

TOPIC: ORAL HISTORY OF FIJIInvestigator: Eseta

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LAU M.

THE COMING OF ANCESTORS TO ONO-I-LAU

Thank you I will tell you the stories which I heard from my grandfather when we used to stay together. The stories about how the ancestors came about to live in Ono-i-lau. This is a story about how the ancestors were searching all over the place until they came to this island of Ono. The first people to reach the island of Ono are the people of DAKU. Today there is still some people in the island of Ono who are called the KAI DAKU or people of Daku.

The second people to reach the island of Ono is the people of Matokana. Another group of people who came to island is from Vanua Levu from the yavusa or big clan which is called LOA. These Loa people came and dwell in the place called DELAILOA. That is how the different people came and dwell in the island of ONO-I-LAU.

As for our ancestors who is called DAULAKO LUSI, he came with another ancestor who is called LOALOANICEVA. They are brothers and they were on their way looking for a place to stay. The two brothers came until they depart from each other when Daulako Lusi came over to one side of Ono island. The two brothers shared the place. Our place or village which was shared starts from MOTONIVESI to DELAILOA and down to LOALOANICEVA. The people built the village where they stayed which is near the beach of MATOKANA.

The ancestors started living on the island until the population started to grow. Then since we are really close to one another, we

tend to come together and formed one community ~~is~~ called the chiefly village of NUKUNI. The word NUKUNI means that all the various small village comes together to form a big village. The word NUKUNI comes from the word KUMUNI which means to gather.

At first the yavusa or big clan of DAKU came together and form a community which is called NAUTUUTU. After sometime this community raise in number and later from a larger community. This was during the time when christian was not at our share.

When the population of the island continue to increase, one chief came up from the village of Matokana. The name of this chief is called SAUNIKALOU. This man start to challenge every people of the village. In the village of Nautuutu, people were seen to be dying in large numbers and sometimes these people were eaten. This is the work of this strong fierce man.

At a time when this man is known to be a very great man and warrior of that place. He was staying in the village of Matokana.

Because of his fame, the people gave him the title of TUI ONO. or the King of Ono. That is why the village of Matokana is known to be the leading village in the island of Ono. It is the life of the ancestors in the olden days that who so ever is the very strong warrior, he would be the chief. If the very strong warrior has conquered many places, he would be made chief. As for Saunikalou, he was very strong and he was called the Tui Ono or the King of Ono. Because of fame, the people of Ono would obey what he says. Only great warriors would get such high title and hence people would

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obey what he says. Only great warriors would get such high titles and hence people would also listen to him.

In the very old days, there was no such installation of chiefs. Only the great warriors would be chief and he would rule all over the place.

In the olden days, the ancestors used to sail all over the place.

At one time, the ancestor of this place sailed to LAKENA and started a yavusa or big clan which is called NAREWADAMU. This clan people

is still existed until this very day. These people are very close related to us. These people are living in Tubou Village in Lakeba.

Since this ancestor is a very good sailor, he set sail to Lakeba and after a while he went to Bau. The ancestor who went to Bau is

called Saunikalou. He went and stayed there. The yavusa of the Vunivalu took a tabua and Vunivalu took a tabua and presented to Saunikalou because they need a help.

The leading yavusa or clan is the VUANIREWA and from here came a chief by the name of NIUMATAIWALU. He is the leader of the clan the Vuani-rewa from the island of Lakeba. It was said that this chief was a big strong handsome man.

One day he went to Bau, since he was a chief, he was related to the chiefs of Bau. On his stay in the island of Bau he had an affair with a woman from the chiefly family of Bau. As a result the woman became pregnant, but his chief came back to Lakeba leaving the woman behind in Bau.

The yavusa or the big clan of Vunivalu was really angered by what the chief from Lakeba did and they decided to kill the people because of what had been done to their lady.

The yavusa or clan of the Vunivalu took a tabua and presented it to Saunikalou and requested him if he could kill the chief who had

made their lady pregnant. The yavusa or clan of the Vunivalu knew that Saunikalou is a very strong warrior and also very closely related to the Vunivalu family. Since he was from the same blood with the Namara people in Bau. This is the only way by which the Vunivalu could manage to approach Saunikalou and presented him with a tabua. The tabua which was presented to the great warriors has a difficult motive and that is to kill the chief by the name of Niumatawalu. When Saunikalou heard about his mission, his mind was going back to Lakeba, especially to his relation in the village of Tubou. Saunikalou knew that the two places are related and he has heard many things about what might happen and he had a hard time thinking.

Saunikalou was on his way to Lakeba for his mission. He sailed and came to the island of Lakeba. Arriving there, he went straight to his village in Tubou and showed his people about the tabua which was presented to him and also mentioning the motives of the presentation. Saunikalou said that the tabua was from Bau. He presented the tabua to the yavusa or clan of people called the Narewadamu in Tubou and requested them if they could carry out the orders from Bau.

The people of Narewadamu could not receive the tabua because they are scared of carrying out the killing since the victim of that mission is the very high chief. After their refusal, Saunikalou asked them if the high chief had gone somewhere or still at home. One man from the clan of Narewadamu replied saying that the chief had gone out sailing. He told Saunikalou that the chief is sailing to Ono-i-Lau with some of his companions.

Saunikalou asked the people why the chief had gone out to Ono-i-Lau. They replied that the chief had gone there to bring his wife. Since in the olden days, during pre-Christian era, people were evil.

There is always fighting, and cannibalism is a common thing. In the olden days if a beautiful woman, young is living in some place, great and brave chiefs would just go and bring her to be his bride.

There is this beautiful woman by the name of Likubua who lived in the village of Matokana. She was very beautiful. This chief was brought to be husband and that is why the chiefly procession is heading towards Ono island.

The sailing party was using the traditional canoe which is called the DRUA and it was a big canoe. The big canoe or drua was accompanied by some small canoes carrying the clan (headman), MATAISAU (carpenters) and the matanivanua or spokesman. These people are going to serve the chief on his way to the wedding ceremony. They went on day and night these people were serving the chief.

Saunikalou packed up his things and set sail with his procession. They will follow the chief who had gone to look for his wife. Saunikalou arrived and stayed for a while in Moce. They stayed in a house which is closely related to the people of Matokana. This house is the house where Saunikalou was brought up and also the house's owner is the leader of the village of Moce. These people are called the RAMASI. Their original place was at Vugalei.

When Saunikalou and his procession reached the island of Move they went straight to this house or clan of people since they are very closely related to the people of Matokana.

The house in which Saunikalou stayed in is the leading clan of Moce island. They are known as the Ramasi. The people of the house were really glad of having Saunikalou. They stayed there for a while and have their lunch. After resting from their lunch, a man came and sat at the door of the house where Saunikalou and others were staying.

The man greeted Saunikalou and told him that he has being sent from Delainakatu, a high chief from a higher place of Moce, there is a very strong man. This man often kill a man or woman from a household and take him or her for his food. This man will take these people to be eaten at Delainakatu.

On that particular day, th household which Saunikalou was staying, was suppose to send someone yp to the man to be eaten for his lunch. When the man who came and sat at the door started to speak, Saunikalou asked him of his coming.

He replied saying that the island of Moce is sending someone from each household to be taken to Delainakatu and be killed and hence to be the lunch for thair big warrior or hero living in Delainakuto. This pracissix is done daily and at that time it would be the turn of that household to send someone up. Saunikalou replied saying that the village is getting empty because of this practise.

Saunikalou told the man who is the matanivanua or spokesman of the great warrios up there in Delainakuto that he should return back to Delainakuto and tell the great warrios that he would not have any more human being for his lunch.

Since Saunikalou is a great warrios too, he told the spokessman that he would no longer tolerate the continuing of such practise. Saunikalou also told the spokeman to tell the great warrior in Delainakat that he is coming to be the lunch, but they would fight first. Saunikalou told the spokesman t tell in Delainakato that another great warrior of Ono island is coming up to meet him . He told the spokesman that if he will lose the fight, the warrior of Delainakuto could hve him for lunch, but if he will win, at would be the vice-versa. Saunkkalou told the spokesman to go back and tell everything

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of what he said fo the warrior. He was really mad whenhe heard of this.

The spokesman returned to Delainakato and tell evetyhign to the warr-ior. He was really mad when he heard about it.

Just before lunch time, Saunikalou told the household where he was staying that he is going to Dəlainakotu to see their warrior which theyhave been mentioning.

Saunikalou went up to Delainakuto with his famous spear. He was been using this spear to fight all his enemies. This spear is made of nokonoko. In our place we called this spear as the CAU.

When Saunikalou came to the top of Delainakato, he saw this warrior waiting for him. He greeted the warrior and he told him tat his name is Saunakalom and he had come to be serve as his lunch.

The two warriors started to fight, and before that, Saunikalou told him something. When fighting Saunikalou told the warrior of Delainakuto that he is giving him the freedom to do all he can since he would only be defending himself. After securely defending hmself from the warrior of Delainakato, Saunikalou told his opponent that he is now attacking and would no longer be in defend.

After fighting for some while, the warrior of Delanakuto made a nistake and Saunikalou made sure of this oppprutnity. He took his spear, the Cau, and throw it fiēcely ar the side of his opponent. The spear burst through his opponents rib and fell back to the ground. The warriors of Delainakuto fell to the grounddead.

Saunikalou cut the opponents head and at the same time planted his nokonoko spear or Cau nokonoko into the place where the opponent lay, that is at the top place where we would be facing Delaimakotu.

Saunikalou late carried down the opponents head.

To this very day, if you will visit this place in Delainakotu you would only find the nokonoko trees growing there. This commemorated the nokonoko spear of Saunikalou which was planted on that place during the killing of the warrior of Delainakotu.

The elders used to say this that if you will go to the higher place of Moce inland you would only find this particular kind of tree - the nokonoko.

The household whom Saunikalou was staying to see or staying with was really surprised to see Saunikalou returning with the head of their great warrior. Saunikalou came to the place and cook the warriors head in the lovo. All the people of Moce were bringing their I SORO or gift of forgiveness to Saunikalou because of what he had done. The people made a traditional ceremony to him and also offered him the island of Moce. Because of this friendly offering, the people of Ono and Moce have very close ties. But as for the ties between the yavusa of Matokana and Moce, this resulted in the soro or forgiveness presentations made to Saunikalou/. The people of Moce promised to offer the island and her people to Saunikalou.

As for the offering, Saunikalou told the people of Moce that he did not want to receive the island or its people but he would if the two islands would be friendly and have a very strong ties. Saunikalou requested that if a child is to be born from the household in which he was living there or within that yavusa or clan, they should name the child as Tui Ono, ~~or~~ to commemorate the strong ties between the two islands.

After a while a child was born in that household and was named as Tui Ono. This name was alive this very day, in that chiefly yavusa. This name brings back the memory of what Saunikalou had done to the

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people of Moce.

To this ~~very~~ day, the people of Ono and Moce have a strong ties which is called THUVU. This friendship ties is commonly known to us. <sup>B</sup>ut my grandfather used to tell me that no such friendship existed in the early days. He told me that because of whar Saunikalou had done to the strong warrior of Moce, the people of Moce can not talk freely to people of Ono, especially to the people belonging to the yavusa or clan which is called the MATOKANA. In the olden days it is said that if the Matokana people are with the people of Moce, the people of Moce would remain silent always. They could not alk in the presence of the people of <sup>M</sup>atokana or Ono island. This is because of what Saunikalou had done. But today the two people aare talking and mix freely together because of the friendly ties between them. Before this is not so. Today there is a traditional way of frinedship betw~~en~~ the people of Ono and Moce. This was created by Saunikalou. After staying in Moce for awhile, Saunikalou returned to his island in Ono. On his return he came and he stopped for ahilw at Vatoa and asked for the chief he ~~was~~ looking for. He was told that the chief had gone to Ono island. Saunikalou reached Ono island to leanrt that the chief had preparing to come to the island to take Likubua

to Lakeba where they will get married. The people on the island were all preparing for the ceremonies and big sheds were built up for the ceremonies. All the people of Ono is preparing for the coming of the chief.

When Saunikalou arrived at the ceremony place, before they arrived, or the arrival of the chief, he found that the wife to be, Likubua was crying all the time. He later learnt that Likubua did not want to marry that chief. Likubua is not willing to go to Lakeba for her marriage. When Saunikalou arrived, Likubua came to him and cried mentioning that she does not want to go to Lakeba to be married.

On that particular day, all the villagers were cleaning the village. All the grasses were cleared off leaving the soil to be seen. This kind of cleaning is known to us as SUWAKI. When everyone is busily cleaning the village, Likubua busily keep on crying.

Saunikalou is related to Likubua and she is regarded to him as his sister. Saunikalou is also cleaning when suddenly a bird, ~~he~~ which is called the QETI flew at him. Saunikalou caught the bird and he knew the meaning of the bird's visit at once. Holding the bird, he went to Likubua and told her that she should not cry because her wish shall be done. He told her to go inside the house and be peaceful because what she wanted shall be done. He told her about the visit of the bird to him and the meaning of it. All the preparations for the day had been done and the people were looking forward for the next day.

During the early hours of the morning, it was called out in a loud voice that the boat is coming towards the island. Everyone rushed to the beach, climbing the trees to have a glimpse of the incoming boat.

The boat came to shore and the ceremony place to be ready for the visitors.

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Saunikalou had a small son and he told him to go and cut a banana leaf which is still enclosed. Saunikalou had a KOLO or a throwing club. This throwing club could kill people if thrown to them at a distance. When the son brought the enclosed banana leaf, Saunikalou took his throwing weapon and placed it nicely within the enclosed banana leaf. He then securely tied the banana leaf.

After doing that, Saunikalou told his son about the plan. He told his son to bring the banana leaf to him during the progress of the chiefly ceremony. He told his son to come to the ceremony place just before the drinking of the yaqona ceremony. He also said that if anyone is going to hinder him away from the ceremony place, he should not go but cry and insisted to go and sit beside him. Saunikalou told his son that he should enter into the ceremony place, he should come and sit beside him with the banana leaf.

Saunikalou was also participating in the ceremony for the visitors. He was chosen to the role of being cup bearer for the yaqona ceremony. All the people were sitting there watching the yaqona ceremony. After the mixing of the yaqona ceremony, it was announced that the yaqona should now be drunk. Before the taking up of the yaqona to the visitor, a small child is seen coming towards the ceremony place. The child came crying and crying. He came to the ceremony place and sat just beside Saunikalou. The boy was dragging behind him a long banana leaf. Everyone in the ceremony place gave no notice of what the child is dragging. They thought that it was merely a banana leaf. The people do not give much concern about the leaf since the banana leaf is very common in cooking, wrapping things up and placing the food on top of it.

The child came and sat beside Saunikalou before the call of the yaqona

drinking. Saunikalou stood up since he was the cup bearer in the ceremony. He came up with the cup of yaqona to be filled and to take it up to the visiting chief.

The yaqona drinking cup in the olden days is like a small basin. When you will drink from it, the cup would cover up all your face. This similar cup was used by Saunikalou when he was going to take the yaqona to the visiting chief.

Saunikalou took the big cup of yaqona and gave it to the visiting chief. After giving it he return back to where the banana leaf is, sat down and clap his hands. The visiting chief, Niumataiwalu, took the cup greeted all the surrounding chiefs before drinking the yaqona. When he started drinking the big cup it started to shade his face. When Saunikalou saw that the chief's face was completely shaded, he suddenly stood up, put the leaves away, hold his KOLO or throwing club and walked towards the innocent drinking chief.

Saunikalou left his club called out the respectable word TULOU and bang the club on Niumataiwalu's head. People in the ceremony place were really surprised to see of their sudden action. The chief's head had a deep cut. It is said that Saunikalou is a very big man and he got the strength similar to two men's strength.

Because of the shock of being hit on the head, Niumataiwalu stood up and ran towards the beach, swaying from one side to the other like a mad man. Saunikalou ran after him to the beach. They chase each other until they came to one end of the beach which is called CUGA. The ceremony ended abruptly and all the people were running aimlessly towards the beaches and the nearby bushes.

Niumataiwalu was running and running until he came across this place called Cuga where the chief seated himself because his injury is getting

injury is getting worse. Sitting there, one of the Lemaki from Lakeba came towards the hurted chief and comforted him. While the two were still sitting on the beach, Saunikalou came up to them carrying his kolo or throwing club.

The Lemaki boy begged for mercy on behalf of his chief. He told Saunikalou that if he would kill his chief he will have no children that was his words to Saunikalou before he died. Saunikalou did not say a word but lifted his club and killed Niumataiwalu, the chief. After he had killed the chief, he turned to the Lemaki and killed him also.

The place where the two died were just spilled with blood all over. From that day to this very day, the place where the chief blood spilled you could only trace with white coloured leaves. No other trees or plants beside the white coloured ones are seen growing on the place where the chief's blood is spilled. The chief was buried and today his grave could still be seen.

The story of Saunikalou is really a terror because he is a very strong warrior and he called himself as Tui Ono. Everybody living on that time respected him. They respect his strength and what else he used to do.

After killing the chief, Saunikalou came back to the village and the rest of the companion of the dead chief return to their village.

The people returned back to Lakeba without Likubua who was thought to bring Likubua who was thought to be on her way also with them when they will return.

Unfortunately everyting was not done according to their chief plan and also their chief was buried there dead.

The fame of Saunikalou does not stop there. He kept on killing people

and often he used to bring to the village to be eaten.

Came a time when Saunikalou made a village of his own and it was called VUCIVUCI. The village of Matokana was at the edge of the island while Vucivuci is at the other edge. The village of Saunikalou was totally separated. In the village of Saunikalou, the people are brought and killed over there. Sometimes the people are killed and eaten at Saunakalou's village. The place which Saunikalou made his villae is now called today as Ono Levu.

During Saunikalou's time our village are always in fighting. Cannibalism was commonly practised during this war time. Many places were living in poverty and destitute because of what Saunikalou had been doing.

During the war, some villages were planning to be in alliance or to be in a secure position. A village by the name of Ututu had a leader or chief. This chief and came from Jakeba and come and live at Cuga. In the olden days if there is war and later on a peaceful measure is sought, the village or place which lost the war would present her soru (forgiving ceremony) and some piece of soil of theirs to the stranger side. This is to mark the peaceful settlement between the two places making sure that no war should take place later on between the two places. The giving of the piece of land of the other side, signify the giving of the whole land to the stronger side. This also includes the giving of the authority and its people to the stranger side.

At one time the ancestors of Ono Levu cut their soil and presented them to the chief of Matokana. This shows that they are surrounding themselves to the people of Matokana. Saunikalou will received their presentation and he called himself as Tui Ono.

In presenting their I soro or forgiving presentation, everybody from Ono Levu is worried about who is acutally going to present the soil to Saunikalou. The people knew that who so ever is going to present their soro to Saunikalou would be killed and eaten up. They all knew how fierce Saunikalou was.

Everyone was bāaming each other about who is going to face Saunikalou until a man by the name of Ramoka stood up and voluteer to take their i soro to Saunikalou. Ramoka is the head or leader of themataqali or clan which is called Lovoni.

Maceya is the vu or godly spirit of Ranka and his clan.

Ramoka voluteered to take the soil to the other side as their i soro. He took the soil and came across the beach of Ono Levu crossing some small rivers. The road which he took was called KOLU.

Crossing over some small rivers and walking towards a higher place, Ramoko met Motowesi. Motowesi grew up with our elders in the olden days. He was from the village of Vakase which shifted down forming a new village which is called WAINI. The village of Waini is the place of Delailoa.

Ramoko met Motowesi on the way and they greet d each other. Motowesi asked Ramoko of where he was going. Ramoko tokd him that he was going to present the soro to Saunikalou. Motowesi stooped Ramoko and requested him if theycould return to the Tui Nautuutu. Motowesi told Ramako that there is no point in the presentation of the soro if there is not another attempt at war. Ramoko and Motowesi went to the Tui Nautuutu and told them about the proposed soro. Tui Nautuutu told them that there should be another war. If they are going to lese than it would be good in the presenting of the soro ~~thax~~ to Saunikalou. He told them that there is no gain in just surrendering themselves in.

Motowesi is theman from the same village of Saunikalou and he grew up as a man with him. But Motowesi is not in agreement with what Saunikalou have been doing to the surrounding place of Ono Levu. He was not happy with all the bad things Saunikalou have been doing. There was a meeting in which all the places decided to make an attack. There was a place in which the war always take place and this is called DILIO. This is at the beach of Lovoni in Ono-i-Lau. This was the place where everywar used to take place.

All the villagers were at the war field when Saunikalou came face to face with them. Saunikalou did not wish to attack them but he just talk to them in a loud voice. Everyone at the war field were scared to death. None could even raise a voice against Saunikalou.

The next morning the people were still at the war field and everyone knew that the war is ready to start. Saunikalou came towards the people and challenge them all. While he was still talking to the people a spear came flying and pierce through his back. Saunikalou got a shock and ran towards the mangrove swamp. He ran until he reached a place which is called Bau where he rested himself. Touching his wound he found that the spear has gone through his body reaching thru his chest.

Saunikalou was a big man and when he ran through the mangrove swamp he almost cut his way through the trees. Because of this tree breaking process, the place is called NADOGOMUSU meaning mangrove breaking. Saunikalou ran and ran until he came to a place called NABOU where he lay dead there. The place where he died, there was his grave in which a big Cau Tree was grown there.

Some people were chasing after Saunikalou until they came to see him dying. Before Saunikalou died he told the people who had been following

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him that whoever is going to turn him facing upwards he would be the next Tui Ono later on.

There was someone who turned to Saunikalou and he turned him upside down but later upside up and he was a man from Maroko. This man tried to turn Saunikalou by himself but unfortunately he could not. Some other came and helped to turn him this big warrior/. One from this yavusa or clan of NUKUNI is Somole.

As this story goes, the man from Nukuni went and stayed along with Tui Nautuutu in Lovoni. Because of that the chiefly part of Tui Ono is from Nukuni. This shows the promises of Saunikalou that who so ever is going to turn him up, will be the Tui Ono later on. The man who actually turn Saunikalou up was from the yavusa and later on that yavusa or clan was the leading people of Ono island.

That is how the big warriors had come to an end.

After the warriors death, a chief is picked from Ono Levu to stay with Tui Nautuutu with Ramoko and Motowesi with the proposal of making another war which resulted in the death of the great warrior. Saunikalou, he decided to give the place of Ono to be shared between the two. The two people shared the place and also the fishing ground.

But as far the chiefly position, the people of Nukuni got it. This was done according to what Saunikalou had requested just before he died. This is the story that I heard from my grandfather about 30-40 years ago.

That is all the story that I know about the coming of the ancestors to the island until the time as Christianity came.

When Christianity came, the people gathered together into the village of Lovoni while the other into the village of Nukuni.

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As time goes on the two villagers came together and untied forming a comon village which is called Ono Levu. Some people from Delailoa in Waini came and lived in the village of Doi. Some also came from Ono Levu Lovoni to live there too.

As Christianity grows the people of Doi shifted to the village of VKASE which was later named as Nukuvakase. From there, they came from Daku. We all stayed together forming a very large group in the same place which is still existed today.

As for Saunikalou, he dows not have children or descendants until this very day. This was the surse of the LEMAKI TO Saunikalou if he plans to continue killing Nium~~ai~~walu, on that beach. Because Saunikalou had descendants to this very day. That was the curse at the beach of Cuga. That is all I could tell you. Thank you.

THANK YOU.

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