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TOPIC: LEGEND OF NAVATULEVU

Investigator: Mill

Informant: Lisala Uivuya of Navatulevu, Serua. Age: 60yrs

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I will be conversing with Lisala Uivuya and we will be hearing some stories which he will relate to us about their chiefly village at Navatulevu. I thank you very much for giving your time to come here and to tell us more of the things about some historical events that took place here at Navatulevu.

- My first ancestors from what my great grandfathers and there fore those before them passed down from the others of our history said that they first came from the edge of the great pool at Nubu near Nakauvadra. There was quite a crowd who came with them and that is the reason why many of use are settling here in Nakorolevu. When our ancestors left Nubu they cut cross the mainland until they reached the edge of the Sigatoka Valley. One of our Yavusa - , the largest kinship and social division of Fijian society, consisting of the descendants of one originator known as Nadrukū. They managed to find food for themselves and travelled deep into the mainland. But the rest of us followed the Sigatoka River travelling south. They came across a range of mountains known as the Vuniarokoto. At this point, some of the group of people divided themselves from the main group and they went away to settle in some new places.

They looked everywhere and in front of them far out they saw

the big waves and the wide ocean. This was the sea. Some of them were quite taken aback of this great discovery of the sea and weren't feeling bold enough to continue the journey. Majority of the group haven't seen the sea before and it is like a completely new world to them. So, this majority of people planned to go and settle someplace else, so, they went to make their home near the mouth of the Navua River. The rest of my ancestors continues with their journey to search for new land and they too came across the Navua River and some of the Yavusa, the Nadrukū, made up their minds to stay at a place known today as Laselase. Again the rest of the group left Laselase and travelled north again until they reached a place known as Lotua Lalai which is just opposite the Queen's Road and near the Naviti Resort. They stayed there and now it is just one large group of people known as the Yavusa Korolevu but today many other Yavusa are staying with us because they are subjected to our village. Staying at this place, on one hill our young people occupied that place and on the other hill, our elders stayed there. The young people did all the work and real helped one another. One day, a young boy came to the elders home crying. The old people staying in their huts heard it and they questioned him as to who made him cry. The boy said a name and this person was the grandson of my ancestor's grandfather. Upon hearing this, the young boy's grandfather was very angry and he said a word which is unpleasant to the ears and also a swear to us Korolevu people. His words were 'Who made you cry?' and this was followed with a swear meant for my ancestor. When my ancestor heard

this he was very angry too and he wanted to do something else in return of the other man's sinister remark. My ancestor is Kolinio Raluvu and he also was one of the people who came right from Nubu. He turned to the rest of the old people inside the Bure and told them that since they have swore at his grandson he is not going to stay with them and he is going to find some- place else to stay. So, he left and some other people of his age left with him. They revelled up and came across this land where the Hyatt Regency is situated. So my ancestors ordered some people to stay there and that is going to be the edge of their land and the boundary mark was set. One of our I TOKATOKA - an enlarged family unit - known as the LIGA NI MASBI stayed there. Today they are no longer known as of that name but they are known as the Vua ni Masel. This I Tokatoka, it is their duty to be the chief's ambassador - Matanivanua - a chief's official herald and they stayed together in that place. The rest travelled inwards and they reached a place known today as Macu. My ancestors announced that his grandfather and some other elders will make that place their home. The name of this group of people is the Bati Koba. Koba in the Bauanadialekt means LOLO - a fig tree. The rest of the group continued with the journey until they reached another new place known today as Navola. Another group, the I tokatoka known as Nalate today stayed at Navola. These group of people were my ancestors right hand man or his warriors. At this point, my ancestors was getting very weak due to his knees. But the Nalate people urged him on and promised to fight for him no matter what would happen. So my ancestor continues up,

of Burentu held a meeting and they discussed about the arrival
Nubu, moved in and stayed with him. While they stayed the chief
and they found him there at Nabunokena, when they first left
or the I Tokatoka the Nadruku who volunteered to come with him
searched for him and they found him at Nabunokena. The tribe
got another name today. His followers or the rest of the people
especially food. That's how that place got its name but it's
Nabunokena. It means that he sweat for everything he wants
and just near it he made a home. At that time, he named it
alone, he left his followers and he came across a sandy island
place where the bay curves up to a point. My ancestor went
went back to the way they came first until they reached this
He was ~~xxx~~ so gilled with shame that returned back. They
snatched his necklace and it was lying on the ground shattered.
and all of a sudden, he realised that the other chief has
right but by exchanging words. He said he wouldn't turn back
want to turn back and he challenged the other chief not to a
that territory since they are living there. My ancestor didn't
and told my ancestor to go back because they cannot come into
like a necklace. The chief of the tribe Burentu, came forward
around their neck and all of them has got pig's teeth hanging
those that followed him show his strength and bravery. All
and they lived there. As for my ancestor, his costume and
warriors. This warriors belong to the I Tokatoka the Burentu
into dry land they were confronted by a large group of
known as Somosomo. They crossed this bay and when they came
occupied it yet. They went past Navtillevu and onto a bay
on and on they travelled and all along the coast, no one had

of the new people. They said that this man who came with the others must be a great chief because of the necklace he wore around his neck. They discussed the possibility of a war if the man returned so, they decided to perform the MALANIGASAU an atonement made with a reed - and by doing this they wanted to soften his heart a bit. So, they gave my ancestor the daughter of one of their chiefs and they usually called their daughter's of chiefly rank as BURINI. They came to see him and they asked him for pardon, to forgive them for the thing that they have done. To prove that they are really sorry, they gave him the young lady and asked him to take the young girl to be his wife. So, they stayed together, the young girl with him and he made up his mind to go down and get the rest of the group whom he left behind after the incident with the Barenitu tribe. He wanted his people to come with him and together they can build up a village. They build their village five miles inland from this place where we sitting. They called their new village Draa. But I don't really know why they call their village Draa. Together with the Yavusa, the Nadruku, they hold hands together and around the village, they dug up the land. And the village sits right in the middle. It has four main gates and near the village, another groups or Yavusa of people stays close by. They didn't like the idea of my ancestors staying near them. So, they decided to fight with them, but unsuccessfully. This is because of the large and deep drains which they dug around the village. The drains are about two chains wide and very deep. People finds it really hard to go down and come up quickly. But my ancestor was not quite settle because he didn't like those people who were

trying to overpower him and take his village. So, he made up his mind to build another village on a nearby hill and it was there that he found peace. The other villages were not able to defeat him because ~~they~~ when they tried to fight them by coming down or coming uphill, they roll down large boulders and stones and it hit their enemies, killing them too. They decided to name their settlement Sabula - saved. It means that they are now free and can live in peace without the other villages pestering them. For many years they stayed there and one day while surveying his surroundings he spotted an island out in the sea and he wondered what it would be like. This was the Yauca Island. So, he asked his people to build a boat for him because he wanted to go out and investigate and see what the island is like. When he reached Yauca Island, he saw that people had already occupied the island. He went to see the chief of the island and he asked the chief if he could bring his young people to come and live with them on the island. The chief agreed and the young people moved to Yauca Island. He stayed there for quite some times and then he remembered the rest of the people, ~~the~~ those who were occupying the village he build. He returned to them and they held a meeting. He asked them if they could build another village. At that particular period, another group of wanderers came to settle near Yauca and also on Yauca Island, are all occupied by some Nasau people. With these people, they were also occupied by some Nasau people from Nadroga. And these Nadroga people who acts as protectors to these people. They went to stay at Vitawa village, but before

My ancestor made that trip to Yanuca Island, he paid a visit to Serua and he was told of the new arrivals and he asked him if he could take the Nadroga people or the Nasau people from Nadroga. And it was suggested that they were taken to be housed at his village. The Vunivalu, the title given to the chief of Serua is also the chief here at Nakorolevu. My ancestor received them with gladness so he brought them with him and they build this very village where we are staying right now. And this is called Nadruku and the people from Nadroga the Mataqali the Nasau, build this village. After my ancestor had seen that it was good he returned to Yanuca. My ancestor had children from his wife, the lady of Burenitu and his children returned with those who stayed at Yanuca Island and they came to live here at Navutulevu right up today. My ancestor died at Yanuca but his son and the yavusa the Nadruku. With my ancestor and his people, many other ~~was~~ people who are now staying at other places began the journey from Nubu near Nakauvadra together. This include the people staying here at Navutulevu, those at Serua, Vunibau and those staying also at Vulanuku. It is just like one enlarge family unit who came down together but divided us up was the words of the young boy's grandfather who didn't like his grandson crying. But if it wasn't for them, we wouldn't be staying here but somewhere else that's how Navutulevu was founded and when it's people came from. I don't really know how it got it's name but if you ask or take a journey down to the beach and around the village don't be surprised to see that majority of it's plants are the Vutu trees. It's got all different species of the Vutu tree.

May be that's how Navutulevu got it's name, from the Vutu trees
It's got that and that is all I know or I can tell you about
the origin of my ancestors and myself, how they came down, the
places they stayed at, until they came to occupy this village,
Navutulevu.

You were telling me that the sign of your god's presence can
be seen when the whole village sort of lit up and the village
is clearly seen at night. Could you say more about this?

Well... as I was telling you, one of the groups of people who
made the journey with my ancestors, they are known as Batikoba.
These people advise me and it is what they've been doing ever
since. Those before them and it will be like this in the future.

They advice the chief, tell him of what things should be done
It's like they are the Beteo- priest- and it is them who says
stop, or go, and do this and that. The name of the originator
of our Vu as we believe him to be is ~~XXXXXXXX~~. RAITONO. And
we've been told that he's got only one sister. Her sister is
usually called Bulou. On top of that hill as you can see,
Navutulevu is down here below and we believe that our ancestors
live on top of that hill. If any of our children, boy or girl,
or anyone disturb the peace of the village, make unnecessary
noise or just pleasing himself as what to do, that day followed
the night our originator or Vu comes into the village. We
know this because of the light surrounding a particular house.
It is telling us that someone in that house had done a wrong
and must be punished. For example, if someone from one house
went to his plantation to get food and he didn't keep his rubbish
and other wastes properly, then, in the night, Raitono will make
his move.

And he will light up the outside of that man's home. When this news is taken up to the Baticoba people. In the morning, the Baticoba leader will sound the Davui-trumpet shell and every villager will attend the meeting. He will advise them not to do any more wrong or anything to disturb the peace in the village. The originator, Rationo, is only seen if something bad had been done. He is like a burning torch or like a hurricane lamp moving around the village burning brightly. I haven't seen it with my own eyes but another thing, if there's a lot of noise made by our young people or someone just please himself as to what he does what usually happens it is that our crops will suffer. When we go down to the plantation to get our food, the taro are not big as it should have been. In some cases, some are spoiled. We do not get satisfactory results when we get our food from the garden. There's a big BAKA tree banayan tree-which grows beside these two gods property. If we get out crops from our garden and it is not what we expected, our ladies and old women prepare each a basket of young taro suckers. They carry this on their back together with another plant known to us as Yaqayagona. It is a plant similar to the Yagona plant with fibrous roots. Together with the taro suckers they are placed beneath this banayah tree. It is like our I SORO - to humble oneself and make atonement - to our gods. Rationo and his sister. Someone will present it and ask for pardon from them. After that we return home and when one year is over and our crops are ready to be eaten. When we go out to get them we find large dalo and root crops are very big and plentiful. This shows the MANA - a sign of good fortune - given

to us from our originators. This follows from the appearance of that bright light, we cannot see who's holding it, it's like a bright star. It moves around roof tops, the chief's house, my grandfather's house and other houses too. That is how our Vu or originator reveals himself to us.

Thank you. You were telling me that the Vu or god reveals

itself in the form of light. You fully know that he is not happy with something, don't you do something like presenting a yagona or something else besides to please him or what do you usually do?

Well... yes, our elders usually make the yagona and they explain why they are very young and they don't realize that what

they are doing is wrong. But after we have made our atonement and made our offerings, that is the young taro suckers and the yagoyagona, the following year is a very prosperous year for

us. Not only, our ~~xxxxxxxx~~ gardens, but it shows also with

the fruits we eat and on the faces of my people. The yagona

is also made to bring peace between our gods and my people.

As we know, they were also people like us, our originators,

so it's nothing new to them.

After the wrong is known and you have presented your sacrifices

to them. This is to please them and to remove any other bad

plans he had in mind to punish your village for the wrong com-

mitted. Is there any taboo that he placed on your village

because of the wrong done?

No, we do not have any taboos. From my childhood days until

today, I haven't come across any taboo that is placed on us

for a wrong committed. The Batikoba people only advise those

who know had done a wrong not to do it again. My elders and other chiefs of our village gather to make a yagona and they make the I Soro. But we don't have any taboo to observe. Is there any food here that is regarded highly and is only eaten by the chief and not by anyone who feels likt it?

Yes, we do have some. Our i Gavuti - a title - for my people here at Navutulvu is the DOKO, in the Bauan dialect it is the dalo or taro. And also that is our chiefly food here at

Nakorolevu.

Is there anything else that happened in your village in the olden days and has become a thing that made you and your people

known to others because of that particular event that occurred

in the days of your ancestors or anything that distinguishes

yourselves from other people?

As I've already said that we all spring from one enlarged family

unit and many are now staying at Srna and other places. In

Serua district, only four villages are subjected to Serua.

There's only one thing that we always boast about from my

ancestors days until that of this days and that is the born

of Christianity in the lives of my people. The first people

who learn of Christianity was Bau and then on to Barebasaga

and the third to accept Christianity was Serua. It was intro-

duced and it extends to the rest of the Serua district. There's

one mataqali in Serua known as the Tausala and it means cannot

be stopped or destroyed. It was this tribe that defeated

Sawateke in Gau and Kadavu and also a village in Sigatoka. The

Tausala is from here at Nakorolevu and they were a very strong

tribe. As we know, today we hear people say BUREBASAGA KEI NA

KENA I SASAVU which means Burebasaga and places subjected to it. It is because as soon as Burebasaga accepted Christianity, the Vunivalu of Serua was the next to follow. And that is what the people of Serua mostly boast of. Serua continued to spread the good news of Christ but Bau and Burebasaga did not. This was skillfully done by the tribe known as the Tausala. Bau and Burebasaga were supposed to make a I QUSI NI LOALOA - it is a reward awarded to a village or a person, it can be land or anything - to Serua but they did not. So what happens is that when anybody from here at Nakorolevu goes to Rewa or Bau they can carry their umbrellas or yell from one side of the island to the other. And nobody can say anything. But we thank the Vunivalu's warriors, the Tausala for spreading the good news of Jesus Christ that borne many Christians. They went as far as Gau, Kadavu and other nearby islands. That is the only thing that makes people of Nakorolevu to be proud of themselves.

Thank you. You were telling me that your ancestors often go out to fight other people. Could you describe some of the weapons used and how they are used and made?

They often use something like a club. It is got a round head and a long handle. All you have to do is club somebody's head with it and they are instantly killed. And another one is the spear. The spear is decorated with a piece of magimagi a native string. Staying with my grandfather he once told me a story of their destroying a village by lighting a fire. And I said that they do not have any matches in the olden days and how come they were able to light a fire. And he said

that they used the Nita- to obtain fire by friction. They got a piece of dry wood and with another piece of stick, it is used to rub onto the surface of the former. You keep on rubbing it until it lights. They used that to obtain fire and that is how they manage to defeat that village by lighting a fire. After the war or fight, do you go straight to your home or do you stay and drink yagons together. What do you usually do after that?

I do not really know. But the Bete, there food is the yagons. I believe that they drink yagons too, since it is through the Bete that the message from our gods is passed from. That is when he goes to sleep and the message is given to him in a dream or something like it. So, they drink yagons in the day-time. I often see my grandfather drinking yagons too. Often and only the Bete sees things and they often perform the Vakawirimadigi - casting spells.

Could you elaborate more on the term 'VAKAWIRIMADIGI'?

They say that they spin their cups of yagons. In this case the Bete spins the cup and it does plenty of things. Sometimes it stands upright, points to a particular direction or points to someone in the room. My grandfather used to do this.

In the presence of the Bete, if they want to know something like the pig spoiling the garden, sometimes the cup moves. It means that someone has done or more than that. Maybe the leader had done something wrong or the opposite side, it can mean anything. That's how it's done.

Is there anything else you would like to say so that when your people grow up to know of these things or anything you would

like to share with your people?

There's something I would like to share with you that I learnt from my grandfather and it is about an experience he met. They were not in good terms with the other people and what happened is that they were experiencing a new surrounding of hot atmosphere. In other cases, watching from his house, he saw the four corners of his house lit up as if it has caught fire.

But in the morning, it was just as it is. He learnt that people tend to practise voodooism and maybe they did just that.

His other brothers did that. At that period, a Christian school was build at Navuloa and it was later transferred to Davullevu where it is today. So, my grandfather made up his mind to go there. And he joined in the 1887 but he was called back to the village to lead his people. He learnt everything about his land and straighten everything not clear in 1889 and many of the things on his mind was written on paper.

Thank you very much for sharing a lot of things with me and I hope that it will help the future people of Navutullevu.

THANK YOU.

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