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TOPIC: PROTOCOL(VISIT OF A CHIEF)

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NAMOSI. M 55yrs.

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VISIT OF A CHIEF

This is the official reception performed by the people of Namosi when a chief makes a visit to Namosi.

Thank you for all the chiefs who might be listening in about this interview. This is the traditional way and the traditional custom paid for the chief of our province. It is only performed for the Tui Namosi(chief of Namosi province) and also for some other important people from other parts of Fiji. There are times when the Tui Namosi makes this visit, once or twice he pays this visit to our village and also to some other villages who are his subjects. For all the villages, places he goes to, they perform all these ceremonies for him, and one of these ceremonies is the ceremony of I VAKASOBU. Here at this spot, we have a few small chiefs who performs the ceremony of I VAKASOBU and also they have a number of men who will guard the chiefly procession from here to the place where the other ceremonies are to be held. As for these guards, it goes to the people who rightly are people who hold this traditional position as being part of the village community. These are the people who hold spears, war clubs, and they watch and guard the chiefly procession as it moves along.

After they have performed the ceremony of I VAKASOBU, the chief and those who accompanied him stepped down and they are taken over by

As for this chief, the Tui Namosi, he is also addressed as the Vunivalu of Namosi. The escorting of the Vunivalu calls for two people to walk in front holding spears and also war clubs up to the house which they have prepared to receive the chief in. The Tui Namosi takes his seat which the people of Namosi or this village prepared. Also there is another group of people here in the village who are known as MATASAU and it is the duty of the Matasau people to sit and form a barrier cutting off the people from this place where the Tui Namosi sits. It is said that the line does not allow anyone to go beyond it and also it is only to give privacy and all those other things to the Tui Namosi rather than associating him with the rest of the people.

During the chiefly procession making it's way towards the place where they will sit, the wooden gong is beaten and only stopped when the chief takes his seat in the house. When the Vunivalu arrives at the front door, before he comes inside the house, all the people sitting there in the house greet the chief with the TAMA (tama is a chiefly way of greeting a chief). After that, then the person who sits there on the seat next to the chief's seat also does the same thing, of TAMA, and this person is none other than the MATANIVANUA (chief's herald). The chief comes in and takes his seat, then comes the next ceremony which is called the I QALOQALLOVI VAKATURAGA. This is said to be a ceremony, 'to swim out for the chiefly procession and the chief'. After they have done the I QALOQALLOVI, then comes the next ceremony which is known as MATAKARAWA. As for the presentation of the MATAKARAWA, which is the yaqona, then it is given to the matanivanua, and it is the duty of the matanivanua to say a little prayer for the yaqona and this is like praying to the god of Nabukebuke to bless this yaqona which they call Matarakawa and this can be an

'I respectfully call upon the chiefly god of Nabukebuke.'

The people inside the house reply with, 'Peace and plenty for the land and the people(vanua), may the church flourish.' After the people respond, again the matanivanua carry on from where he left off. And then he goes on and on praying for the yaqona which they call Matakarawa. After the praying for the matakarawa, comes the next yaqona ceremony and this also calls for the people of the village to take part in the chanting which the people do for the chiefly yaqona ceremony. We find six or more people coming into the room or this area where the chief sits and they will perform the YAQONA VAKATURAGA also known to be the MEKETAKI YAQONA VAKATURAGA. As for these six people, we include the person who mix and prepare the yaqona, the person who takes the dregs of the yaqona and remove it outside or someplace else, and those others who will look after the serving of the yaqona. As for this person who takes the yaqona dregs outside, he is also the same person who takes care of the water used for the mixing of the yaqona. He spills the water into the yaqona bowl or tanoa when water or more water is needed for the yaqona mixed. The matanivanua calls out for the yaqona to be mixed, and this is the time when the chant group begins which their chanting or traditional song sung for the mixing of the yaqona, they keep up with the chanting until it comes to the removing of the ~~xxx~~ yaqona dregs outside, and the chant group keep up with their chanting until the person who is mixing finish with the mixing of the yaqona and is ready to call out or announce that the mixing of the yaqona is over, and now the yaqona is ready. It breaks there and then the person mixing announce that the yaqona is ready. After that, then comes the next part of the chanting and this is for the serving of the yaqona, when it will be taken up to the chief.

The cup bearer stands up and take up his position at the front part of the tanoa. And during this time, the chanting goes on. He takes the cup of yaqona and then goes up slowly, then turn around to face the chief and then stands still. And when he makes this turn, also the people keep on with the chanting. He takes the first step, second step and then he goes down slowly, and when he reach this level, the chanting stops suddenly and then someone who belongs to the Sauturaga calls out something. These people are responsible for the yaqona ceremony and all that. Then the cup of yaqona is taken up after this word is spoken by the Sauturaga. When they know that it is coming near to the time when the yaqona will be completely drank by the Vunivalu, then again the Sauturaga makes another shout or respect and this is to show that the yaqona taken by the Vunivalu is finished. After that, then the cup given to the Vunivalu is seconded with another cup of yaqona given to the matanivanua or this person whose got the right to drink the second cup of the chiefly yaqona, and this is termed as RABE. After the chief's cup of yaqona has been drink second to, then the next cup is given to a person whose got the right to drink this cup of yaqona with the chief. One thing we should bear in mind is the chanting done during the time when the drinking of the yaqona is done. This is only done to those people who belong to the chiefly family and also both their parents come from chiefly homes. As for these people, they belong to a very high family and also respected anywhere when they go to this particular place. As for all the chiefs and those who belong to a chiefly family, we know who our chiefs are and also for those chiefs who have the chiefly yaqona ceremony performed for them when they make certain special visits to a village, like this yaqona ceremony which they held for the Vunivalu or the Tui Namosi.

Also for the drinking of the yaqona, when it is finished, there should not be any yaqona left there in the tanoa. After~~x~~ this yaqona ceremony, then comes the presentation of the magiti (food), and for this magiti, it is widely called in all parts of Fiji as the I WASE NI YAQONA. As for our people in Nabukebuke, we do not call this magiti as the I Wase ni yaqona vakaturaga, but we call it the I WARAKI VAKATURAGA. This magiti is presented, and then received by the Vunivalu's matanivanua and then the magiti is taken aside which they later use for the feast including the chief and all the people of the village.

After the presentation of these magiti, then comes the time when the Vunivalu is escorted to this place where they have prepared lunch or food for the Vunivalu. Here in Nabukebuke, when the Vunivalu is asked to come and eat, no one else is allowed to eat with him, he is the only person who eats, and after that, then the rest of the people are allowed to eat, but always after the Vunivalu has eaten, alone.

During this time, when the Vunivalu sits down to eat, no one inside this house is allowed to smoke, no one is allowed to spit carelessly, and also no one is allowed to drink inside the house, and this is during the time when the Vunivalu sits down to eat. Also for the food given to the Vunivalu, no one else outside this sub-clan to which I belong is allowed to be there in the house where the Vunivalu eats or even give a helping hand in the preparation of the food, we are the only people allowed to be there, serve him with the food and also prepare the food for the Vunivalu alone, on this great day.

We are his people who take care of the food for the Vunivalu, we are known as LIGA NI KI for the Vunivalu. After the Vunivalu has eaten, we collect the rest of the ~~dishes~~ and also those other food which we set on the table. then we move right to the back behind these

the respect we have after the Vunivalu had eaten. Also for all the people in the room, this is the time when they show their respect when the chief has finished his food and they are to clap their hands in respect which is refer to as COBO (to clap their hands cross-wise).

All these foods which we prepared for the Vunivalu is brought to the kitchen to this place also where the rest of the people eat. It is only a person from our sub-clan who is allowed to eat the left-over food on the plate~~of~~ of the Vunivalu. After this person had eaten the left-over, then all the people there with him during the time when he was eating should clap their hands in respect also, this is only to show that they respected the chief's food eaten by this man. They return to yaqona drinking right to the time when the chiefly procession announce the villagers of their permission to be granted wishing to return to the village. They ask this so they can return to their own homes or where they live, the Vunivalu and all those who accompanied him when he came.

Here, we have the following ceremonies, first comes the I BILI NI MUA and this is presented from the villagers who are taking care of the official reception paid to the Vunivalu and also Tui Namosi. When the Vunivalu is ready to leave, again the sound of the wooden gong beaten is heard in the village, and this is even before the chief enters outside from the door. Also the villagers prepares these materials which they call NA I VAKASOSO NI WAQA, and the people are told to bring the best of all foods and anything which they should give to their chief or the Vunivalu when he is ready to leave. As for this i vakasoso ni waqa, it is like to 'return~~x~~ this chiefly people' who came to the village. Again the Vunivalu is escorted and taken down to where they have the boat ready which brought him to the

Nabukebuke which we perform for the Vunivalu when he comes to our ~~vixix~~ village making a visit.

- Thank you, as for all these ceremonies, these are performed when the Tui Namosi makes a visit to the village. can you tell me who in the village is responsible for the presentation of this ceremony which you called the I VAKASOBU?

As for the ceremony of I VAKASOBU, this is performed by someone who also comes from the chiefly family, and we can say that he is a small chief, not higher than the chief making the visit. This small chief and other men respected of this village, performs the ceremony which they ask the chief to step down from the boat, or car in which he came by or brought him in to the village, and this is the ceremony which we call NA I VAKASOBU.

- Here in the village of Navunikabi, who is the person chosen to perform the ceremony of i vakasobu, is it from a special mataqali (sub-clan or lineage) or they have these young people whom they choose from to perform the ceremony?

For any official reception held for the coming of a chief, maybe visiting like this subject, we do not pick randomly at people telling them they are responsible for this and the others are responsible for the other ceremonies. As for our people, only those who belong to the chiefly family like myself, and also I have two other brothers who can also be picked to perform the ceremony of I VAKASOBU or any other ceremonies. I have my own children, so does my two brothers, they are also some possibility to be picked and perform such ceremonies. The matanivanua (spokesman and herald man) is the person who takes these people down to the place where they will perform the ceremony of i vakasobu, asking the chief to get off from his transport before he walks through the village to where they have

- Añ for the ceremony of i VAKASOBU, in this ceremony do you present a yaqona or.....

Thank you. For the vakasobu, we do not present the yaqona for the ceremony. In any vakasobu ceremony, we use the whale's tooth for the ceremony, presentation of the whale's tooth is the ceremony of i vakasobu performed to a chief on his arrival.

- How many whale's teeth do they use for the ceremony?

It does not have to ~~xxx~~ be many or more than one. Only one whale's tooth is needed for the ceremony, only one.

- In the olden times, they do not have this roads which can bring them to our village through such transport like buses or motorcars, can you tell me how do these visiting chiefs travel from their place to your village?

I really do not know, maybe they walk all the way from there and then this is performed to them when they arrived at the village outskirts. But today, for our invited guests who are our chiefs, they come by car or by bus and when it stops there in the village outskirts, this is the place where the ceremony of i vakasobu is performed for them, before they step out of the car or bus or whatever that brought them to the village.

- Can you describe the kind of place or where the ceremony of i vakasobu is performed?

For the vakasobu, this is performed at the end of the village where the chief comes in and ready to enter into our village, at the side of the village or the end of the village, the car or bus stops there and this is the place where the ceremony of i vakasobu is performed to him.

- Can you tell me what do we mean by this phrase NA I VAKASOBU, does it mean that this is a ceremony telling the chief to get off the car

The meaning of i vakasobu, to all those who are listening, when a chief makes a visit to an island, and it means that these chief, or this chief will travel by boat or ship in order to go to the island. And before he steps from the boat to dry land, the ceremony of i vakasobu is performed to this chief by the people of this island. And also they have brought this same idea to those chiefs who makes visit but walks to the next village or go there by car or bus. The great idea or the only reason we can say is that this is to show the respect that people have for their chief or for this great chief from some other place. Only to show we are all of chiefly quality and standard, we perform all these ceremonies to the chief when he arrives. It shows we mean it, and also we like his coming to the village. This is the real meaning of the i vakasobu, performed there for the chief. After the vakasobu, then comes the rest of the ceremonies which they refer to as the VEIQARAVI VAKATURAGA (official reception paid for a chief).

- Say, if you are the person chosen to perform the ceremony of i vakasobu like you told me that you can be one of the small chiefs chosen to perform this ceremony. Can you tell me how many other men will accompany you down to this place where the vakasobu is performed?

I will be their leader and some other small chiefs like me will accompany myself, and also those who are the guards. We all go down to the place where the vakasobu is performed.

- Before the presentation of the i vakasobu, do you first make your chiefly greeting to the chief, or upon the chief's arrival, straightaway you go into the presentation of the vakasobu?

No, first we will greet the chiefly respectiviely. The matanivanua will greet the chief first or say the first part of the greeting, and then we will finish it our him

done for the Tui Namosi or this tama which you said is the first thing done before the vakasobu is presented?

As for the TAMA, this is the chiefly greeting paid to a chief when he comes to the village. Also when you greet a chief in the morning if you meet him anywhere, you do not say hallow just like when you are greeting a friend. But you refer to the greeting as TAMA and this is only used to greet a chief, you do not use it when you greet anyone in your family or any of your friends, only used for chiefs and very important people. As for the TAMA, in relation to the visit of a chief subject, when a chief comes from another village and is a guest here in the village of Navunikabi, the people who awaits his arrival in the house greets him with the tama. This is the meaning of Tama, when you greet a chief and only used for a chief. As for our people, we say, ''DUA'' and the reply or response from the people is ''O'' and they make this ''O'' sound long, to drag it long. And this is the words of greetings which we use when it is day time, and at night, meeting a chief you should say, ''NI SA BOGI SAKA'' meaning ''you have come at night.''

As for the ladies, also they have their own special ways in which they greet any chief, whether it is a lady chief or gentleman chief. When a woman meets a chief, also she greets the chief with the female way of saying Tama. As for the ladies, all they need to say is ''DA''.

- As for the guards and also for the person who performs the ceremony of i vakasobu, can you tell me how do they dress up when they go down to the place where the ceremony is held?

As for these people, the guards and the small chiefs dress up respectively and we could say in the 'vakavanua' style or traditional clothes.

As for the person who performs the ceremony of i vakasobu, he is

especially dressed up out of all the people who go down to the

cloth him with. The person who performs the vakasobu should dress up respectively.

- Does he wear any VESA around his arms and ankles?

No, he does not wear any ornament around the arms and ankles like someone going to a dance.

- His body painted with black spots?

Yes, it is right to have his face painted black, but it depends on those people who are dressing him up.

- After they have performed the vakasobu to the chief, then they escort the chief down to this place where the other ceremonies are to be held?

Yes, after the ceremony, they are taken down to the place where the rest of the chiefs are waiting for them, and led by the guards the chiefly procession makes their way to the house. As for the escorts we have those who performed the vakasobu and also the guards chosen to walk alongside the main group.

- As for these people, who are known to be the guards, do they pick on those people who are tough in looks, and also men with muscles to be the guards, or they have this special people from a subclan to be responsible with the act of guarding the chiefly procession when they move to the house prepared for the chief?

There is a special mataqali or lineage in the village who are called the LIGA NI KAU(handles wood). Here in Nabukebuke, there are several sub-clans here in the village who are called the liga ni kau. They guard the chiefly procession when it comes from the end of the village to the house where the other ceremonies are held.

- Can you name this mataqali or this subclan who are responsible for the guarding of the chief and also those who came with him?

Yes, there is a sub-clan who act as guards. For the whole village

are the people refer to as GONE NI VATUVULA, or the sub-clan Vatuvula. Also for these people, they are called yavusa vanua. They belong to the sub-clan Vatuvula, they are also responsible and known as the matanivanua of Nabukebuke. And also for those known to be in the sub-clan Naviti Levu, these are also some of the people who should carry the spears, war clubs and stand on guard when the chiefly procession moves across the village. Also they are known as the BATI KEI NABUKEBUKE (borders for Nabukebuke).

- You told me when the chiefly procession moves across the village and also when they start from the end of the village, then comes the sound of the wooden gong beaten by someone. Can you tell me who is responsible for the beating of the wooden gong, or do they allow anyone who wish to beat the wooden gong do what he likes to do when a chief arrives in your village?

There are people in the village who are really smart and skilled in the beating of a wooden gong. It does not matter from which sub-clan he belongs to, if there is someone in this sub-clan who knows how to beat the wooden gong in the manner used when a chief arrives in the village, he is allowed to be the one to beat the wooden gong.

- You told me there is an area marked out of bound to all the people and this is shown by the line of people known to be the Sauturaga or Matasau. Can you tell me when do they mark this boundary line showing that it is out of bound to the people, some metres away from where the chief sits. Do they mark this before the chief arrives inside the house or after the chief has arrived, then the SAU or this area is marked by the Sauturaga people?

Very well, after the chief arrives there in the house, then the Sauturaga step in and they make this mark to show that this is as far as the people can move to and look at the chief. and also no one is allowed

All these time when the chief is there in the house, no one is allowed to come into the house. But it is possible for someone inside the house who wish to come outside, to stand up and then come outside. But no one from outside is allowed from the outside mark to step beyond this mark which they call the Sau. As for the Sauturaga, they show this mark to show they have these orders from the chief, and on top of that to show how much they respect this particular person.

- When the Sauturaga mark this place where the people are not allowed to go beyond, how do they show this is out of bounds. Do they bring the reeds and then stick it up there on the ground, or they have another way in which they show that this is the Sau for the Vunivalu or for the chief making the visit?

As for the Sauturaga people, they know what they should do when told a chief is making a sivist on this day. Everything they need are prepared, the people in the sub-clan goes out to get the reeds which they use. As soon as the chief comes into the room, the Sauturaga people are the only people moving in the room and sticking these reeds to show the boundary mark for outsiders. They do not do it anyhow, they know when it is a good distance then the reeds are stuck there on the ground. They use the reeds so it is seen clearly by the people, all those who wish to watch the ceremonies performed for the chief or the Vunivalu also the Tui Namosi.

- As for this Sau, can you tell me what do they do to a person or someone who walk over this Sau, is he punished or let free with nothing done to him?

In the olden times, they might have their own ways of dealing with such people, but many years back, when someone cross this Sau, he

Also for the warriors or those who stand on guard, this can be a time when they make use of their war clubs, this person can be clubbed down because he has violated an old tradition and custom of the village. In the olden times, the warriors or those who stand on guard have the right and the freedom to punish anyone who walk over the Sau by clubbing them down using their war clubs.

- As for the people in the village, can you tell me what do they do when the Vunivalu arrives, do they watch the chiefly procession from their windows or they are told to go to a special place to receive and wait so they can see the chief and listen to what he might wish to say when he speaks to the people?

Very well, for all the villagers, they gather at this place where the Vunivalu comes in to sit and then have the other ceremonies performed for him. Both men and women and children are not allowed to walk across the village, or to play anywhere near to the area where the chiefly ceremonies are performed. The children are kept quiet in their own homes, or taken away somewhere where they spend the day so that they do not create any noise to disturb the chiefly procession coming to the village.

- Is it true that the women are told to stay in the house and also to take care of her child say if she is a nursing mother?

Yes, for our women, they know what they should do and what not to do when a chief makes a visit to our village. The women remain in the house with the children and also you do not find them bringing their children to this place where the official reception is performed for the chief. It is bad manners and also a big shame if women bring their little children here on the spot where the ceremony takes place.

- As for the people or group who performed the vakasobu they have said

this place where the rest of the ceremonies are done, is there any need for the people to greet the chief again traditionally like in the Tama?

As for the true and the correct chiefly ceremonies which they need to do when a chief comes to a village, like for the Tui Namosi to come to our village, when the Vunivalu comes into the house where all the villagers are waiting for him, all those people waiting in the house should greet the chief with their words of TAMA. These are the people waiting inside the house. Also for the matanivanua of the Vunivalu waiting for the Vunivalu inside the room with the rest of the people, he should also be the one who greets the chief when the chief comes into the house.

- And what would they say if the visit takes place at night, can you tell me how they are going to greet their chief, do they use the same Tama or a different one?

When he comes at night and this is for a special visit by the chief, then we are going to use the same words of greeting which they say when a chief makes the visit during the day time. And this is ''DUA'' with the response of ''O'' and dragged when the people say it.

- Can you tell me something more about the presentation of the QALOQALOVI ceremony. What do the people present for the ceremony and who is responsible for the performing of the Qaloqalovi?

As for the ceremony of qaloqalovi, also it calls for the presentation of a whale's tooth, they do not present the yaqona when it is the qaloqalovi.

- Do they have two whale's teeth or four?

Only one whale's tooth is needed for the qaloqalovi.

- When it comes to the presentation of the qaloqalovi and the i

vakasabu can we say that the speech used for both presentations are

The only difference is that for the vakasobu, they mention that this whale's tooth is for the vakasobu for the chief coming. This is the only difference we find in the speech made for each ceremony, as for the qaloqalovi, also they say 'this is the qalovi for the chiefly procession'. This is the only difference we hear when the speech is made for these two ceremonies.

- For the performing of the vakasobu, can you tell me how the speech is said and what are all the words of the speech, and also what is the main reason behind the performing of the ceremony?

As for the ceremony of vakasobu, we can say this is the traditional way in which the people welcome the chief and those who came with him to the village. As for this chief, he is the great of all chiefs and for the chief of this particular chief, he comes under the leadership of this great chief.

- You told me, you can also be someone chosen to perform the chiefly ceremony of i vakasobu. Can you tell me what are the words you will say when it comes to the speech for the vakasobu?

I might say: 'Irespectively ~~the~~ present the chiefly yaqona from Nabukebuke. It has been a great honour for our people today to welcome you on your visit to see your people. We are honoured so in front of us, we resepectively present a whale's tooth for the vakasobu, asking if you could step down and join your people in the village.'

Also you should remember for the vakasobu, this is something binded with the old customs and tradition of a particular place, like here in Nabukebuke. In the olden times, here in our village, we do not have such ceremonies like the vakasobu, we only have the ceremony of qaloqalovi top in the list of ceremonies performed for a chief.

- As for this ceremony of i vakasobu, can you tell me what is the main reason and also the meaning of this ceremony of i vakasobu which the

The only thing I can say, the performing of this ceremony by our ancestors which we now keep as part of our culture, it is only to show how much this chief's visit is liked and welcomed by the people, who are his people and subjects. They greatly respect the motivation which the chief has that brought him here to the village, since for our chief who is the Vunivalu, there are times when he pays us visit and often he comes to our ~~an~~ village unannounced.

- After they have performed the qaloqalovi, the next ceremony which follows is the ~~MATAKARAWA~~.....

Yes, then comes the ~~mat~~karawa.

- As for this ceremony called matakawara, can you tell me what do the people present, is it a whale's tooth or the yaqona which is presented to the chief, can you elaborate more on the matakawara ceremony?

In the ceremony of matakawara, no whale's tooth is presented here, we present the yaqona for the ceremony. Yaqona is used for the chiefly matakawara ceremony. As for this ceremony, it is performed for the chief and to the chief also. When there is a chief visiting or coming, this is one of the ceremonies which they perform for the chief.

- Can you tell me the meaning of this ceremony matakawara, since some of our young people do not know what sort of ceremony this is and what is the reason for having it done for the chief when they have already done other ceremonies?

The real meaning of the matakawara, as for the phrase or word which they used to replace this matakawara, many people of other places widely use the word NA I SEVUSEVU, the i sevusevu, I would say has replaced the word MATAKARAWA today. As for this ceremony, it is done to someone who might have visit ~~ix~~ us for the very first time.

- Can you tell me who out of all the small...

the chiefly god of Nabukebuke, 'I respectfully call upon the chiefly god of Nabukebuke.' 'The response which he gets from the villagers inside the house is 'Peace and plenty for the land and the people(vanua), may the church flourishes.' After the response from the people, then the matanivanua begin with the speech for the presentation of the matakara.

- After the presentation of the matakara, then comes the ceremony in which the chiefly yaqona ceremony is performed. I would like to ask you more about the presentation of the chiefly yaqona ceremony and some small details which we did not discuss when you gave that summary of the ceremonies. Can you tell me how the people who will perform the yaqona vakaturaga enter into the house, are they already there then they perform the ceremony, or after the ceremony of matakara, then these people enter into the room and into this place where the matakara is performed?

After the matanivanua performs the ceremony of matakara, then comes the people or men who performs the ceremony of chiefly yaqona ceremony. First comes the two people who carry the tanoa, and then those others who help in the ceremony and also look after the serving of the chiefly yaqona ceremony. Also, there is something part of the tanoa which they call the ULU. As for the ULU, this is the VAU or strings and fibers made out of mulberry plants. As for this ulu, they use it for the mixing of the yaqona and the yaqona tastes better when they use the ulu for the serving and the mixing of the yaqona. This is used by the person who prepares, mix and serve the yaqona. After they place the yaqona bowl in front of them, then the others who will look after the serving of the yaqona sit there in front of the bowl on the sides before the ceremony commences. Also for the serving and the mixing of the yaqona

The special people for this ceremony are the Sauturaga, not just anyone from the village. This is only if the yaqona is for the chief, like the Tui Namosi. And also for this chiefly yaqona, they include the name of the district, which is Nabukebuke, this is the reason why they have to be careful with the people who prepare the Vunivalu's yaqona to welcome him to the village. Also for our children, those who are our children, they are picked to look after the serving of the chiefly yaqona ceremony. This is only the yaqona ceremony which they perform for a chief like the Vunivalu of Namosi.

We have a few people who look after the serving of the yaqona and they sit there on the sides of the tanoa. We might have six people altogether for the serving and looking after the serving of the chiefly yaqona ceremony. We have one person to mix the yaqona and serve, and someone else to spill the water into the tanoa when it is said to pour more water for the yaqona. As for this person who spills the water and deals with the water during the ceremony, also it is his duty to shake off the yaqona dregs during the ceremony before they use the clean squeezer and strainer for the serving of the yaqona. The Ulu is return to the person mixing the yaqona and then the person mixing the yaqona calls out that the yaqona is already mixed to the matanivanua of the Vunivalu who sits near the Vunivalu. He calls out, ''SA CARA OTI SAKA NA YAQONA,'' meaning that the yaqona is now ready to be served. Then the matanivanua of the Vunivalu calls out, ''COBO'' which means that the people looking after the serving of the yaqona should clap their hands in respect to show that this is so.

Also for the person responsible for the water, he will keep on spilling the water into the bowl and the Vunivalu's matanivanua is

time when the yaqona is prepared, it is the matanivanua who will see to the strength of the yaqona, whether it is weak or strong, he decides. Also the person mixing the yaqona should squeeze the yaqona by holding it up so that the matanivanua gets to seeing the yaqona dripping down and know what else to do. If the matanivanua notice the yaqona to be still strong, then he calls out 'more water.'

With the yaqona still strong when the matanivanua sees this, still he will call out to the people to pour more water into the tanoa, he does not want the chief to drink strong yaqona. As for the person preparing the yaqona, when he holds the strainer up for the matanivanua to see the drink, he face his knuckles towards the matanivanua and then squeeze the strainer, and when the matanivanua knows that this is the right strength for the yaqona, then he calls out to the person mixing the yaqona 'squeeze it now (loba)'.

- In Ra, when the people look after the serving of the yaqona and also for the other people chosen to serve the chiefly yaqona ceremony, the xis people or those number of people whom they have chosen for the ceremony sit up straight facing the chief.

As for the chiefly yaqona ceremony in your area, how do the people serving and looking after the serving of the yaqona arrange themselves around the tanoa or yaqona bowl during the ceremony?

They sit facing one another from the sides of the tanoa. They have six people altogether, so three people sit on this side and three sits on the opposite side and we have the person mixing the yaqona sit in the middle. They sit facing the tanoa and in front of them stretches the string of the tanoa.

- Before the mixing of the yaqona begins, the string of the tanoa is straightened out in front of the tanoa.....

Yes, this string is similar to the string which they use for holding

bowl, this is called the SAU NI YAQONA.

- You told me that for the chiefly yaqona ceremony done for the Tui Namosi, the people chant a traditional song and this is for the mixing of the yaqona. Can you tell me when does the chanting comes in for the ceremony, does it begin when the first water for the mixing of the yaqona is poured into the tanoa or when the mixing is under way?

At the time when the matanivanua calls out 'enough water for the yaqona, squeeze now (loba) ~~XX~~', then the chanting or the singing of the traditional song for the mixing of the yaqona begins. It does not matter whether the mixing of the yaqona goes on for four times, five times or even ten times, the chanting will still carry on from the people.

- As for the yaqona, who pours the water into the tanoa and can you tell me where this man stands or sits waiting for his turn to do his task of pouring the yaqona into the tanoa, is he in the room where the mixing of the yaqona is done or stands there outside waiting until it is announced 'more water' then he comes in?

He sits there near to the door and carries the bamboo in which the water is held. We use the bamboo nodes for holding the water for the yaqona ceremony. As for this bamboo, we have two nodes cut up, we need to have two nodes or more so that there is enough water until the yaqona is over, they should not wait for someone else to get more water during the time when they are mixing the yaqona, so enough water is held there in a bamboo of two nodes. The mouth of the bamboo is closed with reed leaves, if not they use some other leaves like corn leaves. The reason why they close the mouth of the bamboo with these leaves is to allow the water to flow down slowly into the tanoa when poured into the

- After this person pours the water into the tanoa, then he returns to where he sits to wait for the next time when the matanivanua calls out 'more water'.....

Yes, he return to where he sits and wait for the next move when the matanivanua calls out for 'more water' for the yaqona. When the matanivanua calls out again 'more water', again the person responsible for this takes the bamboo and pour more water into the tanoa. Only more water is poured into the tanoa when the matanivanua sees that the yaqona is too strong for the chief to drink, but when he notice that the strength of the yaqona is enough for the chief to drink, then he calls out, ''squeeze it(loba)'', then the person with the bamboo takes the bamboo and let it rests against the wall of the house or someone holds it for him. This time, he waits for the squeezer because he is the one who will take the squeezer and shake off the yaqona dregs outside.

- When this person responsible for the bamboo holding the water takes the strainer to shake off the yaqona dregs, can you tell me how many times does he need to shake off the yaqona dregs from the strainer? It depends on the performaces of the person mixing and preparing the yaqona, and also if he manage to clean out all the yaqona dregs one time, then only once does he need to do the shaking of the strainer. They can do this three to five times, and when the person who is mixing the yaqona notice there is no more yaqona dregs in the tanoa, then there is no more need for this person to stand up to shake off the yaqona dregs. All they need to do is to remove all the yaqona dregs before the yaqona is served to the chief. It is the person mixing the yaqona who informs the chief, matanivanua and the people there is no more yaqona dregs in the tanoa by saying, ''SA DARAMA NA YAQONA!'' meaning no more yaqona dregs in the tanoa.

mind that this yaqona is not poured into the chief's cup using a cup we use the ULU or this squeezer or strainer to squeeze the yaqona into the cup of yaqona taken up to the chief. So they should have all the yaqona dregs removed from the tanoa before the yaqona is served. No yaqona dregs in the tanoa and also none sticking onto the ULU or strainer. It is this strainer which is used for squeezing the yaqona into the cup served to the chief and other people.

- Can you tell me how does the person mixing the yaqona pass on the strainer to this person who shakes off the yaqona dregs before they use it to squeeze the yaqona into the cup served to the chief?
- As for this person mixing the yaqona, when he gives or hands over the strainer to this person who shakes off the yaqona dregs outside, he pass it over his shoulder like someone who carries an object or something over their shoulders, he pass it over his shoulders and then this person takes it from there and then goes outside to perform his task. After the person mixing squeeze the yaqona down, then he pass the ulu over his shoulders, the person who receives the strainer stands up and moves up to receive the ulu, and then goes out to shake the yaqona dregs out. Also, when he return to give the strainer to the person mixing the yaqona, he also pass the ulu to this person the same way, over the person's shoulders. And then he takes it down and then start with the mixing of the yaqona again.

- As for this Ulu it is passed from the right side and also accepted on the right side of the person mixing the yaqona?
- Yes, he hands it over his shoulders from the right side and also when he receives it back, it again comes from the right side like before. They do not give this strainer from their left side or even receive it from their left side.

- In Cakaudrove I heard that the passing of the strainer was the

shoulders during the time when he is mixing the yaqona and also when the person who shakes off the yaqona dregs return from shaking them off?

This is the custom, to have the s_trainer passed over the shoulder of the person mixing the yaqona and also for the person who shakes off the yaqona, he pass it back in the same manner. It does not mean that they do this because the food for the chiefly magiti because of the serving of the yaqona is yet to be presented like what they do in Cakaudrove. The people knows that for all the ceremonies which they perform for a chief or for someone else, they know they have to include all the small details and the small ceremonies or gestures when performing an official reception for a chief like this one which they do for the Tui Namosi.

- You mentioned something of the Ulu or the Vau, like for our people today they use cloths for squeezing and preparing the yaqona, can you tell me how the Ulu is prepared or this Vau s_tstrings which they use for the mixing of the yaqona?

Very well, for the Ulu which they make out of the Vau s_tstrings. First they have to do certain things to the mulberry plant(vau) before they come to the final stage when you can use the Vau for the squeezing of the yaqona or anything else which you would like to get it's water from, like squeezing coconuts. All over Fiji, we have these mulberry plants growing wild in our land. We cut down these Vau trees, and then we peel the skin before the stems of the vau which we have cut into sizes are submerged in water, a stick is stuck there in the water so that we are able to tell that this is the place where the vau are dipped into the water. This plant is very slimy and this is the only way you can get rid of it's sliminess. Asfor the

We do not want the vau stems to have this sliminess in it when we dry it, because when we wet it again, the sliminess can still be felt on these stems and strings we make out it.. After we manage to get rid of it's sliminess then we are able to make use of it in the squeezing and the preparing of any yaqona ceremony, whether it is for a chief for our ourselves too. Also, if you taste the yaqona mixed in the vau strings and the yaqona mixed in the cloth, you will notice that there is a difference in taste, the one in which we use the Vau this tastes better than the cloth used for mixing the yaqona. A lot of people have proved this and they say there is no better yaqona like the one which is mixed using the traditional strainer called the Ulu or the Vau.

- In the olden times, they have their own ways in which the yaqona is prepared and this is the yaqona used for the chiefly ceremony. Can you tell me how do they prepare these dry or green yaqona, as for today, the yaqona is pounded before it is used for preparing for the chief.....

In the olden times, they grate the yaqona or rub it onto something sharp, then the yaqona is placed inside the tanoa. After the yaqona is placed inside the tanoa, the Ulu comes on top of the yaqona and the mixing of the yaqona commence. The water is poured into the tanoa, then the yaqona is mixed with this strainer or Ulu.

- During the time when the yaqona is mixed or prepared, where does this cup bearer sits?

In our district, he is among these people who looks after the serving of the yaqona. One of them sitting there beside the tanoa stands up to serve the yaqona to the chief. In some other parts of Fiji, I notice that the cup bearer does not sit here with the people looking after the serving of the yaqona. they sit on the side when the time

to take up his position in front of the tanoa. Here in Nabukebuke one of these six people looking after the serving of the yaqona is the cup bearer.

- I heard in many parts of Fiji, the cup bearer is always someone from the chiefly family, it can be the chief's son himself or someone who belongs to the chiefly sub-clan in the village. Here in Nabukebuke is there a special mataqali where they choose this person to be the cup bearer, or they choose a chief's son or one of the small chief's son to be the cup bearer?

It is the same here also. We are the people who are chosen to be cup bearers when there is any chiefly yaqona ceremony held here in the village. Unless we give the other people permission to become cup bearers, it can be the son of a head of the particular sub-clan(mataqali) but rightly, it is within our family and extended family that the cup bearers are chosen from.

- Can you tell me how do the people looking after the serving of the yaqona dress themselves, have they got this special dress which they have to wear?

Yes, the people looking after the serving of the yaqona dress up in traditional costumes, not these modern clothes which we are wearing today. These traditional costumes leaves them half naked. The leaves of the VASILI plant is plaited and made into skirts and they wear this like our modern skirts. Also for the person who mix the yaqona, he wears arm ornaments, the same with the others, and their body is shiny with oil before they take up their position beside the tanoa in this place where the preparation of the yaqona takes place.

- Do they wear any salusalu(garland of flowers)?

Yes, they wear those salusalu similar to the ones which our ancestors make in the olden times. Not a dress or clothes worn by anyone

which we buy today from shops and stores. We wear grass skirts and other traditional costumes which our ancestors wore during their time when they took part in such ceremonies.

- The matanivanua calls out there is enough water for the yaqona served for the chief. Can you tell me what happens now that the water of the yaqona is right and also the people have already clapped their hands in respect to show that the yaqona is now ready?

After the matanivanua says enough water and now 'cobo', then one of the people looking after the serving of the tanoa stands up to fold the Ulu which they had extended in front of them before the mixing of the yaqona started. After they have folded the Ulu, then the person mixing the yaqona calls out to the matanivanua and also to the people inside the house, that ''sa darama saka na yaqona.'' the yaqona is ready to be served. To show the respect we have for the Ulu in front of the tanoa, the person mixing the yaqona holds out his arms and hands in front of him, having them straight, then draws it towards him straight, moves it from his right side to the left following the round circle of the tanoa surface, then he calls out, 'sa darama saka na yaqona'. Then he clapped his hands in respect with the Ulu or the Vau he used for mixing the yaqona.

- When he makes this movement around the tanoa, he does it only once or twice.....

Only once, then he clapped his hands with the Ulu. Also for the Ulu this is what he use for squeezing the yaqona into the cup served to the chief. They do not use any other cup for the serving of the yaqona, it is the Ulu which they use. So after they have clapped with respect to show the yaqona is ready to be served, the person preparing the yaqona does not give it to the person who shakes off the strainer or the Ulu to remove the yaqona dregs. The person mixing it

ready in front of him.

- What about if the person mixing notice there are some yaqona dregs in the cup or sticking on to the Ulu?

This is something that the person mixing the yaqona has to take care of, there should be no yaqona dregs left there in the tanoan during the time when he is mixing the yaqona, all the dregs are removed, from the tanoa and also none sticking there on the Ulu. The person mixing should see there is none left on both, tanoa and Ulu.

The ~~resp~~ person given the Ulu also make sure that he shakes the dregs off completely and none stuck there when he return it to the person mixing the yaqona.

- After that, comes the chanting for the serving of the yaqona and the drinking of the yaqona by the chief?

Yes, then comes the chanting. As for the chanting, they keep on singing this traditional song. When it comes to the time when they have to clap their hands to show the yaqona is ready to be served, then they stop for a little while, then the cup bearer stands up and this again calls for the chanting from the people. As for this traditional song which they sing now, this is for the person who takes the yaqona up to the chief and serve him with the yaqona.

- Can you tell me when do the people start the chanting for the mixing of the yaqona, is it when the people enter to place the tanoan in front of the people ready to mix and serve it, or when everyone has seated and the water has been poured into the tanoa?

The people come into the room, they leave the tanoa there in the room and then they place the yaqona into the bowl, followed by the Ulu, then the water poured into the tanoa for the mixing of the yaqona. After the matanivanua calls out, 'LOBA' then this is the time when the chanting for the mixing of the yaqona.

The chanting can be long, they might chant the same song six times or seven times or five times, only they stop when the yaqona is ready and clean also of any yaqona dreg left in the tanoa. For this yaqona, they should have enough yaqona for the people drinking, when all the people have drank the yaqona, also there should not be any more yaqona left there in the tanoa.

- How many cups of yaqona can they get out of the yaqona prepared for the chiefly yaqona ceremony?

It depends on the cups of yaqona used for the ceremony. If there is a lot of yaqona there in the tanoa, then they have six to five cups of yaqona prepared for those who will drink the yaqona, if not four to five. The first cup served and then someone drink second to this first cup, again the second cup is served, and then someone drinks second to the second cup of yaqona, and then the third yaqona cup is served, and someone drinks second to this third cup of yaqona, then the fourth cup of yaqona is served and the person mixing the yaqona notices there is no more yaqona left in the tanoa, then he let the matanivanua knows that the yaqona is finished, 'sa maca saka na yaqona vakaturaga' the chiefly yaqona ceremony is now finished'.

- You told me that someone who sits there looking after the serving of the yaqona is the cup bearer, can you describe the time he comes in to take the cup before the yaqona is placed into the cup and the manner in which the cup is taken up to who has been served?

Can you also describe the position he takes when he stands or crouch there in front of the tanoa, can you tell me more about the way in which the cup bearer presents himself at the front part of the tanoa and also when it is time for him to take the cup to the chief and all those who are to be served, whether it is done in the same manner or different from the way the cup of

The cup bearer stands up, fold the Sau ni yaqona, and place it under the tanona in front. There is a special way in which the Sau is folded and then placed there in front of the tanoa. Then the cup bearer takes the cup of yaqona and hold it in front of him towards the person mixing the yaqona. At this time, he sits on his toes and with his kness bend and straight in front of him. The person mixing the yaqona squeeze the yaqona into the cup and then leaves the Ulu into the tanoa again. The cup bearer takes the cup of yaqona and then slowly goes up, then he turns around very slowly starting from the right side towards the left side. When he is facing the front, he takes one step, two steps and still with the cup of yaqona stretched out in front of him. And if he knows the words of the traditional song which the people chant, then he follow it and every word of the song describes the movement taken by the cup bearer, when he had done all these, then someone calls out for the cup yaqona to be taken up to the person served first. Then he stands up really straight and then bring the cup towards him, and also the song ends here. The cup bearer then moves forward to take the cup to the person served first. The cup bearer waits for one of our people to call out that the yaqona can now be taken up, after he calls out the word used for this occasion, then the cup bearer takes the cup to the chief. This is the way in which the cup bearer presents himself and also the way in which the yaqona prepared for a chief is served, prepared and also taken care of, in the olden traditional customs.

There is no other sound heard, no wooden gong beaten, or the sound of people heard when the Vunivalu drinks the cup of yaqona served to him. There is no sound heard during the time when they respect the moment the Vunivalu accepts his cup of yaqona to drink. Also

He keeps clapping his hands until another person who also belong to my sub-clan calls out, ''BIU'' which means 'leave', then he ~~xxx~~ stops.

- Only one person will clap his hands during the time when the Vunivalu is drinking his yaqona, or there is a group of people who will clap their hands in respect during the moment the chief begins drinking?

.. No, only one person from my sub-clan is responsible for the clapping response they do when the chief is drinking and then he stops when this other person calls out, 'biu'. If there is no one alive here in our sub-clan, then someone else from another sub-clan or someone they agree on will carry out this respect for the chief.

- I heard that for the chief, he is the only person who has his cup of yaqona clapped at when he takes to drink it.....

Yes, this also applies for us. When the Tui Namosi and also Vunivalu is here in our village, no other chief whether big or small here in Namosi gets this response after they have taken their cup of yaqona, only for the great chief the Vunivalu. Only when the chief drinks, then the people respond with the clapping of the hands, no one else in the village get this respond during any drinking party. Also for those who have their yaqona clapped for, they often get this question rising from the people asking, 'who is that getting the clapping response after the serving of the yaqona.' The people does not want this sort of words offended them, so they do what they know is right when the yaqona is served for the chief and also for the rest of the people with the chief.

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