

Disk 6:

Kamoki's Voyage to Peru
in 1863

Done 2.6.6.

8. The Story of Kamoki's Voyage

Kamoki came from Temotu in Nonouti. An American ship called in and a lot of people went to visit it including George, an American and Frank, a Frenchman. When they were aboard, they were all carried away. They sailed north but saw no land so the ship turned about and came to Taliteuca. One man, Bantamana, came aboard and quite a number of women also. They then sailed to Arorae which the ship had visited before. There, they picked up a man called Babu who was able to speak the white-man's tongue and continued to Eneti (Tuvalu).

They made a landfall at Nukufetau and went ashore. The people agreed to sell pigs to the ship but refused any goods other than guns. So they exchanged pigs for guns. They sailed away and came to Rotuma. They didn't stop there but continued on until they reached a mountainous country. They were steering an easterly course and two men swam out from the shore. When they reached the boat, one of them leaped aboard alongside the captain, grabbed his cap and dived overboard. These men had tattoos inside their lips and they fled because they feared what the captain might do. The ship continued on its course.

Land came into sight which the captain said was America. They sailed towards the shore at a town called Ramauke (Kambayegue) and a doctor came aboard to inspect the passengers. He declared there was sickness on the ship and forbade any of them to land. The captain went ashore and later on another ship arrived and dropped anchor to the west. The captain of this ship came over to board

the first one and the crew battered down the hatch. This captain then ordered the mate to open the hold and, when he saw the large number of people in it, called Tem Babu, of Arorae and spoke with him. Then he went ashore to find the other captain who was told to take the passengers back to Kiribati.

They continued their journey and first came to a sandbank in the middle of the ocean. They landed but there was nothing to eat there except non fruit (*Morinda citrifolia*) and cats. They sailed on to Mangarongaro (district on west coast of Tongareva) and the passengers were left there. A steamer came in from Tahiti and took some of them away, and then another ship came and took away more of them. Still later, came a ship from Tabuaeran (Fanning Island) and they (~~the rest of them?~~ ^{remainder}) went there to work for the chief of that island, Wiriam (William Greig). They were there for about ten years. They went to Wiriam and asked to be taken home. Wiriam wrote a letter to Beingham (Bingham) in Honolulu and, when the time came for him to sail, Beingham called at Tabuaeran and took them home. His ship was called 'Moringita' (Morning Star).

Comments by H.E. Maude.

References:

- Maude, H.E. 1981. Slavers in Paradise. Australian National University Press, Canberra, Australia; The Stanford University Press, Stanford, California; University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji. 81, 88-91, 163, 167-9, 213 note 1.