

972

TOPIC : LEGEND OF THE MANULEVU

INFORMANT : VEREMI SADRATA (M 50y)

Place origin: NAKUKERU

YASAWA

PLACE of INTERVIEW : NAVITI ISLAND

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Investigator : Willie Dari.

SPS

LEGEND OF THE MANULEVU.

I will tell you the story about the big bird which was told by the elders in the olden days. It is told that this bird was brought up in the place called YASAWA-I-LAU.

The bird grew and grew and it was told that it would fly all over the places to look for food. Usually it would fly above the sea looking for turtles and big fish, ~~called~~ such as BABALE. When catching turtles and fish, the bird would catch it in numbers and bring it all the way back to SAWA-I-LAU to eat it. For instance one day she would catch 5 turtles and five big fish but will not eat it at the spot and bring it home.

One day, the big ^{bird} ~~fish~~ goes out again to look for food, it flies over the sea and goes to VANUA LEVU, approaching the island of VANUA LEVU, the bird found the women going in the sea for fishing. The big bird decided that it would be good for himself just to pick one from the number of women, for his own food. At least, the bird dived down at the women, where they were doing their nets, and pick one of them. It was told that the women whom it picked was a chiefly woman by the name of NAIOBASE

She was picked by the bird who flys back to SAWA I LAU where he could eat ~~there~~ her. Back at VANUA LEVU the women finished their fishing and decided to return home. Before returning home they found that the woman who was standing in the middle of the group of women, was missing. It was found that the woman missing was a woman from the chiefly clan in Vanua Levu. The women returned to their village and told everything about the bird and the missing woman. All the villagers were having a hard time trying to guess the place where the big bird stays. The villagers were all concerned about the missing of the woman and at least, two men volunteered to set sail and search where the missing lady would be. One was the husband of the missing woman while another was the cousin (brother/sister's daughter) TAVALE.

The two men prepared their boat's sail and at last set sail. The two men sailed aimlessly not knowing where to go, but deep in ~~their~~ them, they knew that the ~~Max~~ MADIGI or power of righteousness would take them to the island where the missing woman would be. The men sailed and sailed down until they come to SAWA I LAU. It was told that the two men felt that something awaited for them at the island, so they decided to go ashore. They moored the boat to the island shore and left it there. After that, the two men walked around the island of SAWA I LAU, looking for any clue. They walked on until they climbed a mountain. They found a cave and they saw the remains of food eaten by the big bird. The two men knew at once that they have found the eating place of the big bird. The men walked further into the cave and found the hair of the missing woman NAIOBASARI. They knew that is all that remains of her.

There is a poem about this, when the men found the remains

of the missing woman. I am sorry I do not know the poem or the recitation of this story but I will try to relay to you what I heard from ~~the~~^{my} elders.

The two men were really sad to see the remain of the woman and they stood there remembering her. While they were standing, they see that the place was getting dark so quickly as if they were standing in the night. Actually this is the time when the big bird returns from, bringing his food. It was told that the bigness of the bird ~~stays~~ stops the sun from shining to the cave. The bird landed at the entrance of the cave where he was used to eat the food he brought. The two men saw the food which was brought by the big bird. As usual, the bird brings about ten turtles and ten big fish called the BABALE. The bird was carrying all this on his claws. He landed at his eating place and started to eat.

The two men saw the bird and decided ~~to~~ that they should spear it. The husband, ~~said~~ told ROKOUA that he should take the spear to throw at the big bird and to kill him. ROKOUA spoke to his cousin repeating him that he could not do such a task because even then he is ~~feeling wet in his pants~~ feeling wet under his pants. He told his cousin he is really afraid to execute the task. At least one of them agrees to do the spearing. While the big bird was there, the two men were very busy in trying to find a good spot at the body of the big bird, so they threw the spear and kill him.

The two men had difficulty in locating a find spot since the feathers of the bird were thick. At last they decided to pray and ask for a strong wind to blow. Soon after their prayers,

they could feel that the cool breeze started to blow within the cave. The wind blows from within the cave. It blew stronger and stronger slowly. To tell the people fo Fiji this wind is still blowing in the cave until this very day when I am telling you this story.

The wind blew and blew until the tail of the bird started to be *positioned* in a side way manner. By this, the two men could see clear the soft part of the bird, *its anal* opening. Seeing this opportunity ROKOBITUQAVI took the spear and hurled it at the spot. The spear found its target and the bird crys out painfully. The big bird fell dead on the ground and the two men decided to take one of his feathers back to be used as their mast on their voyage back. That is what I have heard from the eld elders concerning the legend of the big bird or MANU LEVU. That is all.

- Could you tell me which part of VANUA LEVU the chiefly woman
- I believe this is from BUA.
- Since mentionning about the big bird, could you tell me if you have heard from the elders whether is a bird belonging to a spirit or was it a VU or a godly spirit itself ?
- It is a real bird and not a spirit ~~of a bird~~ making himself in a form of a bird. The elders explain the bird is found only in two places , one in SAWA I LAU and the other at VATULELE.
- Thank you very much Vereimi, do you wish to tell anything else about the legend of the big bird ?
- The story is not well done. since I do not know the recitation which ~~gives~~ ^{goes} along with the legend, The ~~true~~ true wroding of the

The true wording of the legend is not found today and the legend is dying quickly.

- You mentioned that when the two men finished their prayers for a strong wind, a wind came within the cave. Could you tell me if you know any story of how the wind came? Was it sent by some spirits or.....

- The legend says that the strong wind came from within the cave and it does not say whether it is from the North, East, West or South. Today, even if it is a very cool calm day, the wind would be blowing from within the cave. The outside of the cave may be at stand still sometimes but it is not so inside. To prove this, if you will go into the cave and take your shirt and throw it down the cave, no long you, will find your shirt flying out again. by this you can prove that this wind is really coming indeed from the cave. Noone knows where actually it originated from.

- Thank you very much Ratu. Do you wish to say something else about the legend of the big bird?

- I believe that is all. Please, do forgive me if this legend is not very much told in a good manner which you may be expecting. I thank you, that is all.

- Thank you very much Ratu.

The End.