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TOPIC: LEGEND

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Age: 67yrs.

LEGEND OF KAI

This is a legend which tells you as to where the people of Nakini first came from or their place of origin before they came to settle here on this village and we, it's descendants are there today. The first people of NAKINI came from WAIBULA. In that village back there we have our YAVUTU or the foundation of the place where my ancestors once lived before they left. The name of my YAVUTU is WAIBUTA which means boiled water. A day came when my ancestor came up to his people and he told them he had something to announce. The village was quite populated with people, and this is a story which my elders related to me during their time. This man called TORANASAU decided to say farewell to his brothers and sisters, informing them that they are going to leave the village, himself and the rest of the people who are under his command. As for his children, they remain at WAIBULA. For you people to know something more about this village, we have, NAVUNISOLE, NAILEGA, MATAFULA and MATA-CAUCAU. At the chiefly home, the leader of the people who is going to leave this place went up to say their farewells to the chiefs and so my ancestors and the rest of the people who wanted to come with him, left the village. They came through jungles and forests and all during their trip they do not have any knives with them. They came, the whole of the YAVUSA or some people who once lived back there, when they came, they brought with them food to eat on the way during their trip. The food which they prepared and brought along with them are QAMUNI, SOSO

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and some other dishes which they prepared but I can't name them now because I've forgotten the names of it. They came through the forests and bushes and the food which they brought helped them to survive. They only have one meal a day and to make them forget their hunger, they spend time digging up wild plants and also they feed on fruits on the way. On and on they came until they reached a mouth of a river and this place which they first came across is called the main REWA RIVER itself. But they only referred to it as the WAILEVU. The reason why they called it the WAILEVU which means the VAST PLACE OF WATER because this was the largest river they have ever come across, so they said that they are going to call it WAILEVU but today it is no longer that, but it is the Rewa River. As we know that this is also the largest and the longest river in Fiji. They came on and on until they came to the edge of the river and they looked across of the river to the place called VUNISEI. They spotted a large hill from where they were standing and they noticed that no one seems to be living there on this lovely and beautiful hill but unfortunately it was on this other side of the river, not on their side. So TORANASAU told his people that he has decided to take all of them across the river and they are going to occupy this hill which they could see from across the river. During that time, no one, not a living soul has ever set foot on this hill and this village which was later called DELAI NATOAIKA. Then Toranasau went across some mountain ranges and he was taken to the edge of the other side of the Wailevu River. And the name of this place is NAUCUNI which means it ends here. They noticed that the tide was high and so it was

decided by those people who were leading the others the whole lot of them are going to be taken across the river by boat. But there were many suggestions as to what is going to take them across the river, they decided on the boat, a canoe or a BILIBILI (bamboo raft). These are all the things and the knowledge on transportation which our ancestors brought with them when they came down. They came to another new place and the night was approaching fast, but they were still on the other side of the river, so they decided to call this village NAIMINIKALAVO and this name still exists today. This is what it means, in our dialect and the one that was used by our ancestors, if someone says, SA MI NA KALAVO, it means that night is coming up fast. The day is disappearing fast and soon it is going to be darkness. They stayed at NAIMINIKALAVO for the night, and early the next day, they left for another village which is called NADAWA today. This trip took them more into the interior and they were approaching the COLO area fast. Then they came to another place which is called NADEWA and it was at this place where some people decided to go off on their own. Many left to go and look for their own place to leave and then they decided to share the land which they had in front of them among themselves. So this was done. A group of these people who came, as for our ancestors, it is forbidden for the ordinary people to stay together with their chiefs at one place. And so the chiefly place was picked and this is at NABUTU, this is far in after you go past the two villages of WAILEVU and wailiku. The first place given to these people who belongs to the chiefly family and the reason why they called this place NABUTU because the chief said, AU NA BUTUKA

TU which means that I'm going to stand on it and every time I look at it, it reminds me that once I set foot on that spot. The secondvillage was called VUNICIBICIBI. One of the brothers decided to leave the chiefly household to come and stay there and all was caused by a family disagreement so he left hishouse and he came to stay there. There is another village occupied by some of these other people left went to settle there at LOMA-INASAU. And some others went to live at NAULUVATU and they are called the NAVUNIDRALA people today. And another group, there leader took them and he went to stay at this place called ~~M~~AINAWENI. And this is on the other side of the area where they fisrt decided to stay and this village was taken over by the leader of the BATI people. And this is the BATI LEKALEKA people. Then onwards but travelling wetswards, they came to another place which was given to the leader of the BETE (priest) people. And they are normally known as the BETENIKAI. And the name if their village is NALOLOKULA. And that village still exists today.

It is at this place where something which they brought with them fell and that is called the VATU NI KAI. This is a round stone and it is a habit to them to oil it every now and again. As for these people the BETE and the BATI, their full name or the name which they are known at during this trip is YATUBATINIWAI. They are the people who were the first people to live around ~~the~~ place starting from the Waidina River to the land at Navatu at Nacokaika. All along this plce, they came to live there first before anyone else came to make it their home. They stayed there night and day, and there is a guard who lives at NAMANA, a vilbage

up at the mouth of the Waidina River, and they refer to guardsmen as KOLI NI KORO (dogs of war). This place or this village of Namana it is near some mountain ranges which is around this area. As for the guardsmen who watch night and day, they are able to spot anyone trying to come down from the land here in Waidina and also of all the people who come from the area of the Wainibuka people. The place was fairly divided among the people and each group of people were satisfied with the share of land they were given. Then the chief went back to his land at NABUTU after seeing that all the people he brought with him are given a safe and a good place to stay.

The chief went to stay at his home, he has got his BETE to attend to his needs, the BATI people who are going to fight for him, and the rest of the people who are going to help him when there is going to be trouble that might endanger their lives. The BETE is the important people who advises him and he informs him of everything about the land and the people staying around there who is all under him. They are known as the BERENIKAI. This BETE or the head of the BETE people, he possess a ULA (club) and a TANOVA (yaqona bowl) and this tanoa is like a small canoe, it is big like that. They say that also he has got a WAQARI, and this WAQARI is a spoon, spoon-shell. This is used to hold water and the KAI or shell-fish taken from the river, the unio.

The Bete is a very important person to the chief. This spoon which the bete has got, he used to feed the chief with that. When it is time to eat, he is going to take out this spoon and used it to feed the chief. When the Bete saw that the chief has settled in nicely then he approached the chief and

he told him that the left over food which they brought with them to eat during the journey he is going to keep them in that big spon which he has got. It is the custom of the people of this tribe, when they do all these things, they are going to make s yaqona for it. So the Bete said that he is going to do all the things for the chief. Then the chief asked him to see if he could get some food for them and make that place the only place where you will find this food all the time, no other place is going to be a second to this place because of the abundance of this one particular food. So the Bete went back to his home and he began with his ritual ceremonies, trying to do all he can to the chief's command. He prayed to his god and it went on for two days, and early the next morning of the third day, when the chief went down to the edge of the river, he was really surprised and welcomed with the appearance of the KAI (bivalve shellfish) all over the place in the water. It was filled with these shells and he knew that this is his Bete's doing. As for the people in these village they are really smart in the way they do it in finding the KAI and bringing it in. When the four nights of this even happening, they noticed that the shells move further downwards into deep waters. And so the people decided to do something to stop this from happening. So he came up one day and for them to do something wrong they have their own methods if seeking pardon from those whom they have done wrong to. Also for these people they have a special plant which they take good care of and it is known that this plant belongs to this people. This is known to them as the GASAU (reed) but it is the DURUKA plant. This is the VUCU DAMU or the red species of this

plant. The VUCU DAMU is said to be in the reed group and also of the DURUKA group. It does not belong to any of the two plants but in the middle of it. And so the people decided to do something about it, they are the Bete people, so they went to get some vucu damu and they used it to go down the river to follow the kai which is going further out into the river. The ~~BALEI~~ BALEI took them from there and on and on they went, when they reached deep waters, the flowers for these plant all fell off. This is because the BALEI which was leading them was going further on all by itself and sort of leaving this people behind. But still there is another god who is known to live around there and it was said that he took over from there and he send all the rest of the things to other places which he thought best and he did it. This is for you to know. The most important figure now is this person or spirit living underwater and he is the one mastering all the things happening around the place. But the only living being knows what's happening is the Bete who is sitting there inside the house in front of his fire, he informed the chief of what was happening. But for his fire it is going on all the time, not a time during his service time to the chief, would it go off, or no longer lighting. He told the chief of what has happened to the KAI and when it reached the fourth night, then the Bete ~~told~~ told them to go out into the river to get the KAI. Then the people went out to get this one big KAI and then it was dried properly and it was kept in a MASI KUVUI. They oil it every day and special attention is given to this one big KAI. They keep doing this and then the chief told the people to take the KAI and give it to the ~~Bete~~ Bete for him

to see. When the Bete saw the KAI, he said that the whole village should do the I SEVU to the land. They must offer some offerings because of this thing given to them.

So, the villages did their part and that is take the Kai which they got from the river to present it or to sort of offer it to the gods and spirits of the land that they believe in. And this part of the offerings which they manage to get and make, it is taken to the NAQARANIVALU. Then they did the QALU and this food the Qalu is called by the people in our village as VOVITUKAU. This is red in colour and the round balls of food is often large in size and only the Bati people are the ones who should not eat this food when they are around. They prepared all the food which they think best to take as their offerings, and they took it to the BATI people, and then the BATI people, their offering was a large pig, roasted and also the MAGITI for it, like the dalo and yams and some other ~~stuff~~ food to take. This MAGITI was all cooked inside a lovo and this other things called the DREKE. When they had prepared everything, then they took it and they went up to the chief and their chief holds this title of QARANIVALU. They went up to him and they said that this is the I SEVU for the KAI which the villagg has seen. Then the QARANIVALU said that he has given his permission for them to do anything they want but as for this chief, the Qaranivalu, his share from this whole lot of kai that was given to him and his people, his got two shares concerning the area that he could get his kai if he wants to eat some. The rest of the area, it is for the villages and for the people who look after the chief himslef. The first share for the Qaranivalu it is found near some large bouders and rocks.

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There is another village which belongs to the people who came with my ancestors and the name of this village is NAVITI. Here in Naviti, there is this large rock and it looks like a large Fijian kitchen house. And on this rock, there are caves and holes which form ponds. As for the people to get the Kai for the chief, the ladies of the village goes into this caves and they will be able to get hold of the Kai. The name of this particular rock house is called VALE LEVU and it is forbidden to the rest of the people to try and get Kai from this place. The person who tries to steal from this caves, they are bound to be bitten by a shark and this shark that does the biting is the owner of the Kai and the cave, he is the god orspirit which guards the place. No one is allowed then to touch or steal from this particular place if they want to eat Kai, each people has to go to their particular area to get their own. This Kai which is kept at this place is especially for the chief and no one else is allowed to take it. When the women and the men goes to this cave to get some Kai all the shells which they get are taken to the chief's house.

The second place where the Kai for the chief is found is right near the place where the Qaranivalu chief resides. The part of the water which runs near his home, this is the second place where the chief's Kai can be looked for. No one else is allowed to touch or take any Kai from this spot unless the chief himself says so. The chief has I've been teeling you, he's got a place of his own and no one else who is a villager stays with him, it is only him andhis chiefly household. The chief's compound is known to all the people here in Naitasiri and it is

separated from the rest of the village by boundary marks. The swimming place for the chief or the place where he often goes to take a swim, this is the place where the Kai for him is also found and it is a totally different one from which the people in the village gets for themselves. It is referred to as KAI DAMU. It is known of it's softness to eat and also it is always good to eat at any time. For sometimes they say that the Kai is not in season, that means that it is sort of empty and not good to eat, as for this Kai which is at the chief's compound it is always good to eat at any time. This is the only Kai for the Qaranivalu chief, no one else is allowed to share it with him.

There is another thing that I would like to say and it refers back to what I've already said about the rock where the Kai for the chief is found. Once it happened that one of our people commit something which is not agreeable to our custom and tradition. The church movement was coming on strong and our chiefs were forced to move from their chiefly place, this happened at one time, and they moved over to stay at Nakini. The Europeans who were bringing this church movement steeped in to stay at this place. The chief at the time gave about 50 acres to them to occupy and this must have been Ratu Visawaqa's time. This happened when the Qaranivalu chief became a Christian. When he became a christian, he wanted to fight the other villages so that they become christians too. This young chief came to the Toranisau and he asked him if he could give him 50 acres of land so that he could use it for it's purpose and that is for the church. The permission was given to him to own that 50

acres of land, he made good use of it.

Many people were preparing for wars at the time, and when these Europeans came, they helped the Fijians alot because of their possession of guns. Most of our land were sold to them in exchange for their guns. Five guns were given to our people in exchange for a piece of land and it was these five guns which was taken to help the people in Nabutu win the war. In the olden days, after a while they realised that it was too much so they paid the guns at eith hundred pounds of money and this was sold by the chiefs in Bau, they were sort of the main shop for people to go and buy their guns. Then on and on they did this and it was told for all our people or our ancestors who came to live at that place for them to vacata the whole place. The order was given to the people staying in Namana, Nabutu, Navunaweni, Kaluviti and right on to the place where Nakalinidovu's warriors lives and that is in Mataveibeka and right on to the other side of the island. On and on they were told to leave the place, it could be that these areas were sold in exchange for guns during the time of the war. There is another YAVUSA called the yavusa ni LECA and later on they became the MATAQALI NAKINI but also there were some other people with them who belong to another tribe. And there is the yavusa the NAIVISERE and they came from the MATAQALI which belongs to Toranisau. As for that place, all the people decided to leave the place and they came to stay here in Nakini. And again, there is this problem of over-crowded because most of the people were told to leave so there is no other place for them to live, but here in Nakini. And that is why we are here today, because we were told to leave

we came to this place and my ancestors were told to bring them here. Since this is what my ancestors were doing to them from that time, I wish to continue the good work and also play my part in my fighting for my land here in Naitasiri. I want to do all my best for the people of Naitasiri but also we have many people who belong to our tribe and from our land who were forced to go and live some place else because of the war that happened back in the old times. And there is one group of people who came from us and they are in Baulevu and our YAVUTU is there in NAMATUKU.

- During our conversation dealing with this topic, you mentioned that a lady was bringing some food for them on the way. These must be cooked foods which they could have while they were coming? Could you tell me something about this lady who was bringing the food for all the people who were coming on this journey what is her role during the trip and who is ~~his~~ she? The lady who accompanied us during this journey is our VU or originator. We always call her LIGANISUSU, like she is our maid and she was the one who brought us when we were young. That is why we call her that because she played an important role in the lives of our ancestors and also to us. These two ladies, they say that there are two of them, these two ladies must be everywhere in any part of the Fiji group but the only known name that we have for them is LIGANISUSU. In Bau, there is another god or spirit whom we refer to him as our Uncle at that is the husbands of these two ladies. In different parts of Fiji, they have a special name for them only and they only know of it, no one else. \*

- You were telling me something about the stone where the Kai for the chief is found. Could you tell me as to when is the time when they usually go down to the river or to this caves to get the Kai?

Thank you. I forgot to mention anything~~s~~ as to that question. To tell you something about this rock, it is closed and it has got an entrance to it if you want to go inside, it is round in shape. The Bete is responsible for all the things that they might ~~not~~ want to do and they have to refer to him all the time when it is time for them to go and get some Kai that is if the chief wants some from there. They do not enter there any time they feel like it, this is forbidden. This is one chief for the ceremony they are going to have when it is time for them to go and get some Kai for the chief~~s~~. This person is going to sit beside the fire all the time like he is trying to get warm and all the time, they are going to try and make him comfortable on top of that they are going to oil him everyday. ~~The~~ bowl of yaqona which is going to be on his side all the time, it is going to be filled all the time, not one moment when you look into the tanoa to see it empty, they are going to ~~see~~ that this does not happen. Also the Bete will have his Ula or war club near him all the time and no one is allowed to remove it from his side unless he ~~says~~ so.

But let me go back to the story which happened a long time ago. There is also one particular man whom they ~~always~~ refer to to help them with their problems. But it happened one time, the people of Naitasiri had a church gathering here in the village. This is what happens, this man, came and he got hold of some of

these stones for his LOVO, because when you make a lovo you are going to need some rocks which is going to cook your food when you bury it. They light the fire and the food to be cooked in the lovo was put into it when they knew that the stones were hot enough for the lovo. The lovo was buried and when it was time for them to eat, they uncovered it and they noticed that none of the ~~■~~ food which they cooked was ready to be eaten. This is because they used the rocks from that place where the Kai is kept for the chief himself and they did not ask to use it when they went to collect it from there.

- When it is time for them to go and swim for this Kai for the chief or for any village function, is the ceremonial preparation for this thing decided upon by the chief at the chiefly house or..... Yes, the chief is going to decide everything that is going to be held. If he wants some people to go out and look for some Kai he is going to give out the orders, no one can just go in and help themselves to this thing. In the olden days, they believe that these Kai which they found on this place~~■~~ were there before they came, and as for the Kai which was later laid at these special places, it is an inheritance which they brought with them when they came, so they have to observe all these ritual ceremonies before they do anything~~■~~ else. They have a Bete who is going to take over after the chief has let them know that he wants some people to go down to that place to get some Kai for him. This is one thing which they have been doing from a very long time until this very day, and it is nothing that they just have to do it, if they do not follow what is expected of them, they are bound to be punished for that, one way or the other.

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- Is there anything else you would like to say about this topic? No, I think that is all to it, but just one other thing, when the chief wants to eat Kai he can just go down to the place which is near his chiefly home, or ask his Bete if he's people can go down to these caves to get some Kai for him and it is going to involve a lot of preparation before they actually get the Kai out of the water. Thank you.  
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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