which Na Areau later manifests what otherwise might seem inexplicable changes of form and behavior. The immediate aim of the Adult after the ceremony is to open Te Bomatemaki, raise Heaven, and in other ways arrange the universe but, as Moaua and others state, he does not do actual labor himself; usually by spells he shapes, creates, organizes, and directs supernatural workmen. That Na Areau, according to Kabata, questions his elders during the ceremony about what they are doing and what he is to do reveals, I think, his dependence, submission, and ignorance of his future work. Until they have tested his knowledge and he emerges from the third fire they do not inform him that he is to raise and open Heaven. Their subsequent disappearance from the narrative shows that Na Areau needs no further instruction. On Banaba it is Auriaria not Na Areau who raises Heaven; Grimble's notes on this point are initially confusing.

The purpose of the human ceremony is also to stabilize and test an immature male's ability to perceive, perform, and endure under a magician's supervision in order later to function as a *rorobuaka* in society, the framework of which the gods, including Na Areau, have established after the cosmos is in order. For human or mythical initiate the ultimate source of his ability to advance to the status of *rorobuaka* is supernatural.

Does my comparison of human and mythical initiation at all support Malinowski's (1926:19) statement that "myth . . . contains practical rules for the guidance of man"? Suppose the extreme situation or a Gilbertese magician who has not been initiated and knows nothing of his human forefathers' initiation but, wishing to direct one as much like the old as possible, studies the five myths to piece together a ceremony from them. He will learn that he should initiate only one male at a time; the initiate should be his closely related junior paternal kinsman; that other older paternal kinsmen may assist; that women do not participate; that the ceremony uses bonfires—not pit-ovens—and ashes to condition the initiate; that the ceremony may last from a couple of days to many months; and that the ritual should transform the initiate into a *rorobuaka,* a high-spirited adult ready to fight enemies and advance his people's welfare. Differences in the myths give the magician leeway to add, if he wishes, head-cutting from one narrator's name for the ritual, beating from another, and so on. If the magician knows only one myth, he will still find some of the points named even in the brief Tarawan account. Obviously he must allow for

biological differences in nature and endurance between a mortal and a mythical initiate and adapt the mythical procedure to the humanly imitable. As far as these five myths are concerned, he should be able to reconstruct a general pattern for an initiation.

This uninformed Gilbertese can expand this basic pattern and adapt the mythical to his purposes by recognizing their symbolism, which a Gilbertese, I think, will find is present in other customs, conversations, and traditional narratives.

Selected Symbols in the Mythical and Human Ceremonies

Malinowski reiterated that myth is not symbolic of hidden realities "but a direct expression of its subject-matter" and that the native learns "the real meaning" not from "fragmentary mythical stories, but by living within the social texture of his tribe" where he gradually realizes "how everything which he is told to do has its precedent and pattern in bygone times, which brings home to him the full account and the full meaning of his myths of origin" (Malinowski 1926:19, 42–43).

What has appeared as Malinowski's categorical rejection of symbol in myth as he developed his sociological theory of myth with Trobriand examples is explicable, I suggest, if one returns to the introductory pages of his famous essay on myth (Malinowski 1926:11–16).[27] There he rejected the excesses of naturalistic, euhemeristic, psychoanalytic, and other predominantly monistic theories of myth that professed to ferret out its hidden realities and meaning. Reacting negatively to the naturalistic theory, for instance, he declared that he had found from his "own study of living myths among savages [that] . . . there is but little room for symbolism in his [primitive man's] ideas and tales; and myth, in fact, is not an idle rhapsody, not an aimless outpouring of vain imaginings, but a hard-working, extremely important cultural force" (Malinowski 1926:13). His subsequent shying away in his essay from the very word symbol or using it only negatively was, it seems to me, more semantic than anything else because, at least for this essay, he identified the word with these nonemic interpretations.

I do not know if Gilbertese narrators and magicians will agree with my interpretation, based on an outsider's limited knowledge of their culture, of the symbolism of selected components in the five initiation myths. They may attribute different and more numerous meanings to each component and argue among themselves. Nonetheless, I shall try to see beyond the overtly concrete expression in words to the social and cultural aura giving them symbolic significance. Moreover, these symbols are, I believe, also present in the human initiation, where their manifest form is not only in words but in acts and material objects. The task would be lightened with more spells, narrators' and magicians' commentaries, and, of course, observation of the ceremony. Narratives and information about ritualized customs other than those relating to initiation, which have comparable concrete elements, are helpful.

The symbols of the initiate's death and rebirth appear in all five myths, more than once in the Banaban and Tabiteuean variants, and in the human rite of transition. The Gilbertese emphasize this rite of intermediacy, of liminality, far more than the rite of separating the neophyte from society and his old status and that of reincorporating him after the transition ritual into a new status; no ritual fanfare accompanies either his separation or his reintegration (Van Gennep 1960:11).

Fire and ashes are the most striking symbols of the ritual death of the initiate, whether human or supernatural, and for the human, his shorn hair, which symbolizes his whole person. Depending on his human or supernatural origin, he is partly or completely

burned in bonfires. The supernatural ashes come from destruction of his entire body; the human ashes in the Gilberts are from part of his shorn hair, and in Banaba from all of it. The head hair of both sexes is prominent in custom, belief, and myth, and has a value representing an intertwining of such factors as the aesthetic, magical, and practical (from an outsider's view). After a male infant's weaning and first haircut to achieve the status of child, his hair, it will be recalled, is burned as it is when he is classified later as a young boy. Na Areau, according to Tirora, intensely shamed, humiliated, and defeated Tabuariki, Auriaria, and Taburimai in a fire-throwing game by setting their hair on fire; each god had to run away defeated to douse the fire but lost his bushy, curly locks which, as Tirora added, were a source of great pride to each as to other men of old (Simmons Papers).

The initiate's shaven head, scarred by fire and cuts, is part of his ongoing disfigurement, humiliation, degradation, and perhaps disguise in the liminal rite to reduce his former self-image metaphorically to ashes. All rites by fire, blows, and noxious drinks continue the process of "killing" what remains of the human initiate's immature behavior and attitudes—his former self—and of his spiritually polluting past. That the potions cause vomiting, violent stomachaches, and other physical effects may be assumed although these are not mentioned. Like a prisoner of war the initiate is brainwashed by physical and psychological means in order to be redoctrinated, reborn, with the personality his masters can use in their social sphere.

Although these islanders do not cremate their dead but bury them (formerly burial of some dead might be much delayed), they make small, fragrant bonfires to fumigate and purify a corpse with smoke. They make such fires on other occasions too as, for instance, on Tabiteuea, when a fishy smelling canoe is judged offensive to fish spirits and ocean gods. Beating the initiate recalls the former custom of driving away the dead person's spirit and any lurking evil spirits by striking the ground with butts of coconut leaves and sticks. Besides testing the initiate's endurance and destroying weakness, his ordeals by fire and blows remove spiritual pollution and purify him for rebirth.

The ashes of Na Areau's dead self are reborn as a new self in a symbol of the womb, a clamshell or a wooden bowl of water (as also for the Banaban fish-man).[28] The earth under Tab'akea's sacred rock (the earth and the rock slab as sexual symbols) is both the grave and the womb for Te Mamaang's ashes. Both earth and rock are interpretable as male symbols because Tab'akea is ruler of the land, and as Na Areau's origin from his forehead confirms he (like Na Areau too) can create life without a female. Denial of the female role in birth is recognizable in the absence of women from the mythical and human rites and the taboo on the mortal initiate's thoughts about them. One explanation I have found for Te Rakunene's transformation from an Abaiang human warrior to a travelling spirit is that during ritual isolation to prepare for a sports contest he was repeatedly visited by spirit women until he became a spirit too. Denial of the female role in the five initiation myths is recognizable in other than the absence of women and Na Areau's origin from his father's forehead. Tirora does not name Na Areau's mother or perhaps suppressed the forehead-origin motif. Te B'a and Te Nari, named by Kabata as Na Areau's creator, are never, so far as I know, regarded as other than male if the question of their sex arises. In Moaua's account Na Areau was uncreated, a preexistent god with mana to create other forms without a female. And, of course, in all five myths the initiate's ashes achieve rebirth through a male magician. The principle in male initiation (as in Biblical Genesis) is that man creates man, and, conversely, woman not only cannot create man but ruins his manhood if she can.

Rebirth from ashes is reenacted in the human ritual on Banaba when the initiate's liv-

ing body absorbs—or rejects—a mixture containing ashes of his hair; when he was younger these ashes were rubbed on his body, and in the Gilberts the male child breathes smoke from his burnt hair. Symbolic of rebirth too is the nine-month period of the Tabiteuean initiation, but in other islands, except Banaba where it is one day long, the period is more than nine months.

Unlike other myths, that by Moaua does not describe each fire as completely killing all that Na Areau has been. True, all three fires, not just the first two, destroy his previous embodiments, and the third leaves no ashes at all to restore. As Moaua explains, Na Areau therefore can achieve in the future the three phases of his mana, form (or invisibility), and personality. This continuity and differentiation furnish a clue as to why part of a Gilbertese human initiate's shorn hair is saved for his first weapon as a warrior, namely that his symbolic death is not total. And in the case of supernatural initiates, Na Areau's and Te Mamaang's ashes retain a vital essence, a spark of life, so that even a few ashes are enough to start the process of rebirth. Ashes of the human hair have an essential seed of life too.

Fire has creative as well as destructive power. To Gilbertese the use of the fire plough to produce a flame symbolizes the sexual act; the symbol is widespread in the Pacific. A myth from Arorae Island, Gilberts, attributes the origin of mankind to sparks and ashes that flew from the Ancestral Tree on Samoa that Na Areau burned; the implication is that both sparks and ashes are viable although the myth names only sparks as landing at Arorae to originate as its first settlers (Parkinson 1889:106).

Victor W. Turner (1969:95–96), in developing Van Gennep's analyses of processes and attitudes in rites of passage, singled out what is expected of a human initiate in the liminal stage of death and rebirth. Some of his summary applies to the future Gilbertese warrior in myth and real life. He must be absolutely obedient to his mentors, submissive, passive, humble, silent, self-controlled, sexually abstinent, stoically enduring without expression of pain a series of degradations including arbitrary scarring of his head and body by fire, blows, and cutting, and accept prolonged isolation from the rest of society in a desolate area where he is often alone or attended only by his magician.

For a human youth the process is dehumanizing both in degrading him as a male and, contrarily, in enveloping him in a sanctity dangerous to unauthorized people who chance to encounter him. As for the mythical initiate, Te Itirake, Tirora, and Moaua direct one toward the point that Na Areau's fires either divest him of some of his original sanctity or supplement it with a human quality to make possible his later characteristics and activities, whether godlike, humanlike, or a combination of both, so that he mediates between gods and men, the visible and the invisible, the rebels and the conservatives, and the good and the wicked.

Te Mamaang, like Na Areau, also rebels against authority. He ignores Tabuariki's taboo and, after Tab'akea's fire ritual imbues him with initiative and strength, beats and maims Tabuariki and limits his territorial claims. Another Beruan chronicler, member of Karongoa n Uea (Karongoa of Kings), the most important clan, differs from Mareko and names Samoa, not Beru, as Te Mamaang's birthplace (Maude 1963:10–13, 30, 64–65). Te Mamaang, states this unnamed Old Man, was one of the followers of Paramount Chief Tematawarebwe, Karongoa's founder, in leaving Samoa for Beru where they settled peacefully, married autochthones, and assigned them sitting places in their new and sacred assembly house. Tabuariki, one of the two great chiefs of the autochthones, later became the principal god of many of the Samoan clans including the Inaki-n-akawa (Sitting Place—or Clan—of Fishing) which traced descent from Te Mamaang. Tematawa-

rebwe had sent Te Mamaang and his clan to live at Taboiaki (Mareko's village, but his clan is not reported) to look after Karongoa's fishing rights there.

Despite differences between the two traditions, Mareko's description of Te Mamaang's difficulties with Tabuariki suggests that not all newcomers peacefully accepted and respected Chief Tabuariki's rights but gained power through their god Tab'akea to rebel for a time against him. That Te Mamaang was later deified and consulted through his mediums for diagnosis and cure of illness may be connected with belief that his death and rebirth in Tab'akea's rite of passage endowed him with healing power as well as courage (Parkinson 1889:101).

Of the numerous gods in the Gilbertese pantheon, why have narrators singled out Na Areau as the first to go through the fire ceremony? Is he a model for and a symbol of a *rorobuaka?* His very prominence makes him stand out among the gods; Na Areau, it seems, is known to every Gilbertese and of all the gods has the most diversified roles and personality traits, from that of a constructive First Cause or at least a very early god to that of a gross trickster.

Na Areau's prowess as a warrior is attested by more than the Tarawan and Banaban initiation myths and his subsequent exhibition of magic, cleverness, courage, and strength. In a Tabiteuean battle he and his warriors defeat Auriaria and his men after one of them has killed his pet fish.[29] As told on an unidentified island, Na Areau, anonymous through most of a war between Tangaroa and Auriaria for supremacy over Samoa, also fights and defeats Auriaria and his army. Island warfare in earlier times was mainly duelling between combatants, and Na Areau wins the first battle by skillfully dodging and returning Auriaria's weapons until Auriaria falls. Before the next battle, Auriaria's father Tab'akea, guessing who the stranger is, declares no weapons can kill this warrior because of his powerful magic but if he is taken off guard by being made to laugh so that he covers his ugly black teeth with his hand he can be caught, thrashed, and forced to flee. Auriaria takes the advice but Na Areau escapes to Tab'akea's house with Auriaria in pursuit. When Auriaria there learns that Na Areau is his half brother he concedes defeat to Tangaroa but retains his supremacy in the north, leaving Tangaroa to rule the south. Tab'akea, after advising Na Areau to seek a new and distant home to escape Auriaria's wrath, exhorts him as one imagines a mortal guardian-magician might instill confidence in a fledgling *rorobuaka:*

> ". . . Look upon chiefs and kings under Heaven. Have thy way with them and exercise thy thought and thy skill upon them. In whatsoever place thou art, be not dismayed of anything, for there is nothing that thou shalt lack and nothing that can slay thee. Fear not a single thing that brings death, for nothing can slay thee. Thou shalt not die at the hand of any giant or spirit under Heaven."[30]

Vaitupu Island has the same basic plot of Na Areau's defeat of Auriaria and includes among Na Areau's familiar tricks that of fighting and maiming the thunder god after wakening him despite the lightning goddess's vain attempts to quiet Na Areau's noisy demands for fire.[31] In another myth about Na Areau as a warrior, Kuaroun of Nui Island, "a descendant of the Nonouti fugitives from the Beruan conquest," states that while still inside Te Bomatemaki Na Areau, in a war between land and sea gods, enables his father Tab'akea to defeat *Riiki* (Eel) and *Bakewa* (Stingray); Na Areau, Kuaroun adds, is "a great sorcerer, small, ill-favored, black, curly hair standing up from his head, but is skillful in war."[32]

As a model for a *rorobuaka* Na Areau exhibits traits as trickster, cosmic arranger, and warrior that I find are among those Gilbertese admire. He is feisty, courageous, ingenious, skillful, clever, aggressive in battle, successful in sports, dances, and games, knowledgeable about spells and magic, indefatigable in planning new activities, and authoritative in organizing and directing his helpers. When Na Areau's serious cosmic work is over he is often a landless, propertyless, homeless, and lecherous antihero who lives by his wits, thievery, selfishness, and malice; he is the opposite of what a good Gilbertese man should be. In and out of the assembly house he cunningly evades the weight of onerous social customs and physical labor to receive more than he gives, and what he gives is either little or insultingly gross.[33]

Mankind, as world mythology demonstrates, admires both the hero and the antihero, and especially the man who combines in exaggerated, supernatural degree both the heroic and the antiheroic, the light and the dark sides of human nature. Gilbertese Old Men's clan traditions present both sides of their ancestor's character, and the Old Men join the laughter and admiration expressed for him as antihero. They have worked hard all their lives to be recognized and honored as Old Men, good Gilbertese, the conservative Establishment from which Na Areau has alienated himself, but they know that they have often wished to behave like this unconventional ancestor.

Na Areau symbolizes both the man of work and the man of play as well as the man of action and the man of thought.

The Myths as Charters

The five myths validate the arduous human initiation by bringing initiate and magician into a spiritual relationship with the primal gods and era. The initiate may symbolize Na Areau and his mentor, the supernatural magician; together the mortals reenact in human terms the ceremony claimed to be ancient and to have been practiced by their divine, semidivine, and human forefathers whose support the magician invokes to help the initiate approximate the ideal behavioral pattern of the ancestors. Myths about the ceremony serve, as Malinowski said, ". . . principally to establish a sociological charter, or a retrospective moral pattern of behaviour, or the primeval supreme miracle of magic" (Malinowski 1926:83).

Myth, according to Malinowski (1926:30, 43), functions especially when there is sociological strain caused by great historical changes and differences not only in rank and power but in precedence and subordination; people tell a particular myth when the associated ritual is to be performed or when the validity of that ritual is questioned, and thus they strengthen and justify their traditional custom. To this I add that stress and doubt that arise as change shakes a society may lead to new myths to validate old customs which had not been previously questioned. Data are too late and too scanty about the initiation myths and human initiation to estimate the approximate age of the myth or the ritual, or their age in relation to each other; I find no references to either in manuscripts or publications preceding Parkinson's and Grimble's reports. Nonetheless, I hazard a guess that the idea of a myth as a charter for initiation developed during the nineteenth century, perhaps during the last half, when profound disturbances of old beliefs and customs affecting all Gilbertese and every phase of their life had already resulted and continued to result from contacts with foreign newcomers—whalers, traders, missionaries, blackbirders, and foreign political authorities. Before partial pacification, foreign weapons had intensified old

inter- and intra-island feuds and struggles for power and the new weapons, unlike the old, were more likely to kill than wound. To old reasons for conflicts were added splits between pagans, Christians, backsliders, followers of new syncretic religions, and later between Christian denominations. During this great economic, social, religious, and political upheaval, many old customs either fell into disuse or were expanded or modified in other ways. Foreigners opposed some of them as well as the traditional magic and religion on which they depended, and introduced new beliefs and customs. Conservative Gilbertese who resisted the foreign religion and value system defiantly flaunted their old customs, or so it seemed to the missionaries.

Although the fighting later declined, conservatives, I suggest, sought to reinforce and justify the traditional initiation, which had always had more value than to harden and prepare a man for battle. The value system it fostered was still important for survival, and presumably the new foreign rituals did not adequately give a youth the physical and psychological discipline and education that conservatives felt desirable. They may have developed a myth about initiation and projected the oldest example into the period of creation to connect it with versatile, familiar Na Areau.

That initiation, like many rituals for other purposes, has value was still a belief to be heard in the 1940s in Tabiteuea. From Tabiteuean and Arorae men I heard repeatedly as they described their forefathers' feats and skill on land and sea, that the men of their own time cannot compare with these elders in health, endurance, initiative, physical strength, and practical knowledge (Luomala 1974:19–20). Both pagans and converts expressed this nostalgic view and credited their ancestors' superiority to what the native gods and the rituals, especially for the *rorobuaka,* had accomplished. Converts added that when "The Light" came the old gods lost their power and were no longer as effective as before. Nonetheless, many continued at times to invoke the old gods, weakened as they were, or incorporated Jehovah and Jesus or a syncretized form to take no chances and insure success. Na Areau was reinterpreted in Christian terms in more ways than I have mentioned in this paper. Some converts secularized the old rites in a manner to satisfy their consciences and to enjoy the resulting social participation and sense of continuity with ancestral practices. Tabiteuean myths of the first initiation were accepted and transmitted as valuable parts of ancestral tradition through two men very different in religion, personality, and narrative style.

Another possible factor suggesting later origin of the initiation myth is the need to fill gaps in tradition that earlier bothered no one in a more homogeneous culture. This is illustrated by two variants of cosmogony from Beru, that by Mareko in the Grimble Papers and the other and later one obtained by Pastor Bataeru of the London Missionary Society from two Old Men (Pateman 1942). Both tell of two Na Areaus—the preexistent god and his namesake whom he creates by mating couples he finds inside Te Bomatemaki. This done, according to Mareko, the first Na Areau departs, never to return, and the second continues his unfinished cosmic work. In the other variant, the second Na Areau, before taking up his duties, journeys to the elder's retirement haven to inform him that he is going to raise Heaven "because he (the Second) was entrusted by him (the First) in the way of power and wisdom for performing all his works" *(ba e mwioko mai rouna n aron te m'aka ma te wanawana ni karaona ana beku nako)* (Pateman 1942:34).

How this power was entrusted is unexplained although this later narrator unlike Mareko felt that he must explain the Second's source of mana and why he is continuing the First's work. Probably involved too is that Mareko, following older traditional narra-

tive style, sees no need to forge a stronger link between the two gods and their work. The initiation myths told by Kabata, Te Itirake, and Tirora explain the process by which Na Areau's elders entrust mana and wisdom to him. In addition, their myths, and Moaua's too from a different viewpoint, supply the charter for a human magician to cite as precedent as he endeavors to inculcate in an initiate some of his forebears' mana and wisdom.

The process of creative change in myth and ritual was ongoing in the 1940s as in the past and will continue as long as any Tabiteuean or other Gilbertese cares enough about his antecedents to learn what his elders can teach him and to select, reinterpret, and use such traditional knowledge as he finds relevant to modern life and valuable in establishing his personal and ethnic identity as a *rorobuaka.*

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Notes

1. Terms for male age groups overlap, being loosely defined in relation to age, physical development, and marital and social status. A male less than 14 years old is usually called *tei* (child); 14–18, *tei m'aane* (young boy); 19–30 and older bachelors, *roronga* (youth); 31–40, *rorobuaka* (warrior); 40–50, *rorobuaka matoa* (mature warrior); over 50 and active, *unim'aane* (old man, but the title Old Man is reserved for a clan head and community leader); *kara* (very old, unable to work or contribute to village assembly house affairs).

2. The chronicler quoted was, to judge from the Grimble Papers, Kinoki of Beru, who Grimble estimated was about 70 and had a grandson of 15 at the time Grimble transcribed his Gilbertese-language cosmogony which unfortunately is undated.

3. The complex subject of Na Areau as a First Cause or early god, as a trickster, and in other roles will be discussed more fully in later papers. Grimble (1952:166) said that to Taakeuta any myth about Na Areau as Te Moa-ni-bai (the First of Things) was a popular variant; to his royal clan, Karongoa of Kings, another god, Auriaria, was supreme but his clan's "own peculiar versions of the basic traditions . . . were not for the ears of outsiders." The Grimble Papers lack Taakeuta's Gilbertese-language text. The Papers name Mareko as the Beruan narrator, and quote his Gilbertese text (which is longer and more complex than Kinoki's) as well as a somewhat different translation from that in "Myths . . ." (Grimble 1922:92–93).

4. Between 1857 and 1903 native Hawaiian converts under the Hawaiian Evangelical Association proselytized in eleven of the sixteen islands of the Gilberts under the general supervision of a resident American missionary; some financial and other aid came from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the parent organization. In 1917 the Americans withdrew and left the work to the London Missionary Society whose native Samoan converts had proselytized the five southern islands since 1870. In July 1979 the Gilberts became part of the Republic of Kiribati.

5. Grimble (1922:106) has Toakai's Maiana myth in a slightly different translation from that in the Grimble Papers, which lack the Gilbertese text. The Papers quote four other narrators who state that Na Areau originated from his father's forehead. They are Nei Tearia of Banaba; High Chief Auweieda of Nauru, who gives the same origin to Auriaria, Taburimai, and Te Ukeuke-n-anti; Kuaroun of Nui Island, Tuvalu (formerly the Ellice Is.), descendant of Gilbertese fugitives from Nonouti Island; and an unnamed Ellice islander. All except the last name Tab'akea as the father, and except for Tearia, who gives no information, all state that he was manlike at birth. In Vaitupu, Tuvalu, he originates as a lizard from Tab'akea's forehead, and in a hidden basket develops human form except for ugly coconut-shell teeth which he hides when he laughs, a gesture that identifies him as it does the legendary Polynesian priest Kae who was also ashamed of his teeth (see Kennedy 1931:190–192).

6. The spelling *te kanna* is probably a misprint. I shall use the historical present in regard to initiation

although I do not know how much of what Grimble described continued during his Gilbertese years or how much has continued on Tabiteuea since I was there.

7. Grimble (1952:42–47) described Tearia as a narrator. The Grimble Papers have her Gilbertese text with Grimble's translation and his retelling without the list of things in the roots. Above *te ati ni kaioro* in the Gilbertese text he wrote *te ati ni kana.*

8. When *Rimwimaata* begins to appear on the horizon around 6 P.M. *Au-maiaki* (South Season, summer) begins. The appearance of *Nei Auti* (Pleiades) marks the beginning of *Au-meang* (North Season, winter).

9. Te Rakunene, whose medium young Tabiteuean men often consulted in the 1940s, is also important in other islands. The Grimble Papers have a long story about him from Abemama Island, perhaps by Hiram, a "celebrated authority on Gilbertese customs." While saying nothing about initiation it explains Te Rakunene's origin as a spirit as due to visits of spirit women when, as was the custom of warriors before sporting contests, he lived in ritual isolation on the eastern (weather) side of the island, and, of course, was not to be visited by women or think about them.

10. Using spines in the potion is probably symbolically connected with their use to tip many types of weapon as the strong, saw-edged spines from stingray tails inflict dangerous wounds. The large stingray is also one of the manifestations of Nei Tituabine, a popular goddess who, in the 1940s, was still believed to arrive in that form to rescue worshippers from drowning at sea. Bakewa, ruler of the Underworld, is sometimes said to take stingray form.

11. Kabata gave most of his information, including the initiation myth, orally in Gilbertese. Moaua also gave me much information orally in Gilbertese, but the narrative series with the initiation myth was written in 1948 in his village in a thick notebook, which Moaua gave to me. I assumed, perhaps mistakenly, that it represented his versions. I have found the name Nunaia M. K., of a Tewai Old Man unknown to me, written at the end. Meanwhile I continue to credit Moaua with the material.

12. In 1948 H. E. Maude, then Resident Commissioner of the Colony, loaned me Grimble's manuscript copy of the Simmons Papers written by Tirora. Beatrice Emmeline Simmons, who served the London Missionary Society in the Gilberts between 1910 and 1936, was the niece of the Rev. W. E. Goward who, serving between 1900 and 1919, was the first Caucasian resident missionary of the LMS in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. He and Miss Simmons had their headquarters at Beru. Miss Simmons, who had had four years of training as a nurse in a hospital in England, was the first Caucasian with that much formal training in any kind of health care to reside in the Gilberts. Thus far I have found no record of when her Tarawa informant wrote down a collection of stories for her, many with a preliminary or final note of Biblical interpretation.

13. Not included in my paper is Grimble's long retelling, unpublished, based on these notes.

14. The Grimble Papers have both Mareko's Gilbertese text and this previously unpublished translation by Grimble.

15. Grimble (1934) gives a somewhat free translation of all of Te Kawakawa's series of narratives including Na Areau's tricks. The part about raising Heaven from Earth, however, is abridged. The Grimble Papers have, besides the Gilbertese text, two differing, incomplete translations, which are less free than that published, but like it with interpolations from unidentified sources.

16. Grimble (1922:91, n1) translated *Te Bomatemaki* as The Darkness and The Cleaving Together because he interpreted *Te Bo* as the noncolloquial form of *Te Bong* (Darkness, Night, Twenty-four-hour Day, etc.). On the other hand, since *Te Bo* ordinarily means the Meeting, the two nouns *Te Bo* and *Te Maki* may, I suggest, reinforce related ideas, that of meeting and that of cleaving together.

17. The Grimble Papers have a marginal note to Te Kawakawa's Gilbertese text that Auriaria is the spirit of *Kai-n-tikua-aba;* this note is absent from the unpublished version but reappears in the published translation (Grimble 1934:97), with other interpolations: The Tree was a pandanus; it grew on both Abatoa and Abaiti (Little Land); and *Bakatibu-taai* was female. How many of these additions came from Te Kawakawa's explanations is unknown. The unpublished translation of the chant refers to the goddesses who bring the four directions into existence as Women of the South, North, East, and West. Some variants name them as Na Areau's wives; in Moaua's unpublished myth about raising Heaven, Na Areau mates with Lady South Season and Lady North Season to produce spirits of south and north.

18. This sentence came after a pause, an afterthought. Kabata, I think, realized he was mixed up, that Na Areau while still in the second fire should not walk out unscathed. That Na Areau was "burned up" three times I understood to refer to there being three fires with Na Areau reduced to ashes in the first two but unburned in the third.

19. *Kunaia* (their song) is ambiguous here; it means a song dedicated or sung to more than one person, whereas *aia kuna* (their song) means a song composed by more than one person. I find Kabata unclear here as to who is singing and to whom. At the time I understood Te B'a and Te Nari, joyfully dancing, sing this magical

chant to the natural phenomena which their powerful words create. Moreover, Na Areau is still sitting in the third fire not yet begun on his life work. On the other hand, Te Kawakawa, as in most cosmogonies with this famous chant, more typically has Na Areau chant the creative words to the natural phenomena. Kabata, an ebullient and often disorganized narrator who never repeated any story word-for-word but loved to insert joking anachronisms, offhand comments, and explanations, may have revised this narrative to make the older magicians the chanting creators.

20. Most chants mentioning the directional goddesses start with North, as, for example, in Pateman (1942:35).

21. The narrator wrote the title and subheadings.

22. The sketch shows a rounded dome over a straight base line. Te Bomatemaki is written inside the dome, Abatoa on its top, Te B'a outside the dome's lower left, and Te Nari on the right.

23. Grimble (1922:93) translated Te Kikitei and Te Kikinto as the Mischief-maker. The narrator here in equating these epithets to Te Rabakau implies a broader connotation, for *rabakau* is not a disparaging adjective. Sabatier (1954:443) defined Te Kikitei and Te Kikinto as *le Chercheur* and *kikitea* as *chercher la science, le savoir, les trucs, les inventions* (to seek science, knowledge, dodges, inventions). When there are two Na Areaus the two epithets usually but not always refer to the Second in connection with his tricks, but Mareko's Gilbertese text repeatedly refers to Na Areau the First as Na Areau Te Kikinto, for instance, *Na Areau Te Ikawai ae Te Kikinto* (Na Areau the Elder who is Te Kikinto); the younger Na Areau bears no epithet. In his translation Grimble drops the Kikinto epithet entirely for the elder and applies it to the younger.

24. The noddy *(Anous stolidus)* and the *rereba* (*Caranx* spp.) are relatives according to a Tabiteuean man; when noddies hover over the sea, fishermen know there are shoals of *rereba* on which noddies feed and smaller fish eaten by *rereba.* Both the noddy and the *rereba* are totems of clans worshipping Taburimai.

25. I am unfamiliar with any custom throwing light on this quest for a name. The adoptive father names a male child, according to Parkinson (1889:13), usually giving him his own name. Each rock questioned by Te Mamaang's grandaunts may represent the shrine of a god bearing the name of the rock; most shrines consist of a small slab of rock at which offerings and invocations were made to win the god's favor.

26. Mareko's narrative actually ends with the name Te-manoku. Grimble interpolated the reference to marriage from two preceding narratives which mention it in contexts other than initiation. Maaui, so famous in Polynesia, is known in the Gilberts especially for his adventures while fishing. Na Areau and Maui-of-a-thousand-tricks have much in common as tricksters and cosmic heroes; Na Areau's conflict with Tabuariki, the thunder god, resembles Maui's fight with the underworld god or goddess of fire and earthquake from whom he gets fire, and maims. See Luomala 1949.

27. For criticism of Malinowski's denial of symbolism see Kluckhohn (1942:45–79; or 1968:137–168, especially 146).

28. In some variants Na Areau temporarily loses his life in certain tricks but recovers in ways other than those described in initiation myths. Narrators of the initiation myths who also tell of his trick in which he is immune to death in a hot pit-oven do not associate these different experiences; gods are expected to be able to transform and restore themselves by their mana. In the trick Na Areau has his host cover him in a pit-oven to demonstrate a new "fishing method." Later he strolls from the bush and opens the oven to display many cooked fish. Imitating him, his foolish host is burned to death. See Grimble (1934:99–101) for translation of Te Kawakawa's variant.

29. From Moaua's notebook, Tabiteuea.

30. The Grimble Papers have only the English version with neither the island nor the narrator named. Reference to the Polynesian god Tangaroa, also known in the Gilberts, indicates that the myth may have come from a Tuvalu narrator. Tuvalu is predominantly Polynesian with Gilbertese influence, particularly on Nui Island, principally from refugees from Gilbertese wars.

31. Kennedy (1931)—"The Story of Naleau and Kaulialia," pp. 190–191—the attack on the thunder god, p. 194. Kennedy gives both the Ellice text and the English translation. The thunder god's sensitivity to noise (except from himself) is known to all. Parkinson's extensive description of the Gilbertese Tabuariki (1889:100–101, 102–104) stated (p. 101) of his sacred house and a four-foot-high stone in front of it circled by smaller stones that "Children must not enter the house, and the adults only do it with a positive shrinking, constantly speak softly, and avoid all loud racket." In some islands a stretch of land outside his house belongs to him and may not be trespassed except briefly when crossing it in time of war. The god's power to send rain, particularly to the middle and southern Gilberts, which are often afflicted with droughts, makes his priests much respected.

32. The Grimble Papers have only English notes on this myth.

33. Luomala (1956:38–44) tells how Na Areau and a later-day man Tareti got much food while giving little or nothing in return.

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