

dish, for Wonajö and his tribe, being thorough bushmen, had no knowledge of canoes.

Wonajö placed the pig on one side of the island, the dog on the other, and planted the taro, from which a number of varieties developed, at a certain spot, where he appointed a snake-god to look after it.

As a result of the union of Mbasi with Könjini, an egg was produced and from it hatched out two children, a boy and a girl. Then Mbasi told the sun and the moon to hide, for he wished himself and his wife to turn into stone, and he did not wish his children to know where they were; he was also afraid lest his children know the whereabouts of their parents. The place where the sun and moon stayed is sacred ground at the present day, and as is the case with numerous other places on the island, certain rites have to be performed there at certain times, and the ground is strictly tabu. Wonajö, discovering the sun and moon in this place told them to go up above into the sky. But first the sun and moon went to bathe, the sun choosing the warm salt water and the moon the cold creek water — as a result when they ascended into the sky, the sun found the moon too cold and the moon found the sun too hot. Wonajö, therefore, arranged that they travel through the sky at separate times, and moreover, finding them too close to the earth pushed them both high up into the heavens by means of a long pole.

As a result of the incestuous union of the children of Mbasi, there came a race of people, intermarrying at first and acquiring new totems by the will of Wonajö and Mbasi, who made the law of descent of their totems through the mother and the prohibition of marriage within the totem. The totems given were the totems of the various snake-gods (also crocodile-gods, &c., for the hierarchy of gods includes a few who partake of the nature of man and beasts other than snakes). Of the four linked totems of the Rossel Islander, one is generally a species of snake, and a species of which a snake-god and his tribe of similar snakes partake in nature. Thus, in a certain sense, one of the totems is a god, but in all cases except one (that of the Mbasi snake), not a god from which the totemic group is descended.

Mbasi and his wife were not seen again by their children; they became converted into two stones, which remain at this day close together at the East end of the island. Mbasi is a piece of rock, similar to other rocks cropping out in the neighbourhood, and lies some little way from the shore, almost completely covered at high water. Könjini is a smaller stone on shore, partially concealed by bush. The neighbourhood of these stones is held in great awe by the natives. Those in canoes passing this spot even at a considerable distance lower their voices to a hush. No woman is allowed to pass in a canoe, so that they have to make a considerable detour through the bush at the back.

This piece of ground, on which are the stones of Mbasi and Könjini, held in great fear by the natives, and to approach which would mean death to any but him who owns the necessary ritual, is only one example of some fifty or more scattered over the island or round the reef. Such pieces of ground which are tabu and on which repose certain sacred objects, are known