The Tikina of Naviti

The island of Waya

Except for the inhabited island of Waya Sewa and the garden island of Kuata which are included in the territory of the vanua of Vuda, the southernmost island of the Yasawa group is the island of Waya. Waya lies about 40 km north-west of Lautoka and about 25 km from the Great Sea Reef forming the western edge of the shallows within which the islands of the Yasawa Group form a chain. Waya is about 6 km from north to south, and about 4 km from east to west. It has an area of 22 square km. There are wide bays on the north and south coasts. It is the highest and most broken island in the Yasawa Group, with sharp peaks at the north-east corner (571 m) and at the south-west corner (500 m), dropping sheer to the shore. It is well-watered and densely wooded in parts, and there are at present two coastal villages at the north end and two at the south end. There is a population of about 600.

The myth of Tunaiau and the Samoan connection

Tunaiau is regarded as the ivakatawa or guardian, or itaukei du or true owner of Waya. He did not come from Vuda or Nakauvadra or from anywhere else. Tunaiau's place is on top of the south peak, known as Ulu i Tunaiau, where the Lomati people cut the grass because Tunaiau dislikes long grass.

As indicated in the following lines which I recorded in 1953, Tunaiau is said to be autochthonous and was created at the same time as Waya was created:

Buli ko Rotuma, buli ko Waya,
Buli vata kei na kena ivakatawa.

Rotuma was created, Waya was created,

At the same time as its guardian was created.

Tunaiau took some yaqona to Samoa and brought back a girl but they had no children. Other Samoans accompanied the girl, and they lived on a yavu known as Samoa. There was a yavu called Samoa at the village of Yalobi when I visited the place. The Waya people told me that they thought that their communalecct had features similar to Samoan, citing the word laka or go. In fairness, there is a Samoan cognate, la'a; but Andrew Pawley, who has investigated the communalecct extensively, is not aware of any other similarities (personal communication). However he told me that there are two groups at Yalobi who claim a Samoan lineage. Recently I checked that there are people there who claim descent from Samoans. The Samoan connection is of some importance to the people of Waya and especially to those in Yalobi. The origin of the myth may well be seen as a rationalisation of some admixture of Wayan and Samoan blood, following some occasion(s) when Samoans came as far west as the Yawasa Group, perhaps to obtain the sail mats for which
the Group was famous. From early times there was known communication between Fijians, Tongans and Samoans, and within this area there was exchange of crafts and a mingling of the people themselves.

**Origins of the four yavusa**

Waya is said to have been unoccupied until the arrival of certain individuals or small groups whose descendants formed the core of the four Waya yavusa registered by the Native Lands Commission (NLC) and currently recognised by the people of Waya. These arrivals and their descendants were as follows:

(a) A man from Rakiraki and a man from Votua, Ba, followed the coast west from Ba to Saru, Lautoka, and thence sailed first to the island of Vomo and then to Waya. After landing at Vuai, their party established a settlement on the slopes at Yaketi which they called Lomati in memory of the home of the man from Rakiraki. They appointed the eldest son of the man from Rakiraki as leader and installed him with the title of Takala i Waya. Their descendants developed into the yavusa of Lomati. There is a division of the Lomati mataqali called Rakiraki, and the descendants of the man from Votua are the mataqali of Narewa.

The origins of these two progenitors are reflected in the chants used in the course of a yaqona ceremony on Waya, where the meke ni yaqona or chant while the yaqona is being prepared is the same as that used at Votua, Ba, and the meke ni tu yaqona or chant while the yaqona is being offered is the same as that used at Rakiraki.

(b) After a long time, some Lauvatu people from Nalotawa, Ba came and were settled in Lomati but lower down the slope from the first settlers. The first settlers were then known as the Lomati i Yata and the Lauvatu as the Lomati i Ra (the upper and lower Lomati respectively).

Currently the Lomati i Yata are known simply as the Lomati; and the Lomati i Ra are known as the Lauvatu.

(c) Not long afterwards some Kai Yaukuve from Navatucili, Nagwagwa, Vuda, arrived and were settled between the other two groups. Their descendants developed into the yavusa of Yaukuve.

The three groups duly met and appointed the head of the Yaukuve as the paramount and installed him with the title of Nasau or Saumalumu; and then the Lauvatu installed the head of their group with the title of Roko.

(d) Not long after, some Vunavau people of Ketenasau, Vitogo landed at Vuai and sheltered under a large vunabuevu or burevu tree. The Lomati settled them beside the Lomati village, and the settlement was known as Vunabuevu in memory of the tree under which they had sheltered when they first landed. Their descendants developed into the yavusa of Vunabuevu.

They were given the heavy work of the village, and everything they undertook they carried out energetically, including the building of a house for the Takala i Waya. The other groups realised how energetic and useful the Vunabuevu were; and following general agreement, the Lomati and the Lauvatu people installed a man of Vunabuevu as paramount of all four groups, giving him the title of Saubuli. The stone on which the installation was carried out has survived until the present day. Then the Lomati installed this man as leader of the Vunabuevu, giving him the title of Ratu.

The Yaukuve did not attend the ceremony because they were looking for other land on which to settle. When they returned, they were upset that they had not been present at the
There is an anomalous group known as the Vunasalamaca. It is not at all clear where they came from. The only evidence which I could discover was that they have some spiritual association with Viwa (see *ivilavila ni yalo*). The NLC registered them as a *mataqali* of the Lauvatu *yavusa*, but I recorded them on one occasion as once a separate group but now associated with the Vunabuevu. I also recorded them as once part of the Vunabuevu, with whom they had the responsibilities of *dau vakasaqa* or people responsible for cooking for the Vunabuevu. On one occasion, they were preparing *lolo ni qalu*, a kind of pudding, but they let the water dry up and spoilt the pudding. They were no longer regarded as part of the Vunabuevu and were called Vunasalamaca because they had let the water dry up (*maca*).

The jumping-off place of the spirits of the dead of the Vunasalamaca is different from that of the Vunabuevu; and their features of identity (*vuti yaca*) are not exactly the same. The *kai* of the Vunabuevu is the *tawa* tree, whereas that of the Vunasalamaca is the *raro*, although they also respect the *tawa*. So they may have once been one group but after a quarrel symbolised by the spoiling of the pudding, they may have separated; and the NLC may have been asked to record the Vunasalama as of the Lauvatu, not of the Vunabuevu because of this quarrel. On the basis of different *ivilavila ni yalo* and different *kai*, it is more likely that they were groups of different origin and that the Vunasalamaca were late arrivals who associated with the Vunabuevu as servants but later quarrelled and separated.

### Later arrivals

From time to time more individuals or small groups arrived from Viti Levu or from other neighbouring islands and settled on Waya, joining the already established groups, as follows:

(a)  
(i) Some people came from Vuda and joined the Vunabuevu *yavusa*, forming the *mataqali* of Nalotu;  
(ii) Some people came from the island of Malolo and joined the Vunabuevu *yavusa*, forming, I was told in 1953, the *mataqali* of Werelevu;  

(b) A woman of high rank from Batiri, in Nadroga, came with her attendants to marry the Ratu of Vunabuevu. The descendants of the attendants formed the *mataqali* of Vunawi of the *yavusa* of Vunabuevu, with the status of house servants;  

(c) Some Nanuku people of the Kai Vuda came from Saru, Lautoka, and joined the Yaukuve, forming the *mataqali* of Nanuku. They were almost extinct in 1953. The Nanuku people had been chased away from Vuda and had fled to Saru. Some then went to Waya and others to Tavakubu (see Vuda); and  

(d) When the Suelevu of Muaira, Naviti, split up, two groups came and settled at Ravouvou, Wayalevu, and were given land by the Lauvatu. They were included as a *mataqali* of the Lauvatu.

### Installation of the Saubuli

At the time of the NLC, the paramount chief of all Waya was still installed with the title of Saubuli. He was chosen by the Lomati, as the original inhabitants of the island, from among the Vunabuevu. They would then discuss their choice with the Vunabuevu and the Yaukuve as the chiefly *yavusa*. When they reached agreement on who should be installed, the person chosen was duly installed on the installation stone.
Later the title of Saubuli was easternised to that of Tui Waya. More recently, as the result of a split among the Vunabuevu people, there have been two people holding the title of Tui Waya, one from the Nalotu division living at Nalauwaki on the north side of the island, and the other from the Vunakura division living at Yalobi on the south side of Waya. Andrew Pawley (1981) recorded that in order to solve this dichotomy of paramountcy, the people agreed that the title of Saubuli should alternate between the Vunabuevu and the Yaukuve. The problem was solved, albeit temporarily, after I had last met up with the Waya people at Lautoka in 1996: one of the two Tui Waya died.

**The spirits of Waya**

The main anitu or spirit of Waya is T unaiau, the autochthonous itaukei du or ivakatawa from whom no-one on Waya claimed descent. All the groups on Waya claim descent not from a spirit coming to Waya, but from an individual or group coming from groups on other neighbouring islands or from Viti Levu. It is interesting to consider, under these circumstances, the nature of the spirit world on Waya, particularly in the case of late arrivals who joined established original groups.

The Lauvatu mataqali of the Lauvatu yavusa and the Vunasalamaca respect T umaiau as their anitu or spirit with whom the bete or priest communicates at his mata ni sava or place of spiritual communication. During my 1953 visit, the bete, who was also a dauainai or person who foresew the future, lived at Natawa. However, the Suelevu mataqali of the Lauvatu yavusa who came from Muaira, Naviti, respect Maravulevu as their spirit.

The Lomati who are closely associated with Tunaiau and have traditional responsibility for cutting the grass at his place on Ulu i Tunaiau, respect the spirit of their progenitor who came over as a person from Rakiraki.

The Vunabuevu respect a spirit called Ranadi whose place was in the middle of the village of Natawa. Andrew Pawley (1981) recorded that she was sent by the Yaukuve to the Vunabuevu who arrived without a spirit. She was famous for stealing. There is no evidence whether the late arrivals from Vuda and Malolo brought their own spirits. However, the Vunawi mataqali of the Vunabuevu who came from Nadroga respect Levui, whose place is in Nadroga. She is sometimes referred to simply by the female term of respect, Lewatu.

The Yaukuve respect Vureibulu whose place and mata ni sava are at Nalauwaki, where Andrew Pawley (1981) recorded a second spirit called Mudu. She is the spirit of the unborn daughter of a Yaukuve woman who died before the child was born. There is no evidence that the Nanuku, the late arrivals from Saru, brought a Vuda spirit.

Each of the original four groupings whose descendants formed a recognised yavusa respects a separate anitu. The later arrivals respected their own anitu, which in the case of the Nadroga people was their spirit in Nadroga. In the other cases, the information is not available.

**iVilavila ni Yalo**

Except for the Vunasalamaca, the spirits of the dead of all the Waya people go first to Nacilau point near Nalauwaki. Then they fly round Waya before returning to Nacilau. From here they jump with their belongings into a pool beside a flat rock called Waqa (canoe) ni Senio. The sound of two thuds is heard, representing the sound of the spirit and its belongings as they fall into the pool. Then they go by the rock canoe to Narokorokoyawa for which, see below.

However, the spirits of the dead of the Vunasalamaca jump from a rock on Narara Island to Koroua where they eat plantain and crab for the journey. The spirits of the dead go from Narara
to Kavua on Viwa Island before finally going to Narokorokoyawa. If the spirit is that of an unmarried man, there is at Kavua a spirit called Limalimanidawai who will strike the spirit of the bachelor (*dawai*) with a club.

The island of Narara is at present the southernmost of four islets which are associated with the island of Naviti. It is, however, closer to Waya than to Naviti, and may once have been associated with Waya. The procedure followed by the spirits of the dead of the Vunasalamaca is so different from that followed by the other spirits of the dead on Waya that it suggests that the Vunasalamaca were different in origin from the rest of the Waya people, and may indeed have come from Viwa.

**Settlements**

At the time of the NLC, the villages of Yalobi, Nalauwaki, Wayalevu and Nasau were occupied, and the recognised order of seniority of the *yatusa* was Vunabuevu, Yaukuve, Lauvatu and Lomati (i Yata). When I visited Waya in 1953, Nasau had been abandoned and the village of Natawa had been established. The *yatusa* of Vunabuevu and Yaukuve had groups in all four villages.

**Waya and the neighbours**

The women of Waya used to make pottery such as *saqa ni wai* or water jars and *dare* or flat dishes used for food or for *yaqona* bowls. They used resin which they obtained from the mainland. Women used to go to Malolo to teach the women there how to make pottery.

**Waya and outside influences**

In 1881 the Lands Claims Commission (LCC) considered and allowed a claim (1,059) for the purchase by Messrs Villa, Webb and Tyreman in 1871 of two areas on Waya, known as Naseva and Vita. They planted 7 acres of cotton at Vita and a total of about 60–70 acres in both places. After the end of cotton, they had planted the same total of acreage of coconuts by 1881.

**The island of Viwa**

The westernmost island of the Yawasa group and indeed of the whole of the Fiji group is the lonely island of Viwa. Viwa lies about 30 km north-west of Waya and is situated on the edge of the Great Sea Reef. It is a cay of sand and coral debris, about 80 ha in extent, and lies in a lagoon. The highest point is only about 2 m above sea level, and the island is just visible from the heights of Waya. It is covered with coconut palms but there is no natural water supply on the island. The only natural fresh water comes bubbling up in the lagoon from a spring under the sea. Drinking water comes either from cement tanks or from rainwater collected from holes scooped in the sloping trunks of palms. In times of drought, water has to be brought by boat from Waya. There are at present three villages on the island, with a population of about 200.

**The myth of Rainima and the Kaunitoni connection**

Tunaiau is regarded as the *ivakatawa* or guardian, or *itaukei du* or true owner of Waya. He was a member of the crew of the first canoe, the *Kaunitoni*, and a brother of Erovu, the progenitor of the Kai Vuda. He first landed at Vuda and then went to Waya where he met Rainima. They quarrelled and Tunaiau sent Rainima to a reef which Tunaiau could see from the heights of Ulu i Tunaiau. As a punishment for the quarrel, Tunaiau told Rainima to bail (*nimai*) the water from inside the reef. This he did, and so he formed the island of Viwa. He went to settle on the land that he had formed. As there was no fresh water on the island, Tunaiau brought over some in a *dalo* leaf. Rainima poked his finger into the leaf, and the water fell into the sea and formed the fresh water pool in the channel at Kavua.
Rainima’s place is a yavu at Natogo, in the middle of the island, which serves as his mata ni sava or place of communication. He had a son called Rabaraba whose yavu is at Balenatuivi near Yakani.

**Origins and development of the three yavusa**

Viwa is said to have been unoccupied until the arrival of certain individuals or small groups whose descendants formed the core of the three Viwa yavusa registered by the NLC and currently recognised by the people of Viwa.

The initial occupation of Viwa came about because three men from Waya happened to see the reef at Viwa and went to explore. They were:

(a) Two brothers from the Ketenasau division of the Yaukuve yavusa; and

(b) a man from the Kai Lauvatu yavusa.

They formed a settlement at Nakovu and divided the island into two parts, one for the Ketenasau (Yaukuve) and one for the Lauvatu.

They then returned to Waya and the chiefs of the two groups agreed that some from each group should go and settle on Viwa. When they returned, the Lauvatu installed one of the Ketenasau as paramount with the title of Sau, presumably because on Waya the Yaukuve were senior to the Lauvatu. They then separated and went to their respective sides of the island as follows.

(a) Descendants of the Ketenasau

The Ketenasau remained at Nakovu, and were later joined by another group of Ketenasau who were very energetic and their leader was installed as Sau. From here, they moved first to Nabogikolo and finally to Nasoso facing Yakani beach where they built a ceremonial house for their leader that was called Namatoka. At Yakani, some split off and went to settle at Cobocobo. They had not been long at Yakani when they were struck by a hurricane and a tidal wave. After this disaster, they still remained at Yakani.

The descendants of those who remained at Yakani became the Namatoka or Yakani yavusa.

The Ketenasau who had gone to Cobocobo were joined by some Leweivawa from the island of Naviti who settled next to them at Bakubaku. The Leweivawa were very energetic in the work for their settlement, and the Ketenasau agreed to give the Leweivawa the leadership of both groups. They installed one of them and gave him the title of Ratu.

Later, a second group of Leweivawa and some Kai Koro from Marou, Naviti came and landed at Natia. They were given land called Taganikula beside Cobocobo and Bakubaku, and all joined to form one settlement. Here they were struck by the hurricane and tidal wave; some food was brought from Waya and Naviti, but it was not enough and some of the Ketenasau went to Nadroga. The Leweivawa and the rest of the Ketenasau remained at Cobocobo.

When the first group of Leweivawa at Bakubaku saw how energetic the second group of Leweivawa at Taganikula were, they gave them overall authority and installed one of them as leader with the title of Ratu.

Later, those of the Ketenasau who had remained at Cobocobo changed their attitude towards the Leweivawa and began shouting in the middle of the village and being arrogant before the chiefs. Eventually the Leweivawa chiefs could stand the bad behaviour no longer and the Ketenasau were killed.
The Ketenasau at Yakani determined to avenge the killing of the Ketenasau at Cobocobo, and plotted the death of the Leweivawa at Taginakula, inviting them to a feast at Nakovu. When the Taginakula were returning from the feast, they were attacked by the Ketenasau. Those who survived wanted to return to Naviti, but were induced to stay.

The name of the joint village became known as Natia, and the people living there form the yaqona of Natia. The title of the leader is Ratu who is independent.

At the time of my visits, all but five of the Yakani had died. It was explained to me that a member of the Yakani had gone to Koro in Lomaiviti where he had joined a group to vui neke or learn chants from a dau ni vucu or poet inspired by a spirit. He had not thanked the spirit. On his return to Viwa, he had taught the young men the meke he had learnt. They performed the meke at meetings not only in the Yasawa islands but also at Vitogo. Then the people of Waya wanted them to perform the meke on the main darata or ceremonial green on the island. After the performance, the man who had learned the meke at Koro as well as the young men who had performed on the darata died. People on Viwa considered that these deaths had been caused through the anger of the anitu or spirit on Koro who had not been thanked for the meke which he had taught through the dau ni vucu. The spirit may have been Dakuwaqa, the shark spirit, because it was common for descendants of the meke group to be bitten by sharks.

This is a very good example of a situation and associated belief I frequently encountered in the course of my explorations into the interaction of spirits with people. A spirit which is not thanked or is not given due respect will react against not only the perpetrator of the discourtesy but will also continue to react against relations and associates, causing sickness or death until or unless appropriate apologies are made to vakasavasavatoka or clean up the situation.

(b) Descendants of the Lauvatu

The Lauvatu people left Nakovu and went to the other side of the island and settled first at Pacai and then at Ra where they were joined by some more Lauvatu (the Vunatoto) and some Leweivawa from Naviti. The Vunatoto were very energetic and one of them was made leader.

They were joined by Tongans who had come ashore at Nakauveve. Basil Thomson (1908) claimed that they were castaways, and like the Samoans at Waya may have been in the area looking for sail mats. The Lauvatu made one of them leader with the title of Navatanitawake, and the Tongans and their descendants were known as the Veruku.

After the hurricane and tidal wave, the Lauvatu and Tongans at Ra were joined by people from Nadi and Momi; and their descendants became the Ra yaqona.

The Tongan descendants retained the leadership; and the line of authority at present is that the Navatanitawake of Ra heeds the authority of the Ratu of Natia who in turn heeds the Sau of the Yakani.

All three yaqona are closely connected and have the same kai, the tawa tree (Pometia pinnata) and the same ika or fish, the cumu or trigger fish (Balistes sp.) Only the Veruku (those of Tongan descent) have different vuti yaca, the damudamu as their kai, and the sokisoki or porcupine fish (Tetrodon sp.) as their ika.

The spirits of Viwa

The main spirits of Viwa are Rainima and his son, Rabaraba. No-one claims to be descended from either of these two, although all three yaqona on the island respect Rainima. The Yakani
and the Ra also respect Rainima’s son, Rabaraba. I could find no evidence that any of the groups or their component *mataqali* brought any spirits with them, or that they respected spirits in the places whence their progenitors came.

The only other spirit about which I could obtain any information was a female spirit or *anitu* called Lewatu ni Nuku, whose place is on a little islet called Nuku near Kavua. It is called Nukununuku, and is a rock shaped like a vagina. Lewatuninuku is a bad spirit and I was told in 1953 that she often appeared at Naibalebale, near the point of Kavua. If people want to go fishing at Nuku, they must first make a presentation of *yagona*, coconuts or pawpaws to Lewatuninuku.

**iVilavila ni Yalo**

The spirits of the dead of the Yakani and the Natia *yavusa* go to Rainima’s place at Natogo and eat *yabia* or arrowroot (which is the plant presented to Rainima as *isevu* or first-fruit offering). Then they go to the reef at Navovokulu and from there to the spirit centre at Naicoboboco, at the west end of Vanua Levu.

The spirits of the dead of the Lauvatu/Ra *yavusa* go to Natogo, Rainima’s place, where they too eat *yabia*. Then they go to Kavua, the point near Naibalebale, from which they plunge into the sea, and from there they go to Naicobobobo.

**Viwa and the neighbours**

The Viwa people were regarded as very strong, and the island was never attacked. However, if there was external or internal trouble affecting their neighbours in the Yasawa group, the Viwa people were willing to go to their assistance. They had a large outrigger canoe called the *Lialiabula* and a wooden *lali* or drum called Duguirevo that they would take with them on board. When they neared the place they were visiting they would beat it, as a signal to let the people know so that they could prepare a *revo* or earth oven for the feast with which to greet the visitors. Some of their victories were as follows:

- The people of Macuata, Vanua Levu, came over to join the people of Teci in attacking the people of Yasawairara at the north end of Yasawa Island. The Viwa people went to Yasawairara to help the group of the paramount with whom they were related; and assisted in defeating the Macuata and Teci people, and in saving the *Tuivasa*.

- The Drola people of Nacula Island were engaged in internal struggles, and one group asked the people in the neighbouring island of Matacawalevu for help. The request was passed on to the Yaqweta people and thence to the Viwa people through a woman of Viwa who was married to a man of Yaqweta. The Viwa people went to Nacula and slaughtered the dissenting party in their war village. After these two victories, the Viwa people became accepted as the *ivakayadra* or watchmen of the Yasawa and Malolo groups. As they sailed about, people learned of their victories and recognised their strength.

- Yaravoro, the Kwa Levu or paramount of Nadroga, was preparing to attack Malolo and the Malolo chiefs sent a request for help to their relations on Viwa. The Viwa people went to Malolo and boasted that they would challenge the Nadroga people on the island of Tavarua where they were preparing for the attack. They landed on Tavarua and clubbed Yaravoro and the Nadroga people.

- Tui Sabeto came to the island of Naviti to weaken the people of the island. When the Viwa people heard about this, they went by canoe to Naviti where they went ashore at Somosomo. Tui Sabeto took the empty canoe, and when the Viwa people saw what had happened, they went and clubbed the Sabeto people who were in the canoe. Also in the canoe was Ratu Taito, the head of the Naua people of Saunaka. He was shot in the arm by an arrow, but was allowed to live and return home.
Later he returned to Viwa to thank the people and to show them where he had been shot in the arm. The person who gave me this account was on Viwa when Ratu Taito returned.

- At the time when the Yaqweta people from Ba had accepted Christianity but Ba had not, a war party came over from Ba to Yaqweta to attack them for accepting Christianity. The Ba people came with their faces blackened (quumulosa) as for war, and dressed in masi or bark cloth up to their nipples as only important chiefs could do. The Ba people were sitting in their canoes, when the Viwa people arrived to help the Yaqweta people with whom they were related. At the time, a church service was in progress.

**Viwa and outside influences**

The Viwa people pulled up plantain suckers and struck the Ba people on the forehead, so that the juice flowed down their faces and mixed with the blacking, and they had difficulty in seeing. The Viwa people then seized their testicles and told them that their masi must come down to the level of their loins, like ordinary people. So the Ba people were chased away and they returned to Ba.

I was told that the Vunivalu of Bau brought an army to introduce Christianity to Yasawa, Naviti and Viwa. He told the people of Viwa that he had brought them sulu or cloth symbolising Christianity. He loaded his gun and asked the Viwa people whether they accepted the sulu or would prefer war. They accepted the sulu, and all the people of Viwa assembled at Natia and put on the sulu, and the Vunivalu went away.

The LCC in 1881 investigated two claims relating to the purchase of land on Viwa (1057 and 1058). From the evidence given, it appears that the first to purchase land on the island was Duncan Murray who in 1869 bought a strip of land in the middle of the island from Ratu Semi, the chief of the island, for eight guns. A witness to the 1869 deed was Peter Danford, who happened to be on Viwa in search of labour. Danford is presumably of the family of ‘Harry the Jew’ Danford who came to Fiji from England in 1826 and lived in Namosi. His family was still living in the Navua area in the 1960s.

Murray was living in Nadroga at the time. Then he heard that F.R. Evans had bought the whole island from Ratu Epeli, son of Cakobau, for 1000 dollars. So Murray went over promptly to take possession of his land. While a house was being built for him, Evans turned up with Veli, a member of the household of Ratu Epeli, who said that Ratu Epeli had sold the island to Evans and that if Evans could not occupy the island at once, it would be depopulated. Veli told the people to build a house for Evans. Evans went away, leaving some of his belongings which the people promptly removed to another house. Evans returned with Veli and left more of his belongings in Murray’s house. They quarrelled and Murray told the people that Evans had taken over his house. Evans sailed off and the Viwa people removed his belongings from Murray’s house and overtook Evans’ canoe and put his belongings on board. Veli accused them of defiance, and later Evans returned with Alexander Eastgate, Major Harding and some soldiers to collect taxes for the Cakobau Government. Evans left with the soldiers, having told the people to build his house. The young men were taken away to work for their taxes, and the elders built the house. When the young men returned, they threw the house into the sea. When Evans came back, he saw what had happened and went away, never to return. Meanwhile five houses were built for Murray, who took a local woman to live with him. He planted 30–40 acres of cotton and coconuts and lived permanently on the island from 1872 to 1878 before going to live on Kadavu. He was taken before the Supreme Court by Evans over his land claim, but I have found no record of the outcome.

The Viwa people showed great courage in defying the threats of Ratu Epeli and the power of Bau and the Cakobau Government. To my knowledge, this defiance was never avenged. Perhaps mighty Bau thought that the tiny, worthless, far-off island of Viwa was beneath contempt.
Perhaps they had heard of the valour of Viwa as evidenced above and thought that discretion should be exercised in this case. It was perhaps fortunate for Viwa that David was never brought to the physical test against Goliath.

**The islands of Naviti and Yaq(w)eta**

*The island of Naviti*

The island of Naviti lies about 13 km north-north east of Waya. In between these two islands are four small and uninhabited islets. Irregular in shape, Naviti is nearly 15 km from north to south, and varies in width from nearly 5 km to about 700 m. It has an area of over 34 square km, and is the largest and most populated island in the Yasawa group. As are the other islands except Viwa, Naviti is volcanic in origin with a steep, rugged ridge following the west coast. The highest point, Vaturualewa (388 m), is in the middle of the island, and sends out four spurs. The surface is broken and there is little flat land. The north coast has a large, wide bay comprising three smaller bays. At the south, Soso Bay is narrower but extends about 3 km into the land. There are many streams rising from the central slopes. There are at present seven villages on the island, with a population of about 1000. Of these, two villages are on the shores of the northern bay, four grouped along the windward, eastern coast, and one at the head of the southern bay.

Naviti is a very interesting island because the polities are composed of a series of yavusa based, first, on the descendants of two spiritual progenitors, Tunaqaia and Botabota, who came there from the Nakauvadra and settled first at Somosomo and Kese; and secondly, on groups or parts of groups of people who came over from Viti Levu. These were those from Vitogo who settled at first at Kese and became known as the Leweivawa; those from Votua, Ba, who settled at first at Somosomo and became the Kai Nadua; and others from Votua who settled at first at Suelevu and became the Kai Koro. These newcomers were included as mataqali in their host yavusa, and just as the original yavusa of Somosomo split and sought to establish new settlements and formed new yavusa based on the new settlements, so the groups of newcomers also split up and parts of the groups joined the newly formed yavusa. In some cases the newcomers became recognised as the leaders, and the host yavusa would install one of the newcomers as paramount chief with a given title.

Naviti is also interesting as a case study of the spirit world of yavusa which includes elements of groups descended from local spiritual progenitors as well as from spirits from Vitogo and Ba. The newcomers would also have been associated with other sorts of spirits at least in the areas from which they came. It is interesting to try to explore whether the newcomers brought their old spirits with them to a new area, or at least whether they continued to respect and communicate with the old spirits; or whether they respected spirits of the areas where they came to settle. Equally interesting is an attempt to explore what happened to the spirits of the dead of the newcomers. Did they acquire a new jumping-off place, and if so what was the basis of such an acquisition? Did they go eventually to the same place as that to which the spirits of the dead went when a person died in Vitogo or Votua?

*The myths of Ravuravu and of the progenitor nitu/spirits*

**Ravuravu**

Ravuravu is a nitu or spirit, regarded as the ivakatawa or guardian, or itaukei du or true owner of Naviti.
(a) Tunaqaia at Somosomo

I was told in 1953 that the first progenitor spirits to arrive on Naviti, which was then unoccupied, were Lekenidavule and his wife who appeared mysteriously at Nasau on the north coast, where Tunaqaia was born. They went and settled in a cave at Davule, where Tunaqaia married a woman of Vuda and they had two sons who were men. The NLC recorded that Tunaqaia came from the Nakauvadra and settled at Davule, a narrow strip of land between the hills and the sea. His descendants became known as the yavusa of Somosomo.

Davule became too cramped and so they went to settle on a wider area of land at Somosomo, divided from Davule by a stream. The elder son had three sons.

(b) Botabota at Kese

I was told in 1953 that after Tunaqaia came to Somosomo the next progenitor spirit to arrive on Naviti was Botabota, who came from the Nakauvadra and stayed at Vatunitu on the beach at Kese where the Church now stands. I could not find out whether this was a deliberate juxtapositioning of church and spirit stone. From there, he moved to the centre of Naviti and settled at a place called Vanua. Here he had six children. They later moved to the coast at Kese. Tunaqaia’s descendants became known as the yavusa of Kai Luvuka.

Settlements and development of yavusa

(a) Tunaqaia’s descendants (the Somosomo yavusa) and their four settlements

The first settlement of the descendants of Tunaqaia was at Somosomo, and the people were known as the yavusa of Somosomo. From there a hunting party found a suitable site for a second village they established at Gunu. Not long after, the settlement at Somosomo was faring badly because the eldest son kept on hitting people. So he was chased away and went to establish a settlement at Nasoqo/Liku. Finally the youngest of the three sons was taken by the other brothers to establish a new settlement at Suelevu.

Later some of those at Suelevu went and established the villages of Marou and Malevu.

(b) Settlements and development of Somosomo yavusa

The settlement at Somosomo and later arrivals: development of Somosomo yavusa

After the quarrels, the Somosomo people retained their status of seniority and in order to make the position quite clear, they held an installation ceremony, at which they installed their leader and gave him the title of Sau.

Later two groups arrived from Vitogo in search of the two daughters of the chief of Vitogo who had been so upset over an insult to their father (a piece of kawai or yam-like tuber had been thrown at him) that they left Vitogo. The girls eventually reached Naviti and were hospitably received at Somosomo. One of them, Lewatulekeleke, went to Malolo where she married the Tui Lawa. The other, Lewatubalavu, went around the Yasawa group and then to Lomaiviti, and finally she settled on Bau. The two groups from Vitogo remained at Somosomo, and were included by the NLC as two divisions of the chiefly mataqali of Natula in the yavusa of Somosomo.

On another occasion the young men of Somosomo gave an old man the tail of a saqa or trevally to eat, and he was so upset and dissatisfied with his share that he went to Kese and asked the Kai Koro, Leweivawa and Suelevu people living there to come and attack Somosomo. A representative of the Somosomo people went to Votua, Ba, and asked the Nadua people for help. The groups from Kese came and, as a gesture, burned the outskirts of the village of Somosomo but left the village intact. These Nadua people remained at Somosomo, and were included by the NLC as a
separate *mataqali* in the Somosomo *yavusa*. This connection provided the basis for an occasion which led to the gift of the island of Yaqweta by the chief of the Somosomo people to the family from Votua, Ba, and to its being populated by the Nadua people of Votua.

The Somosomo people claimed to be very strong and warlike, going to the other side of Naviti and filling the cooking pots of the villagers with excrement and the water jars with urine. They were often attacked but the only time they failed to repel the enemy was when the people came from Kese, as related above.

At the time of the first NLC, the position of the chief of Somosomo was recognised as superior to that of the other chiefs of the island. However, the Tui Marou later approached the Sau of Somosomo with *tabua*, *iyau* or valuables and with food, and asked him to give up his position as senior chief. He agreed to do so, and at the second NLC, Tui Marou was recognised to be senior. The Somosomo chief later bitterly regretted that he had accepted the gifts of Tui Marou and had given up the position of senior chief of the island.

**Spirits**

The Somosomo respect Ravuravu as the *itaukei du* or *vakatawa* of Naviti as well as Tunaqaiya as their own *nitu* or spirit. Tunaqaiya’s ceremonial site is at Nasau, and when I visited in 1953, the *bete* or priest in communication with Tunaqaiya was Isimeli.

The *nitu* of the Leweivawa was Nakia (see under Kese).

Also at Somosomo, there is a female *nitu* called Lewatu or Lewatuturaga who is respected not only at Somosomo but also by the people of Malolo and the Naciriyawa of Vuda. The communalect word for chief is *momo*, and it is possible that this Lewatuturaga should properly be called Lewatumomo, the name of a famous female spirit in the Ba area. The Somosomo spirit may be a local borrowing from the Ba spirit, perhaps brought over by the Nadua people as their protector.

**iVilavila ni Yalo**

I was told that the spirits of the dead go to a stone at Vatunikasami on the lee side of Naviti, where a spirit will wait for its spouse. Then it goes to Ori, an islet off the northeast coast of Naviti. Here it eats *vudi* or plantain (the *magiti* symbol of unity and identification or *vuti yaca*). Then it goes to a little headland and plunges into the sea.

**The Somosomo settlement at Gunu and later arrivals: development of Kai Gunu**

The Somosomo people at Gunu and Nasoqo heeded the authority of the Somosomo people at Somosomo settlement.

Then two groups of Leweivawa people (originally from Vitogo) came to Gunu, one from Kese and one from Soso. Their leader was Vuki from Kese, and they were settled at Gunu by the Somosomo and given land at Nabebe. When Ro Seru became leader on the death of Vuki, his father, he was installed as chief by the Leweivawa. However, there was disagreement as to whether he was to be chief of the Leweivawa or paramount over the Somosomo as well. So the Somosomo installed Tokalaulevu as their own leader. Ro Seru was most upset about this second installation, and gathered a force of Leweivawa from those Leweivawa living at Kese, Soso and Marou. They attacked and killed Tokalaulevu and the rest were taken to Yaqweta. Ro Seru duly brought them back, and was installed as paramount of the Leweivawa and the Somosomo at Gunu and Nasoqo, being given the title of Ratu.
These people were duly registered as the yavusa of Kai Gunu, and their different origins were recognised not only in the three component mataqali of Leweivawa (chiefs), Somosomo and Nasoqo, but also in their symbols of unity. The Leweivawa had the niu or coconut and the vai or stingray; whereas the Somosomo had the bausomo tree and the vai.

**Spirits**

The nitu for the Leweivawa was Nakia (see under Kese)

For the nitu for the Suelevu, see under Somosomo.

**iVilavila ni Yalo**

Not recorded.

**Somosomo, Gunu, Nasoqo and outside influences**

The 1881 LCC investigated claims in respect of purchases of land at Somosomo (1051), Gunu (1055) and Nasoqo (1052) at the north end of the island of Naviti. The purchase, by J. Harman, of 400 acres at Somosomo in 1865 is the earliest sale of land in the Yasawa Group to a European of which I have a record. From 1865 to 1868 Thompson traded there for cotton grown by the local people and by Harman’s tenants. One tenant grew 105 acres of cotton and another grew about 85 acres. Other Europeans traded from 1868 to 1875. The property was abandoned in 1875. J. Stark purchased about 80 acres at Nasoqo in 1868. He planted some 25–30 acres of cotton, and the locals also planted on the land. These two blocks and also the block at Gunu were adjacent.

The Commission also considered but disallowed a claim (1063) for the purchase by J. Harman of the five islands of Nanuya, Vunivau Balavu, Sesaro, Bule and Nakara (Narara?) off the east coast.

**The settlements at Suelevu, Muaira, Soso and Marou**

**Origin and development of Suelevu yavusa**

The youngest of three grandsons of Tunaqai was taken by his brothers to establish a new settlement at Suelevu. After a long time, the people at Suelevu increased in numbers and two groups were sent off to find other land on which to settle. One group established the village of Muaira, and the other group established the village of Soso. After that, some from Muaira and, later, some from Soso went and settled on the island of Waya. Of those remaining at Suelevu, some went off and established a village at Marou. The descendants of the youngest grandson as well as some later arrivals from Suelevu, Muaira and Soso, as described below including the Kai Koro from Ba and the Leweivawa, originally from Vitogo, comprised the yavusa Suelevu.

**Village of Suelevu: later arrivals**

A party of people from Ba, known as the Kai Koro, arrived at Suelevu, and the Suelevu people gave them a place to stay.

The Suelevu then established the villages of Marou and Malevu (see below).

After the Kai Koro had been with the Suelevu for some time, the Suelevu agreed to appoint the chief of the Kai Koro as the paramount over the Suelevu, and gave him the title of Sau. The NLC included the Kai Koro as part of the yavusa of Suelevu.

**Spirits of the Suelevu**

The nitu of the Suelevu was Dolonisakau.
iVilavila ni Yalo
Not recorded by me.

Village of Muaira: later arrivals
The site of Muaira where the Suelevu from the village of Suelevu first settled is a different site from that of the present village. The first site is between Kese and Soso, near the site of the Vatu ni Vula (see below).

Not long after the Suelevu had settled at Muaira, a party of people from Vitogo came to Naviti and settled with the Suelevu at Muaira who gave them a place to settle at Vawa. So these people from Vitogo became known as the Leweivawa. They later accepted an invitation from the Luvuka people of Kese to go and settle with them at Nabouvatu (see below under Kai Kese).

After the party from Muaira had gone to Waya, the remaining Suelevu at Muaira installed one of their own as leader with the title of Ravouvou.

Spirits of the Suelevu
The nitu of the Suelevu was Dolonisakaui.

iVilavila ni Yalo
Not recorded by me.

Vatu ni Vula
On the path from Muaira to Soso, I was shown twelve stones, known as the Vatu ni Vula or ‘Stones of the Moon/Months’. At each new moon, the villagers of Muaira used to move one of these stones, and this form of calendar served to indicate the planting season.

Village of Soso: later arrivals. The yavusa of Kai Naviti (or Yavusa Ratu)
Not long after the Suelevu had settled at Soso, the Leweivawa at Nabouvatu split of their own accord, and a party went to join the Suelevu at Soso, who gave them land at Mavoca. The Suelevu, as landowners, remained leaders until they saw how energetic the Leweivawa were in carrying out their responsibilities in the settlement. So they agreed to install one of the Leweivawa as paramount at Soso, giving him the title of Ratu. There is an installation stone (vatu ni vibuli) at Soso, and I was also shown a stone seating arrangement where the elders used to sit on formal occasions, to discuss such matters as installation. The paramount now has the eastern title of Tui Soso or Tui Naviti.

The Suelevu as landowners at Soso and the Leweivawa as chiefs were registered by the NLC as a single yavusa under the name of Kai Naviti (I was told that the present name is Yavusa Ratu). I was told that the Leweivawa were included in the yavusa of Yavusa Ratu as the two mataqali of Leweivawa and Nabuya.

Ratu Apenisa of the Leweivawa was renowned as a chief of aggressive and challenging nature. He involved the Kai Soso in a number of warlike visits from the mainland, as on the following occasions:

- He sent a pig with a tabua in its stomach as a challenge to Vuda to come and fight. The Vuda people, however, attacked Yalobi on Waya and Ratu Apenisa was sent an invitation to go and witness how strong the Vuda people were. He went and showed his own strength by stopping the attack, saying that some of the survivors should go to Naviti and make pottery there (The Waya women were famous for their pottery). The Vuda people went home and Ratu Apenisa went back to Naviti.
At the invitation of Ratu Apenisa, some people of Vitogo, Nadi and Sabeto came and anchored in Cavu Bay and landed but did not go to Soso. They went and attacked Kese, Muaira and Malevu, which villages had been quarrelling with Soso. They did not go and attack Gunu and Somosomo, because Soso, Gunu and Somosomo were to vata or associates through the common relationship between the Suelevu people and the Somosomo people based on descent from Tunaqaia.

People from Vitogo came to help Ratu Apenisa when he attacked Nalauwaki on Waya. As a result of this attack, some land on Waya between Wayalevu and Natawa and known as Namotu became Soso territory.

**Spirits of Soso**

The nitu of the Suelevu was Dolonisakau.

The nitu of the Leweivawa was Nakia (see under Kese).

**Nitu ni Valu: connecting Soso, Naviti, and Soso, Kadavu**

Soso on Naviti and Soso on Kadavu have a tautu relationship, based on a spiritual connection of common origin.

I was told that the people of Naceva, Kadavu, were looking for a nitu ni valu qaqaqa or strong war spirit. They came to Viti Levu and followed the Nadroga coast, asking where such a spirit could be found. They were told to look for an island with a double rock, and so they moved north to Vuda, Vitogo and Votua and finally across to Waya. Here they were told of a bay in Naviti where such a rock could be found. So they went to Soso, where there was a double rock where the nitu was supposed to be. Its name was Rokonakana and it communicated through a man called Betekece.

They explained to Betkece what they had come for, and Betkece said that they should wait for five nights. If during that period, the lightning split an ivi tree beside Rokonakana’s yavu or mound, the spirit would be theirs. This is what happened, and so the Kadavu people acquired Rokonakana as their nitu ni valu. His house was a short stick, so the people took the stick and the bete Betekece on board their canoe. They sailed off, having picked up a rock called Navatunicaginiwaidroka (‘the rock of the fresh-water wind’) at the islet of Nabawaqa. They came to Nacilaumomo on the Ra coast and here the stick fell into the sea. They went back to look for it and it was erect in the water. They retrieved the stick and sailed on down the eastern coast of Viti Levu. Betekece was a weak old man and said that he wanted to be buried on Kadavu. If that was not possible, the place where he was buried would always be revered in the future. They reached Bureibau on the southeast corner of Ra. Here the old man died and the place was called Soso in memory of the occasion. The people remembered the old man’s wishes to be buried in Kadavu and took the body on with them to Namara where the body rested (mara is a place where a body being taken on a long journey for burial is set down to rest). The body was smelling badly but the people pressed on until they came to Bau, where the body was smelling so badly that they landed there and buried the body at Soso. The words of the bete foretold the future importance of Bau. The canoe sailed on with the nitu in the stick and the rock until they came to Kadavu. They kept the stick and the rock at Nasosoceva, where the rock can be seen. The stick has disappeared.

To show their gratitude to their tautu on Naviti, the Soso people of Kadavu brought a rock from Kadavu and presented it to the people of Soso, Naviti. I have seen it, lying on the yavu of the Were Levu or main ceremonial house of the chief, now known as Tui Soso or, during my visit, Tui Naviti. When called upon to do so by the bete, the rock would produce a favourable wind for travellers. The Bauans call the Soso people Na Qase or the Old Ones, because of the connection through the burial there of the bete Betkece and his prophesy.
**iVilalavila ni Yalo**

When a member of the Kai Naviti (both Suelevu and Leweivawa) dies, the yalo or spirit goes to a rock at Vawa, on the path between Soso and Muaira. It jumps from the rock into a pool among some ivi trees. As it jumps, there is a sound of thunder, which had been heard by my informants, the Tui Naviti and Paula. It goes to a rock in the pool which represents a canoe in which the yalo sails away to an unknown destination, taking its possessions with it.

**Soso and outside influences**

The 1881 LCC investigated a claim (1053) for the purchase by George Evans of about 300 acres of land known as Sa or Esa on the southwestern peninsula of Soso on the island of Naviti. The deed, dated June 1869, was signed by Ratu Apenisa Nayatu, the Tui Soso, of the Leweivawa people, by Sovatabua, the Governor of Yasawa under the Cakobau Government, and by others; and witnessed by Thomas James Morton (brother-in-law of George), then living at Somosomo and trading in the Yasawa Group. After trading here for twelve years, he went to live at Korotubu, Ra.

Ratu Apenisa had previously offered the land to John Stark, then living at Nasoqo, who did not want it and arranged for the sale to George Evans, at the time living at Matacawalevu. The land was in fact owned by the Suelevu people of Soso, and although Ratu Apenisa, a strong socio-political figure in Soso, may have been the paramount chief of Soso who by virtue of this position took the lead in local politics, he was not in charge of the land of the Suelevu and therefore had no powers to approve the purchase without the agreement of the leaders of the Suelevu. Also Sovatabua, not even a chief of high rank in his own island of Nacula, might, as Governor under the Government of Bau, have had political power over the Yasawa group, but he certainly had no traditional power over the administration of land in Soso. The landowners did not at first realise the true situation about the sale of their land by Ratu Apenisa, but when they did, they indicated their displeasure. Fifteen guns were given for the land but were left with Ratu Apenisa and the Suelevu people were told by the Turaga ni Koro or Village Headman not to touch them. They were kept by the Leweivawa until Major Harding and soldiers who had come to collect outstanding taxes arrived with Robert Evans, seized the guns, and burned the village of Soso. Some people were taken by the military to Saivou, Ra. A suggestion was raised by the LCC that the people were taken to Saivou because of an anti-Government plot. The people also showed their anger with Ratu Apenisa in customary manner and buturaki or stamped on him and expelled him from Soso, sending him to relations in Vitogo where the Leweivawa had come from.

Francis Richard Evans occupied the land under lease from his brother George until his brother Robert came to Fiji in 1871 and went to occupy the land at Soso, living with his brother Louis, until the lease was transferred to Robert. John Gaggin occupied the land for a short time in 1872/3, when George demised the land to Francis Richard. In April 1874, the lease was transferred to brother Robert, who gathered nuts from 1874 until 1879 when he abandoned the property and went to live in the Fiji capital at Levuka.

The LCC also considered a claim (1064) for the purchase by T.R. Shute of four islands off the south end of Naviti, being Naukucavu, Nanuyabalavu, Nakara (Narara?) and Nadredre (Drawaqa?). These had not been occupied and the claim was disallowed.

**Villages of Marou and Malevu: later arrivals, Yavusa of Kai Marou**

After some of the Suelevu people living at the village of Suelevu had gone off and established the village of Marou, there remained a close connection between the two villages of Suelevu and Marou. There was a series of later arrivals, as follows:
• After the village of Marou had been established, those of the Leweivawa (originally from Vitogo) who had been settled by the Luvuka at Nabouvatu quarrelled and came to stay with the Suelevu at Kese. The Leweivawa when they had first come from Vitogo to Naviti had settled at Vawa on land given them by the Suelevu living at Muaira. So they were rejoining their original hosts, the Suelevu.

• Then following a split at Votua, Ba, a group of Kai Koro came over to Naviti and anchored at Marou. The Suelevu brought them ashore and they settled together at Marou. The Kai Koro heeded the authority of the Suelevu at Marou, and the Suelevu at Marou heeded the authority of the Ravouvou or chief of the Suelevu at Muaira.

• After the Suelevu, Leweivawa and Kai Koro were firmly established together at Marou, a second group of Leweivawa came from Muaira, following a split.

By this time, the village of Suelevu had been abandoned; the Suelevu had moved from Suelevu and established a new village of Malevu between Marou and Kese. All those living at Marou and Malevu, irrespective of origin, were registered by the NLC as the yavusa of Kai Marou.

Shortly after the arrival of the Kai Koro at Marou, the Suelevu had discussed the installation of a Kai Koro as paramount of all the groups in the two villages of Marou and Malevu. They duly installed the chief of the Kai Koro and gave him the title of Sau. I was told that formerly a chief used to be installed on a vatu ni vibuli or installation stone at Nasivi, when there was no yaqona ceremony; but nowadays he is installed in Marou village.

The Kai Koro were upset because the younger brother had been installed, not the firstborn. So they split, and some went to Malevu and others went to the Luvuka at Kese.

The Sau of Marou is now commonly referred to by the eastern title of Tui Marou. As already related, he approached the Sau of Somosomo who had been recognised by the first NLC as the senior chief on Naviti, and made him presentations and asked him to give him the status of senior chief. This was agreed to and confirmed at the second NLC, to the later regret of the Sau of Somosomo who had accepted the presents and had agreed to this arrangement.

**Spirits**

The nitu or spirit of the Suelevu at Muaira was Dolonisakau.

The nitu of the Kai Koro (now Nasukamoce) was Batisekaseka.

The nitu of the Luvuka was Naqovuloa (see under Kese).

The nitu of the Leweivawa was Nakia (see under Kese).

The Kai Koro at Votua, Ba, have their nitu, Vulakanawa (female) and Tui Vaturua (male) who had a place near Nailaga called Nadikilagi.

There are at Marou two female spirits, Tīnāidrekedreke vina and Tīnāidreke cakaca, the first one being of good disposition and the second one being evil unless well appeased.

The two rocks, Vaturualewa and Vaturuatagane which dominate Naviti are said to be the places of nitu.

**iVilavila ni Yalo**

The spirits of the dead of the Kai Koro go to a hill on a headland called Dovu near Soso. From here they plunge into the sea. The spirits of the chiefs of the Kai Koro go to Viwa and jump from there. The ivilavila ni yalo of the Suelevu and Leweivawa have already been discussed.
(b) Botabota’s descendants (the Kai Luvuka yavusa) and the settlement of Kese

Origins and development of Kese settlement and Kai Kese: late arrivals

The descendants of the six sons of Botabota settled at Kese. There were later arrivals, as follows:

(i) A group of people had come over from Vitogo and had settled with the Suelevu at Muaira where they were given land at Vawa. So they were known as the Leweivawa. The Luvuka at Kese agreed to invite the Leweivawa to join them at Kese, and passed a message to this effect to the Suelevu at Mauaira. The Suelevu agreed to the proposal and so the Leweivawa left the Suelevu and Mauaira and went to join the Kai Kese at Kese, where they were given land at Nabouvatu. The Leweivawa agreed among themselves to install their chief with the title of Ratu, but they heeded the authority of the Luvuka as the original landowners. The person installed was an elder brother. Then it became known that the younger brother would obstruct the leadership of the Ratu. So the Leweivawa split up and some went to Soso which was occupied at the time by some Suelevu who had gone there from Muaira.

(ii) Not long after this split in the Leweivawa at Kese, there was a split in the Kai Koro (from Votua, Ba) who were living at Marou. They had been living there with the Suelevu (who had established the village) and some Leweivawa (who had gone there following the split at Nabouvatu). Following this split at Marou, some of the Kai Koro came to settle with the Luvuka at Kese who gave them land at Nasukamoce. They were later registered by the NLC as the Nasukamoce division of the Luvuka mataqali of the yavusa of Kai Kese, which comprised the Suelevu, Leweivawa and Kai Koro living at Kese.

The Kai Koro were firmly established with the Luvuka at Kese, when the Luvuka agreed to appoint the Kai Koro leader as paramount and gave him the title of Rokotakala. The paramount leadership of the Kai Kese remained with the Kai Koro up to the present time.

The LCC were told that Kese and Soso were constantly at war in the old days, but I could find no oral traditions to this effect still surviving in the 1950s.

Symbols of identity

Each element in the Kai Kese yavusa retained its own kai or tree, and its own ika or fish, as follows:

The Luvuka have the baka or fig tree and the ika bula/vonu or turtle.

The Kai Koro have the vesi (Afzelia bijiga) and the vai or stingray.

The Leweivawa have the niu or coconut and the vai.

Spirits

The nitu or spirit of the Luvuka is Naqovuloa.

The nitu of the Kai Koro (now Nasukamoce) was Batisekaseka.

The nitu of the Leweivawa (while they were at Vitogo and later on Naviti) was Nakia, who came down from the Nakauvadra. His first-born son, Ratu Vuki, came to Naviti as a man, and his yavu at Kese is called Nabouvatu. His spirit is communicated with here. Nakia is also respected and communicated with here as well as at Vitogo.

iVilavila ni Yalo

Not recorded.
The island of Naviti, less Soso Peninsula, Nasoqo and Gunu, and outside influences

The 1881 LCC investigated a claim for the purchase in 1870 by F.R. Evans for the whole of the island of Naviti, about 4000 acres, less Soso peninsula (1054), Nasoqo (1052) and Gunu (1055), from Ratu Epeli and his brother Ratu Timoci, sons of Cakobau, Ratu Apenisa (Tui Soso), Ratu Isireli Wainiqeqe (chief of Gunu, with Tongan mother), and others.

Before the execution of the deed, George Evans had gone to Marou with John Stark to see Meli, the chief of Marou, with the object of purchasing some land at Yaro for Evans. Meli said that they were short of land and that his people would rather die than sell the land. Evans said that they were slaves and he would go to Bau to get the land.

Not long afterwards, Evans returned to Somosomo where Morton, his brother-in-law lived. He came with Veli, a personal follower of Ratu Epeli’s but having no official connection with the Yasawa Group, and Sovatabua, the Governor. They gathered the leading people of Naviti together, including Ratu Esekia of Marou, Noa of Kese, Isireli Wainiqeqe of Gunu, and Ratu Apenisa of Soso; and Sovatabua told the people that they had come from Bau and that Ratu Epeli had ordered that they should make sail mats. Veli displayed twenty guns, ten axes and other trade goods, and said that Ratu Epeli had sold Naviti and the trade goods were theirs to divide up. It was not the purchase price but a present from Ratu Epeli. He told them not to despise or disobey Ratu Epeli lest some great wrath or evil should fall upon them. In Ratu Epeli’s anger, they may be driven away or clubbed or shot. The people were dumbfounded and strongly objected to the sale. They set up a very strong opposition until Veli said that if they did not sign, a vessel would soon come from Bau and remove them. So, all except Isireli signed under protest. Isireli ran away and hid but was found by Veli and brought back and threatened with deportation. He too signed. They were also forced to take away the trade goods which had been divided up for the villages of Soso, Kese, Marou, Malevu, and Gunu, but later the shares for Gunu, Marou and Soso were returned to Somosomo and left with the people there.

The Evans brothers then occupied Naviti between 1870, when the deed was executed, and the 1874 hurricane when they were ruined, and then for some years after. They had cotton plantations at Marou, Kese, Malevu and Soso. They sold some land to Eastgate at Gunu, and leased to him some land at Yaro. The occupation of the Yaro land was only effected after desperate resistance by the people of Marou and Malevu who threw his house timbers into the sea at his first attempt to land. Heffernan then went to Bau, and with the assistance of Sovatabu and Bau messengers, threatened to remove the people to Bau and insisted that they build Eastgate’s house for him.

Disputes between Evans and the locals occurred so frequently that a meeting was held in Levuka in 1872, attended by G.A. Woods, the premier, Evans and the Naviti chiefs, at which Evans tried to induce the Government to remove the people entirely from the island. A compromise was reached, in which it was agreed that, except for the people of Gunu, they should move to the likuliku or lee side of the island. However, the people persistently resisted the occupation by the Evans brothers and their lessees. Not only did they not want to leave their own land which they regarded as still theirs in spite of deeds and threats from Bauans and their appointees like Sovatabua, but the leeward side was arid, hot and infertile and, on inspection, the Deputy Warden Blyth agreed that the Soso people should remain. Later they were forcibly removed by Major Harding with Government troops and driven to the likuliku. The people of Marou and Malevu were taken to Somosomo; and after a month, they were taken by Sovatabua to Nacula. They were uncomfortable there and preferred to go to other Yasawa islands or to the mainland rather than go the likuliku. Those who went to the likuliku but continued to go to the yaro or windward side to pick from the fruit trees and coconuts, were threatened by Sovatabua and flogged or imprisoned for trespassing. The people of Kese were determined to stay but Deputy
Warden Blyth came and arrested the elders who were sent to Somosomo. The rest were told that the elders would remain in gaol for the rest of their lives, if they persisted in their obstinacy. They left for the likuliku and the leaders were released. However, their condition was so miserable that they preferred to work as labourers for Evans rather than stay on the lee side. Evans may have permitted the people to return and plant on the yaro side; but it is highly likely that the supply of labour was obtained only by intimidation and threats under arrangements whereby they supplied twenty men to fish for béche de mer. In spite of this evacuation of the population to make room for unfettered plantations, it appears that only a total of 150 acres was planted with cotton and perhaps 200 acres with coconuts. Agricultural development by Europeans on Naviti appears to have been somewhat exaggerated by the planters.

It was agreed that the Kese, Malevu and Malevu people should return in 1878 without being molested by Evans, and Robert left the Yasawa Group in 1879.

The island of Yaq(w)eta

The island of Yaqeta, or Yaqweta in the local communalect, lies about 3 km north of Naviti. It is a volcanic island, 8 km long, from north to south, and about 1.5 km across at its widest part; and has a ridge running the length of the island with its highest point at the south end. It is nearly 8 square km in area, and has one village, Matayalevu, with a population of about 350 people. I was told in 1953 that it was originally owned by the Somosomo people of Naviti but was not inhabited until proto-historic times when, as I noted in the Somosomo account, it was given by a chief of Somosomo to a family from Votua, Ba.

Myths of origin
I was told that the island had no particular guardian spirit or nitu.

The populating of Yaqeta: the yavusa Nadua
A man of Votua was married to a woman of Somosomo and, because their position at Votua was uncomfortable, they came over together with their two sons to stay with the woman’s relations at Somosomo, Naviti. The woman later gave birth to a third son, Kava; and at the request of the father who collected some valuables for the purpose, the wife went to ask her brother, Dudulevu, the chief of the Somosomo for the island of Yaqeta so that the family could go and settle there and gather sici or trochus to eat. The chief gave the island to Kava who was his vatu. The family went and settled at Tābana, the first village on Yaqeta.

The other two sons had gone to stay at Soso, Naviti and were asked by their father to come over to Yaqeta. They settled at Donomai, and they all formed the mataqali of Nadua. Others from Votua followed and formed the mataqali of Votua. Collectively they formed the yavusa of Yadua, as registered by the NLC. One of these was instated as leader with the title of Ratu, and he was independent, heeding no other authority. At the time of my visit there were disputes about the leadership and ownership of the island.

The people of Nacula used to attack the Nadua people on Yaqeta, who would retire and take refuge in a cave at Koro. A large snake is said to live in the cave and sometimes appear in the village. It is not clear whether the snake is regarded as the waqawaqa or manifestation of a spirit, perhaps the guardian spirit, Devu. It used to eat the bats in the cave which is full of bat bones.

Spirits
The present inhabitants, the Nadua people from Votua, regard their guardian spirit at Yaqeta to be Devu, their guardian spirit at Votua.
iviVilavila ni Yalo
At Votua.

Yaqweta and outside influences
The LCC considered in 1881 and allowed a claim (1076) for the purchase in 1870 by Messrs Milligan and Williamson of two areas of the island of Yaqweta. 30 acres of cotton were destroyed by the 1871 hurricane. In 1872, 15 acres of cotton had been replanted, and then another 15. All were destroyed by the 1874 hurricane. J. Vernor was then in occupation. By 1881, 100 acres of coconuts had been planted and there were 350 goats on the island. Leslie was then in occupation and he planted about 10 acres of cotton.
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