

Magic

There are two very distinct sorts of magic in the Gilberts — the Kawai and the tabuua.

The Kawai is purely ritual, being unaccompanied by incantations or spoken spells of any kind. An example is the simple burning of a fire in a circle surrounded by a square in the preparations of a poet to compose his song.

The tabuua is the incantation or spell. It is generally found in combination with ritual, in which case the ritual is called te Kawai and the spoken charm te tabuua. Both ritual & words are equally important to success in such an event, the one being considered powerless for good or evil without the other. In a few cases pure tabuua is found — simply spells without ritual — an example being the exhortation to Sun & Moon, made by the poet before his song is first raised in the manabala.

Joseph E. ...

Magic and Prayer.

Hitherto, I have used the word magic as a convenient label to attach to all the magico-religious formulae and rites described in the first part of my work. But it is obvious that there is a vast difference between such examples of "magic" as the wawi^x shown on page 200, and the appeal to the moon on page 220; between the tabu of a coconut-tree on page 210, and the address to an ancestor on page 230. Before a further discussion of the subject is possible, it is necessary to find and to define a set of terms expressing the nature of such a difference. I intend henceforward to limit my use of the word magic, ^{is used to designate} to such actions, whether of word or gesture, as are so secret in character that their benefit is definitely limited to the individual performing them; which depend for their efficacy upon what the native calls te maneve and te Kawai — the precise word of power or the exact ritual used; and which claim to control or command the obedience of the spiritual being^(if any) addressed, and therefore lack any element of appeal.

I shall use the term prayer, ^{is used} to designate that class of actions which, while being addressed towards a spiritual ^{power} being, is open in character at least to the extent that an individual may perform the ceremonial for the benefit of other spectators beside himself, which is not dependant for its success upon a stereotyped form of words or gestures; and which is characterized by the element of appeal, or propitiation of a superior being.

Between magic and prayer thus defined is to be found in the Gilberts a third form of magico-religious ceremonial, invariably (so far as I ^{know} see) connected with the cult of the sun, which seems to partake of the elements of both. For while, in some cases, it seems to be secret in the essential sense that its benefit is limited to the performer, it is at other times of an open and even a public character; and while, like magic, it is stereotyped in its formulae, it has the nature of prayer in that it is addressed as an appeal or supplication to a power held in awe and fear. If my definitions of magic and prayer are sound, then we have here a type of ritual which is neither the one nor the other, but a hybrid of both. I shall reserve a consideration of this form until I deal with the question of the sun-cult.

A very definite distinction exists in the ^{Gilbertese} native mind between magic and prayer. Magic is called generically by them tabunea, while prayer is called tataro. I do not wish to imply that the Gilbertese native more than any other primitive man has reached the stage of defining the precise nature of his mental attitude towards the spiritual powers which he recognises. But if you give him concrete examples of tabunea and tataro he is ^{quite} ~~unmistakably~~ incapable of confusing the one with the other, of calling by the name tabunea that which is tataro, or vice-versa. And it is certainly indicative of a pretty clear realisation of values when an old

woman of seventy odd, on being asked outright what was the difference between a tataro and a tabunea in her view, answered immediately and in a tone of expostulation, as if the question were absurd, "Kai, a Kaokoro, a Kaokoro! Te bubuti te tataro, ao te tabunea bou traki te bubuti! Hongkoo! (Why, they are different, they are different! The tataro is a begging, and the tabunea is certainly not a begging! Forsooth!) This answer is striking particularly because it plunges ~~just~~ ^{right} to the heart of the psychological difference ~~between~~ ^{between} the two things. My old woman might have been expected, if she saw any distinction at all, to have given salience to the material rather than the psychological ~~factor~~ ^{factor}. She might have answered, for example, that in a tataro you give propitiatory offerings to the power addressed, while in a tabunea you do not. This she certainly knew, because she referred to it in the course of the conversation which followed; ~~but the essential difference, which the propitiatory offering is merely an external manifestation, was certainly that~~ ^{psychological} ~~more important~~ ^{clearly} ~~in her mind~~ but there can be no doubt from the vigour of her first answer that it was the difference of mental attitude above all which struck her as the salient difference distinguishing the tataro from the tabunea.

Magic, To Buickna, Butaritari.

There is an utu of Kinuar on Butaritari whose uimaane uioices in the name of Kitina (Kitchener), which claims the power of calling the porpoise at will.

This utu belongs to Mōne, the land under the sea. When a member dies, he does not go to the land of Bōwan or Matang, to which other people go, but to Mōne, his spiritual home.

A member of this utu claims the power of bringing porpoise to shore at any season of the year. Having been asked by the High Chief to call the shoal, the "caller" goes and lies down in his hut with feet to westward. He passes into a natural sleep, during which he claims that his spirit quits his body and goes westward to the islet of Bikaati, there it dives under the sea, straight down to the spiritual replica of Bikaati in Mōne. Here live the porpoises. When the caller's spirit comes among them, they are men in the bodies of men, and wear men's clothes. They greet him kindly, and the King of the place receives him as one of that utu. After feasting and talking with the people, he bids the King that some of them may accompany him ashore to the maie (game or dance). The King permits this, and

those who will, arise from the assembly,
go to a sandspit a little distance apart,
and doff all their clothes. Immediately
their garments fall from them they are
converted into porpoise.

All set out together for the village of
Kuma, the "caller" leading them with
dancing movements. When they are
well on their way, the "caller" leaves
them and turns back to his
sleeping body. His eyes open, he
awakes from sleep, and says to the
people who await him "E tan,
a noko raoni, naku Katason
te manie." The whole village, both
members and non-members of the ~~etc.~~
then goes and decks itself out with
mats, garlands and scented oils,
exactly as if a dance were toward.
The whole company then repairs to
the beach. While awaiting the porpoise,
it is sternly forbidden to talk or even
to think of food. The porpoise must be
referred to as "our friends," their visit
is alluded to as a gathering to the
"dance". If there is any mention of a
killing, the porpoise will hear, and
turn away in fear.

The animals swim straight to the

beach, the "caller" standing knee deep in the shoal water to welcome them. He goes through the gesture of the dance, and repeats the incantation of the Binckua, and entreats his "brothers" the porpoise to come and "dance" ashore.

When the fish are close in, the whole population descends into the sea. Each one chooses a porpoise and standing beside it, fondles and embraces it, and leads it ashore.

Whatever may be the truth of the caller's descent into Mōne, there is absolutely not the shadow of a doubt that if you ask one of this utu to call the porpoise, the porpoise can be made to arrive that very day. Also it is borne out by hundreds of witnesses that, whatever may be the cause of their arrival, they swim into the shallow water in such a condition that a man may go down and clasp them in his arms without difficulty.

The magic connected with the Binckua, as that concerning navigation, may be inherited by women, as well as men. Kitina is the only man of his utu who has inherited the spells; the rest of the people in this utu who hold the

Sun and Moon.

The clan of Maerna was believed to have the power of causing eclipses of the sun and moon at will. The ritual was as follows:- The eclipse-maker built a smok thatched hut on the eastern shore of the island, and hung mats about it in such a way as to exclude all light from the interior. Towards moonrise or sunrise, as the case might be, he entered this hut and left outside a member of his clan to shout to him as soon as the edge of the luminary's disc appeared above the horizon. As soon as he received the signal, he began to mutter —

I ti bwerebwere-ia mata-n Jaai (* Namakaina) (or Moon)
I only enclose it in a fence face - of Sun

tu-itera-na; I ti bwerebwere-ia mata-n Jaai
one-side ; I only enclose it in a fence face - of Sun

ua-itera; I ti bwerebwere-ia mata-n Jaai
two-sides ; I only enclose it in a fence face - of Sun

tu-itera.
three-sides.

This simple formula was repeated thrice. There was no other ritual. After the third repetition, the performer immediately lay down and slept. During his sleep the eclipse was alleged to take place. He would bring it to an end by awaking, and emerging from the hut into the open.

* (Namakaina)
Moon

Magie : Mofu.

Old men and women would go at ~~moonset~~ ^{moonset}, on the first day of the young moon, to the Western beach, and address the moon in following manner:-

Namakaina - o! ^{Moon} - o! Namakaina - o! ^{Moon} - o! ^{I kept} ^{held} upon roro-u.

Namakaina - o! ^{Moon} - o! Namakaina - o! ^{Moon} - o! Ko na angann-a^{give} an^{me} ai^{my} oiaki, te-oiaki^{month}-na^{one month} ma^{with} ua-oiaki^{two months}, ten-oiaki^{three months}, aa-oiaki^{4 months}, nima-oiaki^{5 months}, on-oiaki^{6 months}, iti-oiaki^{7 months}, van-oiaki^{8 months}, rua-oiaki^{9 months}, te-ngaun-ee!

Namakaina - o! ^{Moon} - o! Namakaina - o! ^{Moon} - o! Ko na angann-a^{give} an^{me} ai^{my} riki^{year}, terrikena^{one year}, ma^{with} ua^{2 years} uriki etc. te^{but}ngaun-ee!

Namakaina - o! ^{Moon} - o! Namakaina - o! ^{Moon} - o! Ko na angann-a^{give} an^{me} ai^{my} tannang^{age}, te tannangina^{one age}, utannang etc. te¹⁰⁰⁰nga-ee!

While going down beach to edge of sea, where this is recited the old man opens his arms with palms up towards moon and does movements of the moia. When he begins chant he claps hands at each repetition of "moon" and does moia movements to rot. 3 times.

Mameaba, To Boti, Mameaba

The succession to the Boti was in the vast majority of cases traced in the male line (i.e. through the father), but the boti of the mother or father's mother was sometimes allotted to several children (generally the juniors) of a numerous family. The mother's boti was considered as a tabo ni Kamawa, a place to make room, if the father's boti in a particular family-group seemed to be in danger of overcrowding.

‡ An adopted child would nearly always transfer to the boti of his adopter. Supposing the adopter to be of the same utu as himself, but on the mother's side, a child would thus leave the paternal boti. Or again, if the adopter was of the paternal utu, but had himself by adoption or other circumstance changed his boti at an earlier date, the adopted