

tions of Lycurgus are another example, owing their authority less to their own excellence, or to the rank of the legislator, than to the solemn oath by which he enforced their observance, and to the mystery of his death. With the Lacedemonians it was tabu to use silver money, to wear certain clothes, to eat certain dishes, and the like.

These examples may give us a clue to the probable origin of the tabu-system. If the individual to whom the Polynesians owe their present civil and religious code, for such in fact it is, was one who claimed to communicate with divine powers, or to possess supernatural attributes, his precepts would have, in the eyes of a people so strongly imbued with religious feeling, an authority infinitely superior to that which they could derive from any other source. That such was actually the case, would seem probable from certain peculiarities in the language and customs of the natives. In most of the groups, the word *aliki*, (or *ariki*, *ali'i*, *ari'i*, &c.,) is the usual word for chief. In the dialect of New Zealand, however, which has retained many features of the original Polynesian tongue that have been elsewhere lost, the term *ariki* is applied to an individual in a tribe who is considered to have received, by hereditary descent, a peculiar rank and sanctity, entitling him to certain observances which are rendered to no others, and making his person inviolate in war. He has, however, no authority whatsoever over the other freemen of a tribe. In Lee's vocabulary, *ariki* is rendered "a representative of God,—a priest," and *wakariki*, "making an *ariki* or priest." This, though not strictly correct, is perhaps as good a translation as could be given. In Samoan, *ali'i* is chief, and *va'ali'i*, priest; it seems likely that the latter was originally the same word with the former, and that the particle *va* has been prefixed for the sake of distinction.

In short, we may suppose that the author of the tabu-code was a person, who, in the original seat of the Polynesian race, united the power of a ruler and lawgiver to the dignity of a chief-priest, and perhaps of an inspired being. From the latter circumstance, his laws or tabus, whether promulgated as divine commands or not, would be received and obeyed as such, and would retain their force, from this cause, long after the legislator was forgotten. His descendants, finding the duties of their religious office less to their taste than the enjoyments of civil power, might, like the Eastern caliphs, devote themselves chiefly to the latter, while retaining the name (*aliki*), and perhaps much of the homage belonging of right to the former. Such