

Chapter 10

Cultural Survey of the Nakorotubu Range, Ra and Tailevu Provinces, Fiji.

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SUMMARY

An archaeological assessment of any given area involves collecting information about the location, distribution and organization of past human cultures across a large area. Engaging the assistance of several guides, a non-invasive cultural survey of the Nakorotubu Range was conducted identifying and exploring archaeological sites of significance.

Utilizing the guides knowledge and local stories providing some hint of a greater past, the oral history of several archaeological sites in the Nakorotubu Range was documented. A major portion of the cultural sites identified during the survey belong to the people in the districts Bureivanua, Nakuilava and Bureiwai.

While most sites in the area have been well preserved over the years, a select few have been disturbed by human and non-human interaction over recent years with the introduction of livestock farming and agriculture in the area.

INTRODUCTION

Nakorotubu, one of the 19 districts in the province of Ra is rich in cultural history that spans over centuries in time. Given that there have been no previous archaeological records or research conducted in Nakorotubu, the archaeological assessment conducted over a span of two weeks was the first of its kind and nature in this area.

The area is littered with fortified village sites, ancient burial sites, old village sites or koro makawa and other interesting non-invasive archaeological finds. This chapter will explore the various cultural aspects of Nakorotubu, giving site names, descriptions, and brief discussions on folklore, the uses and significance of such locations, the imminent human and non-human threats as well as recommendations on how to maintain and preserve the cultural sites.

METHODS

The Fiji Museum-Archaeology Department's assessment of the archaeological/historical sites in Nakorotubu was documented from the local guide's knowledge of the sites and through the collation of oral history of the sites background and significance from the elders of the village of Matuku, Soa and Nasau.

The sites were mapped using a GPS receiver (GARMIN GPSmap 76CSx) and a rough sketch of the layout of the old villages and settlements was produced.

RESULTS

Nakorotubu Area

An annotation of the sites recorded from the forest area towards the village of Matuku is provided below. The location of the cultural sites in Nakorotubu are presented in Map 9.

Rock Shelter (Plates 54 & 55)

About 20 minutes walk, southeast from the Base camp 1 is the rock shelter. Commonly