

FIJIAN ROCK ART SITES REVISITED

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Relatively little is known about Fijian rock art. The few existing publications are descriptive, sketchy, and outdated (Paine 1929; Vogan 1937; Snow 1950; Philipps 1951; O'Reilly 1954; Hill 1956; Palmer & Clunie 1970; cf. Ewins 1995). Except for Ewins, who recorded and analyzed a rock art site on Naura Beach, Vatulele Island, no one has focused on an in-depth analysis on any of the sites. Neither comprehensive rock art survey nor any site excavations with a focus on the rock images has, to our knowledge, taken place. Some of the reasons are, perhaps, the large area involved, the often dense and rugged terrain, and the lack of people's awareness or interest in this part of archaeology.

Located in Melanesia but geographically close to Western Polynesia, culturally, Fiji Islands hold a unique position in the Pacific as an "in between" archipelago (Kirch 2002:155-56). Thus the studies of early cultural traits that may or may not be shared between both regions are significant. The petroglyph and pictograph repertoire in Eastern Polynesia (e.g., Cox & Stasack 1970; Trotter & McCulloch 1981; Lee & Stasack 1999; Lee 1992; Millerstrom 1997, 2001) and parts of Melanesia (e.g., Rosenfeld 1988; Ballard 1992; Roe 1992; Spriggs & Mumford 1992; Wilson 2001, 2002; Monnin & Sand 2004) are generally well documented, though by no means complete. In contrast, the rock art of Fiji is marginalized and rarely referred to in the literature. So it is with a great deal of local and academic interest that we took on the Fijian rock art project.

The Fijian Islands preliminary field project took place between September 10 and 28, 2007. Our main objectives were to:

1. Re-visit and record, if necessary, the already known sites described in the literature.
2. Note the archaeological, cultural, and environmental context for each site.
3. Evaluate the potential of developing a project on rock art in Fiji taking into account that the knowledge of rock art in the archipelago is considered a 'blank spot'.

According to published accounts available to us, we compiled a list of names, locations, and references of 21 rock art sites in Fiji (Table 1). We were able to visit 8 locations and recorded the rock images on 5 boulders, 2 of which have never before been documented (Figure 1). Logistic conditions and Fijian social protocol greatly shaped our survey. Table 2 is a synthesis of the rock art sites visited and recorded in 2007. What follows is a description and discussion of the sites we visited.

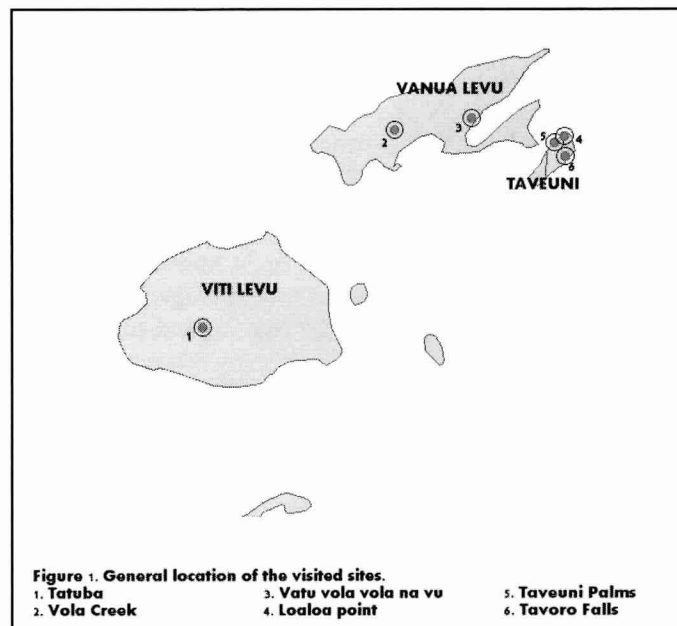


Figure 1. Simplified map of the Fijian archipelago. General location of the visited sites are marked.

VITI LEVU

Kalokolevu, Naboro

People in Kalokolevu Village had no knowledge of the rock art site mentioned in Hill (1956) and Palmer and Clunie (1970).¹ With three local guides we searched the area along the Naboro Creek to the uppermost waterfall. We were unable to locate the boulder with inscriptions described in published sources (Hill 1956; Palmer & Clunie 1970). Some construction has taken place along the upper part of the river when a dam and the connecting pipeline were installed. It is possible that the petroglyph boulder was destroyed or turned over in the construction process.

Sewene, Tatuba Cave

Unfortunately Palmer and Clunie (1970:10; fig.4) offer only four lines on the Tatuba petroglyphs; the exact location was not mentioned. Our local guides knew about the cave but had no knowledge of the carved figures.

Tatuba Cave is located on a steep ridge in the upper part of Sigatoka Valley some 60 m (197 ft.) above the river. At the

Table 1. Fijian Rock Art Sites Mentioned in the Literature.

<i>island</i>	<i>village</i>	<i>site name</i>	<i>reference</i>	<i>comment</i>
Viti Levu	Sawene	Tatuba Cave, Sigatoka Valley	Palmer & Clunie 1970	a human hand and a series of circular indentations
	Naboro		Palmer & Clunie 1970:10	“running human figures”
	Tawalika	Upper part of Sigatoka Valley	A. St. Johnson 1883:256 Palmer & Clunie 1970:10	human, bird, and canoe motifs painted on limestone walls in a cave
	Natabua	Lautoka	Snow 1950:71	a stone with what appears to “resemble a primitive animal or a crude human figure”
	Raiwaqa	Bukusia	Worthy & Anderson 1999	paintings on a cave wall
	Maqere	Tavua	Parry & Watling 1988:106-114	anthropomorph, zoomorphs, and a geometric figure
Vanua Levu	Dakuniba		Vogan 1937; Snow 1950; Palmer & Clunie 1970	several boulders with engravings
	Dawara	Vola Creek, Yanawai River	Hill 1956; Palmer & Clunie 1970:3	circa twenty-eight concentric circles and two or three rings
	Vatukuca	Vatu Vola Vola Na Vu	Snow 1950; Hill 1956:74-75; Palmer & Clunie 1970:10	concentric circles, horizontal and vertical lines; an “owl-like face”
	Near the villages of Malake and Valovoni	Tikina of Saqani	Hill 1956	reported to be a large human footprint with toes; may be a petroglyph or a natural indentation in the boulder; called “Beranayalo”; nearby, another group of rocks with late historic figures (?); called “Tukituki”
	Nailou	Qaravonu	O’Reilly 1954	engraved turtles
Taveuni	Qacavulo	Naqilai area	Snow 1950; Palmer & Clunie 1970:3	“a boulder with engravings of parallel characters which are set in line”
	Bouma	Tavoro Waterfall	Hill 1956; Palmer & Clunie 1970:3	script-like forms on a cliff face
Ovalau	Lovoni		Palmer & Clunie 1970:10	engravings in a cave; a fragment was placed in Fiji Museum, Suva
Moturiki	Uluibau		J. Balenaivalu, <i>pers. comm.</i> Sep. 13, 2007	5 concentric circles on a polishing boulder
Beqa	Naceva (Kuatu)		Phillipps 1951; Palmer & Clunie 1970:3,10	incised concentric circle or a spiral design
Yanuca Lailai			Phillipps 1951:51; Palmer & Clunie 1970:10	reportedly a cave with some 50 circular figures similar to those at Beqa
Vatulele		Naura Beach	Palmer & Clunie 1970; Ewins 1995	paintings; anthropomorphs, zoomorphs, canoe, geometrics
Yasawa Group		Sawa-i-lau	Vogan 1937; Snow 1950; Palmer & Clunie 1970	in 1932 Vogan made casts of the carvings “which are now in the Cambridge University, the Auckland and other museums” (Vogan 1937:101-102)
Totoya, Western Lau Group			Ewins 1995:69	also noted by P. Nunn, University of South Pacific
Moala, Lau Group		Ketei-Ra	J. Balenaivalu, <i>pers. comm.</i> Sep. 13, 2007	high island; boulder on the coast with circles and suns; located by a creek; apparently associated with a grinding stone

Table 2. Synthesis of Fijian Rock Art Sites Studied, September 2007.

<i>island</i>	<i>village</i>	<i>site name</i>	<i>reference</i>	<i>content</i>	<i>incidences</i>	<i>comment</i>	<i>setting</i>
Viti Levu	Naboro		Palmer & Clunie 1970		not found	near waterfall; creek has been modified by construction of a dam	boulder
	Sawene	Tatuba Cave	Palmer & Clunie 1970	anthropomorphic handprint and cup-shaped impressions			cave
Vanua Levu	Vatukuca			anthropomorphic face, concentric circles, circular geometric shapes			boulder
	Dawara	Vola Creek	Hill 1956; Palmer & Clunie 1970	concentric circles and circles		partially submerged in Vola Creek	outcrop
Taveuni	Matei area	Taveuni Palms Resort	new site	concentric circles and circles			boulder
	Welagi	Loaloa Point	new site	two concentric circles			boulder
	Qacavulo	Naqilai area	Palmer & Clunie 1970		not found		boulder
	Bouma	Tavoro Waterfall	Hill 1956; Palmer & Clunie 1970		not found	destroyed by landslide in 1955?	boulder?

base of the ridge there are several stone-covered burial mounds in addition to stone-outlined house foundations. Near the opening of the cave remains of Fort Tatuba are still standing (e.g., several stacked walls). Giant *dalo* (*Cyrtosperma chamissonis*) grows near a small creek below the opening of the cave. Candlenut trees (*Aleurites*) and Breadfruit trees (*Artocarpus altilis*) grow in the vicinity. The large opening to the cave is partly closed with a stacked wall some 10 to 15 courses high. Potsherds and small lithic pieces are scattered on the floor at the entrance of the cave and on the flat area below. Subsurface excavations within the cave determined that initial occupation occurred between *cal.* 20 BCE and *cal.* 80 CE; stratified deposit suggested a continuous occupation until the historic period (Field 2004:88). With our four guides we examined the interior of the cave. It was extensive, with high ceilings in some parts; in other places we had to crawl on our bellies in powdery bat dung to reach the other chambers. Bats fluttered above our heads. According to our local guides the eastern part of the cave was used for burial in the past and they did not wish to take us there. After investigating the interior of the cave for some three hours we discovered that the petroglyph panel was not located in the cave but placed on the vertical cliff face to the east of the cave entrance — in the area of the burials. The cliff face was covered with green lichen and the petroglyphs were almost invisible. A hand in *intaglio* — it is impossible to know if it depicts the right or the left hand — and some 63 three cupule-like indentations in two

different sizes are visible on the cliff face (Figure 2). Considering the long occupation in the cave it is impossible to determine the age of the petroglyphs.

VANUA LEVU

Dawara Village, Vola Creek

The petroglyph site is located on the north side of Vola Creek, a subsidiary of the Yanawai River, approximately one-hour walk from Dawara Village. The path runs through taro (*Esculenta*) and yaqona or kava (*Piper methysticum*) fields tended to by the people in Dawara Village. The last section consisted of a dense forest. Though some of the residents were aware of the site, most of the people in the village had never visited the place. They were quite surprised that we came all the way from the United States to examine the rock art boulder that they had never seen.

The outcrop, located in the bend of the creek, was covered by silt, sand, gravel, and water, and it was, for the most part, invisible to us. It is possible that gold-mining activities that have taken place over the last 50 years on Mount Kasi (located on the ridge directly to the north), may have altered the direction of the watercourse.

The outcrop is relatively flat. It measures 2.2m (7.2 ft.) in length, it is 2.0 m (6.6 ft.) wide, and the images are carved from 0.15 m to 0.20 m (0.5 to 0.66 ft.) in depth. The day we

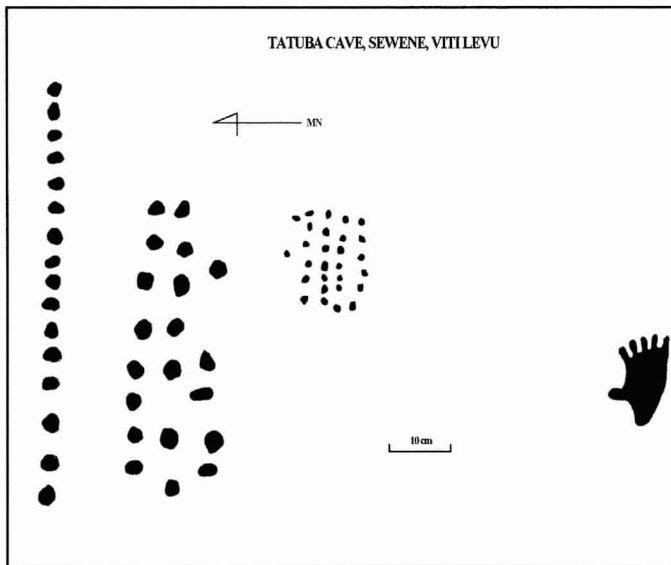


Figure 2. Tatuba Cave, Sawene Viti Levu. Images of a human hand *in itaglio* and some sixty-three rough circular indentations.

visited the site (September 18, 2007), approximately 1.3 m (4.3 ft.) of the outcrop was submerged some 0.40 m (1.3 ft.) under Vola Creek. We expect that this measurement may fluctuate according to the tides and the time of the year. The pecked and abraded motifs consist of 19 concentric circles, 2 of which have spokes, 2 circles, 4 small circular indentations, and 7 grooves (Figure 3). Since most of the petroglyph panel is under water, the panel was sketched and photographed only. According to Hill (1956), W.G. Johnston found a small boulder with polishing grooves associated with the rock art boulder. We were unable to relocate the polishing boulder.

W.G. Johnston (in Hill 1956:78) who visited the site in April 1955, “attempted to chip the rock horizontally in order to bring away the remaining part of the marking comprising a circle. The attempt was made in the interest of nature and science, but I am sorry to report that it did not succeed to the extent I expected and the circles shattered”. Considering that part of the petroglyphs are shattered due to vandalism and the fact that gravel and sand covered the panel, in general, the condition of the figures is good.

Vatukuca Village, Vatu Vola Vola Na Vu

The megalithic boulder, referred to by local residents as *Vatu vola vola na vu*, is located on top of a narrow but prominent ridge, some 1,072 m (3,517 ft.) above sea level. The location offers great visibility to the Nadi Valley below. While there is a cluster of boulders on the ridge, only the *Vatu vola vola na vu* has pecked figures. The images consist of an anthropomorphic face, concentric circles, cupules, and circular geometric figures (Figure 4). The entire ridge has been cultivated with taro and yaqona. It seems as if all sides of the boulder have some figures. However, the north side was covered with trees and bushes. Debris from clearing the field

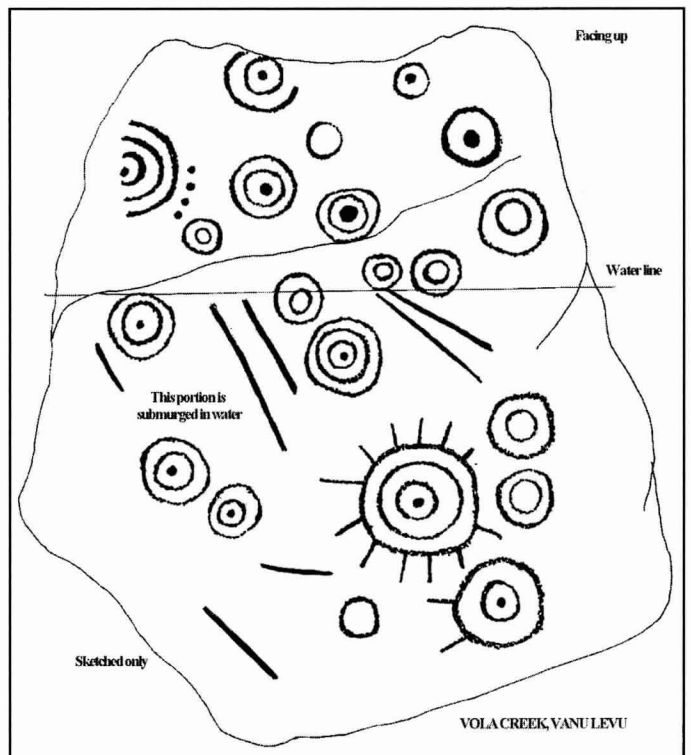


Figure 3. Vola Creek, Vanua Levu. Concentric circles on boulder partly submerged in water.

was deposited in the same area. Because of the sensitive planting area we were unable to clear that part of the boulder to locate the panel described by Palmer and Clunie (1970).

TAVEUNI ISLAND

Welagi Village, Loaloa Point

While this boulder is known by many of the local inhabitants, it has never been documented. The site consists of a megalithic boulder situated on the beach directly north of the highway, at the stretch between Matei and Somosomo. Depending on the tides, the base of the boulder is submerged in some 0.20-0.30 m (0.66-0.98 ft.) of sea water. We visited the site on September 22 and 23, 2007. The boulder measures approximately 4.5 m (14.8 ft.) in height and it is 6.6 m (21.7 ft.) wide. Two 0.40 × 0.40 m (1.3 × 1.3 ft.) concentric circles, with four rings, face the highway and the contemporary Welagi Village. According to our Welagi Village guide Manoa (also the local traditional priest and healer), the original village was located inland at some distance from the ocean. Subsequently the village was moved closer to the sea. In a third move, the village settled inland from the highway and southwest of the boulder. The boulder is clearly visible and accessible from both the second and the contemporary village. The age of the images is unknown. Interestingly, the boulder is located at the point where land and sea meet, at the north side of Loaloa Point. It seems to be a conspicuous geographical setting, referred to as “Kona” — “place where things meet”.

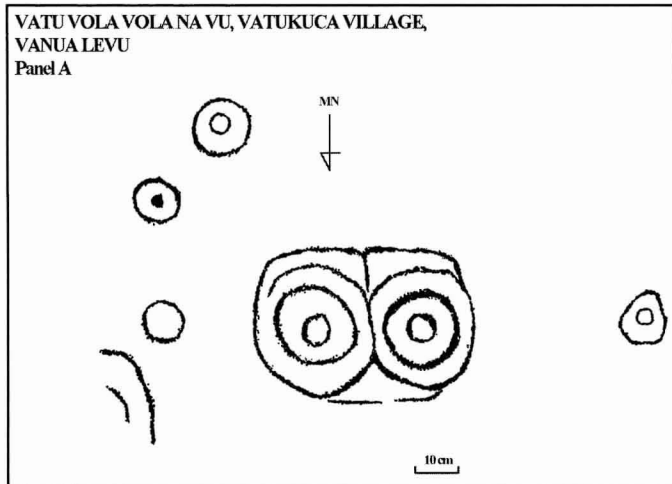


Figure 4. Vatu Kuka Village, Vatu vola vola na vu. Boulder with an anthropomorphic face, concentric circles, and circular figures.

Bouma, Tavoro Waterfall

Hill (1956:84) visited the site in 1955 and did not see the petroglyphs reported to have existed near the waterfall. He believed that they had been destroyed in rock falls. Palmer and Clunie (1970:10; fig. 3) wrote that the petroglyphs at Tavoro "...seem to have been destroyed by landslides". However, we wanted to investigate the situation. The location of the alleged rock art site was at the first Tavoro Waterfall. It is easily accessible along Tavoro River, a popular short hike for foreign tourists. We talked to local residents and searched the area but could not locate the carvings. An elderly gentleman with whom we were in contact believed that the carvings were lost since they had not seen them for many years.

Taveuni Palm Resort

A basalt boulder with carved concentric circles is located on the property at Taveuni Palm Resort, Matai. Eight concentric circles are located on the south and the west sides of the boulder while 2 cupules are situated on the top surface (Figure 5). The boulder measures 1.7 m (5.6 ft.) in length and 0.8 m (2.6 ft.) in width. The height is 0.6 m (2 ft.). Sections of the boulder have flaked off. A shallow creek that runs towards the sea is located some 5 m (16.4 ft.) to the west. No archaeological association is visible. Landscaping, however, has modified the area. This boulder has never previously been recorded.

Qacavulo Village

Snow (1950) and Palmer and Clunie (1970:3) all mentioned a boulder at Naqilai near Qacavulo. Palmer and Clunie (1970:3) wrote: "A boulder engraved with a few roughly parallel characters with are set in line". The current landowner was unaware of a carved boulder on his property.

We searched for it along the shore but, because of a storm and high sea, we were unable to examine the sides of the largest boulder facing the sea. The landowner promised to check them for us and let us know if he found any petroglyphs.

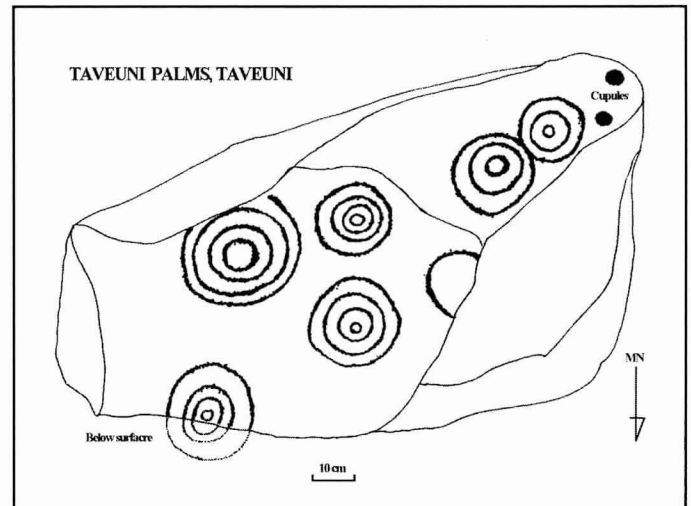


Figure 5. Taveuni Palm Resort. Boulder with concentric circles and 2 cupules.

DISCUSSION

Rock images are present in Fiji but probably not in large numbers such as for instance in New Caledonia (Monnin & Sand 2004), the Hawaiian Islands (Cox & Stasack 1970; Lee & Stasack 1999), the Marquesas Islands (Millerstrom 1997, 2001), Easter Island (Lee 1992), and New Zealand (Trotter & McCulloch 1981 [1971]). However, it is likely that more rock art sites will be found in the future, perhaps accidentally, or in the context of archaeological survey and excavation. For example, on the island of Moturiki (Lomaiviti Group), a boulder with circular motifs and polishing grooves was found during cultivation at the edge of a taro swamp (Cruz & Millerstrom 2008). Wall paintings in Viti Levu have been found in Bukusia, Raiwaqa (Worthy & Anderson 1999). After spending some time on Taveuni and talking with several local residents, we were told of the two new sites that we documented. Other sites may be located in a cave in Saqolo (Navakawau Village, Taveuni). Apparently there are foot and finger-print carvings. And there may be another boulder with hand-prints south of Naqilai, Taveuni.

Since rock art is a culturally (and therefore archaeologically) highly structured material manifestation, it is not anecdotal that these rock art sites have been found. Rock art appears in systems, which means that other rock art sites must be found when surveyed in a systematic way. This is our underlying assumption and the goal of our project.

To date we have documented 5 rock art sites only — too few sites to understand the cultural context or their relationship to other islands or island groups. Cupules and circular indentations dominate with 62.6 percent or 67 figures. Concentric circles makes up 34 figures or 31.8 percent (Table 3).

The only anthropomorphic representation is a face and a human hand (1.9 percent). Except for Tatuba Cave, we saw no apparent archaeological association. Environmental context

appears to be ridges and water such as the sea, rivers, and streams.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage of Fijian Rock Images, September 2007.

<i>image types</i>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>percentage</i>
anthropomorphic figures (face and hand)	2	1.9
concentric circles	34	31.8
cupules, circular indentations	67	62.6
circular geometric figures	4	3.7
TOTAL	107	100

Our 2007 field season was short but successful. The rock art survey helped develop the next stage of Fijian rock art research. Our future plans are to examine the remaining rock art sites, record them, and evaluate their cultural context. Our 2008 plans include conducting intensive archaeological survey on Moturiki Islands in the Lomaiviti Group, in which rock art has been found recently. The 2008 field-season, funded by a Pacific Rim Research Grant (principal investigator Margaret Conkey, Department of Anthropology, Archaeological Research Facilities, University of California, Berkeley), took place between September and October, 2008.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Conducting rock art research in Fiji takes time and patience and involves the goodwill and cooperation of a great number of people. While many Fijians have not thought about rock images or knew of any sites, they were interested and enthusiastic about our subject.

We thank Joji Qaranivalu, head of the Research Division of the Ministry of Education, Suva, for granting us a permit to do archaeological research in Fiji. Jone Balenaivalu, head of the Department of Archaeology, Fiji Museum, Suva, was extremely helpful and willingly answered all of our questions, as were Sepeti Matararaba and Sela Rayawa. Sero Rokotuitai (assistant in the Provincial Office in Savusavu) and Eroni Matalau (head of the Provincial Office in Sigatoka) wrote letters of introduction to the various villages we wished to visit. We thank all of them for their kind cooperation.

We felt welcomed in each village. The local residents provided information, the chief of each village housed and fed us and provided guides to take us to the sites. We wish to especially acknowledge Vika Satakala, Peni Tuibenau, Manoa Ratinaisiwa, Luke Kubunavanua, and Watisoni Lomaiviti in Dawara Village, Vanua Levu; chief Josaia Mocenanuma, Muriana Tuimoala, Repeka Taqanasavu, Atoni Tusaki, and Francis Xavier Leo in Vatukuca Village; Laisani Raivalita in Vuinadi, Vanua Levu; on Taveuni we wish to acknowledge Toni Douglas and his wife Maria in Naqilai; the energetic

Ronna L. Goldstein, owner of Coconut Grove; Tony Achland, the owner of Taveuni Palms; chief Tomasi Naceba, Mateo Vulovulo, and Manoa in Welagi Village. We extend our thanks to Iva Koroisalili and his wife Leone in Kalokolevu Village, our cheerful guides Seveci Naisilisili, Apakuk Rawaikel, and Eseto Taqiri; in Vatumali village we were welcomed by Ratu Vilame Vatureba, and housed and fed by Vasiti Vatureba; our guides to the cave (Sewene Village) were Akuila Vadua, Alifereti Sauroutu, and Noa Matanisiga.

Last but not least we extend our sincere thanks to our German friends — Michael Koch, his wife Suzanna, and their two children Fanua and Samuel — for their hospitality and friendship and for letting us stay with them in Savusavu (Vanua Levu) and sharing their food with us. We also wish to thank Patrick Bibi for his patience when driving us on Taveuni.

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NOTES

- ¹ Review articles by Palmer and Clunie (1970) and Hill (1956) often relied on secondary sources and therefore the exact locations of some of the rock art sites are sketchy or missing.

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ADDENDUM

The 2008 field-season, funded by a Pacific Rim Research Grant (principal investigator, Margaret Conkey, Department of Anthropology, Archaeological Research Facilities, University of California, Berkeley), took place on Ovalau, Moturiki, Yanuca, Leleuvia, and Caqalai, in September and October.

After our September 2007 preliminary exploratory field trip to three Fijian islands, we proposed to work on Moturiki, in the Lomaiviti Group, in order to:

- 1) document the rock art;
- 2) study the location patterns of this rock art and its iconographical features; and
- 3) attempt to establish the relationship between rock art sites and settlements.

We believed Moturiki would function as a preliminary model for further rock art research in the Fijian archipelago, since we could develop an experimental methodology using remote sensing to design an adequate survey.

Moturiki constituted a perfect initial case study since it is a high island with a diversified landscape that includes both mountain and coastal settings, providing an interesting possibility of differential landscape contexts for rock art. Additionally, the island appears to be part of a network of inter-island relationships. This allowed us to study the island as a single entity, but also as an inter-related entity part of an extended net of archaeological features. Furthermore, Moturiki has one of the oldest Lapita settlements found so far

in Fiji, which means that we appear to have evidence for the entire temporal sequence of settlement in Fiji, from the earliest (Lapita) to the latest (with European contact and later) (Nunn, *et al.* 2007). In addition, a rock art site, located on the south part of the island, was found in Uluibau Village in 2006. This newly discovered basalt boulder (Figure A), found by accident in a taro swamp, showed concentric circles and polishing spots, exactly the same kind of depiction we had seen in Viti Levu, Vanua Levu, and Taveuni.

Moturiki is some 10 km (6.2 mi.) long and approximately 3 km (1.9 mi.) wide (*c.* 10.9 km² / 4.2 mi.²). The ten modern villages are all located along the coast near the beach area. Moturiki Island is divided in two clear areas, the wet part and the dry part. The dry area basically occupies the entire northern half of the island. The difference in density in terms of archaeological sites is also evident. While we still lack a chronology, there seems to be a shift in settlement patterns. The first occupation is a Lapita site located near the beach.

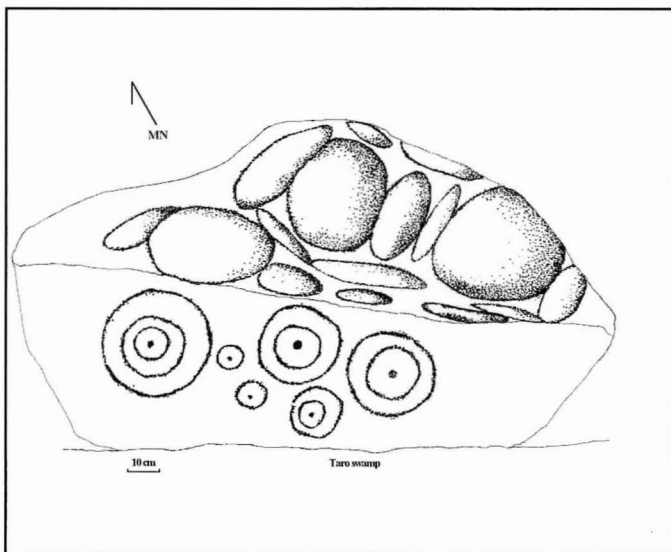


Figure A. Rock art boulder from Moturiki with concentric circles and several polishing grooves. It is now sitting on the edge of a taro swamp.

The bulk of settlement seems to be inland while post-historic occupation shifts again towards the coast. These villages, now abandoned, were occupied in a time-period still within the

memory of some of the local inhabitants.

The Fiji Museum suggested that we worked with Sitiveni Namua (Siti), a local guide. Siti knew the island well as he used to work for the Department of Agriculture. He also had a good relationship with the various island chiefs so we were able to, after following dictated local protocol, survey the whole island.

A large part of the island is heavily cultivated and relatively easy to survey. However, often dense and impenetrable vegetation prevented us from carrying out a systematic survey. Thus we changed our strategies from systematic survey to a judgmental survey. Forty archaeological sites on Moturiki were visited and placed on an island map with the help of a GPS. Some of the sites were mapped. The archaeological sites vary from house-mounds to entire ring-ditch villages, terraced settlement, caves, forts, one Lapita site, and one rock art site. The rock art boulder does not seem to be associated with initial Lapita colonization on Moturiki. Pottery and shell fragments were widespread.

We did not find additional rock art sites. If there are other rock art sites on Moturiki they are covered with vegetation or buried in the fertile swampy area surrounding much of the island.

While Moturiki was our main focus and we estimated that we surveyed some 60 percent of the island, due to archaeological field logistics beyond our control, we had time to map several sites on Ovalau, located to the north of Moturiki, as well as systematically survey three small islands, Leleuvia and Caqalai located to the south of Moturiki, as well as Yanuca, situated to the east of Moturiki.

Our main focus is to examine Fijian rock art within in a cultural context. However, after the 2008 field season we decided to use a regional approach rather than to investigate a specific island. During our 2009 field season we plan to return to several island where there are known rock art sites. Maria Cruz Berrocal and some of her colleagues from the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas in Madrid, Spain, will continue to conduct archaeological work on Moturiki and the neighboring island of Yanuca.

REFERENCES

- Nunn, P.D., T. Ishimura, W.R. Dickinson, K. Katayama, *et al.* 2007. The Lapita Occupation at Naitabale, Moturiki Island, Central Fiji. *Asian Perspectives* 46(1):96-132.

A BIT O' PACIFIC TRIVIA

Thor Heyerdahl's *Kon-Tiki* has been continuously in print since it was released in 1950, has been published in 65 different languages, and sales have far surpassed the multi-million-dollar mark — but many people are unaware that the manuscript was originally rejected by twenty publishers before Rand McNally accepted it!

Source: *The New Book of Lists* by David Wallechinsky & Amy Wallace (Canongate, 2005)