Polities of Nawaka Tikina

General background

The present Fijian Administration tikina of Nawaka is part of the yasana or province of Ba. Nawaka lies in the middle of the west side of the island of Viti Levu, separated from the western coastline by the tikina of Nadi. To the north, Nawaka borders the tikina of Magodro in the mountainous interior of Ba. To the east lie the Nausori Highlands and the area known as Namatakau in the mountainous territory of Navosa, which forms part of the present province of Nadroga/Navosa. To the south, that part of Nawaka known as Rukuruku borders on the tikina of Malomalo and of Sigatoka (the latter being the heartland of the powerful polity of the Kwa Levu of Nakuruvu, the present paramount of Nadroga, which through marriage has close traditional connections with Rewa and mythical connections with Tonga). Associated with Nawaka are thirty-one yavusa, the origins, development and grouping of which will be discussed in this chapter. These include mainly independent groups, many of which lived in the interior of Viti Levu where the rugged terrain made communication difficult, but the steep slopes, rocky peaks and, in certain parts, thick bush, provided natural features for defence.

Nawaka is important as an area of research for the purposes of my hypothesis that the more distant a polity is from the east, the less it will be affected by the east from the point of view not only of communicalct and spirituality but especially of socio-political complexity. In Nawaka with its mountainous terrain, distance from the east may not be the only factor, but I suggest that it is probably the most significant. As the following accounts will show, Nawaka has socio-political (including linguistic), geographical and spiritual features significantly different not only from those of the major polities of the east but also from those of the polities of Rakiraki, which, I suggest, are intermediately situated geographically and also intermediately developed in terms of socio-political complexity, between the polities of the east and the west. The further west one goes from the highly developed socio-political complexes of the east, the less evident will be the tendency towards stable forms of federation and political hierarchy. In the present tikina of Nawaka, there is a great variety of differing geographical features. The western part of Old Nawaka tikina which borders with Nadi is relatively flat, but further inland the terrain gets increasingly hilly and bush-covered, with a backdrop of mountainous territory overlooked by the mighty peak of Koroba (1075 m). Rukuruku is mountainous with peaks up to 511 m, as is Vaturu with peaks up to 645 m and overlooked by dividing ranges of up to 981 m. Many areas of mountainous crags and dense bush are difficult to access even nowadays and these are features which in the past provided natural defences. Socio-politically Nawaka was characterised by a number of small and independent groups, being either single yavusa or loose confederacies of a few yavusa or part-yavusa. For socio-political purposes many of these groups recognised marital or spiritual connections within themselves or with other groups, and as they developed they accepted a form of group leadership by mutual consent. Nevertheless, the accounts of Nawaka
polities show how choice of leadership by mutual consent can be overridden by ambition which led to jealousy (vuvu) and discontent (veiqati), two emotions which occurred frequently in the affairs of a polity and bedevilled the ideology of unity of a group. Generally these groups did not, however, formally acknowledge the imposed higher authority of either one of themselves or of outside polities in the coastal region or from the east.

Perhaps the most powerful neighbours were the strong warriors of Nadroga or, to be more precise, of the polity based on the Nakuruvarua group of which the Kwa Levu was the paramount. The Nadroga polity in turn had connections through marriage with Rewa and also with Tonga. By tradition, as we have seen, a fair-skinned Tongan was found hiding up a tree by some fisherwomen. Nadroga at the time was seeking an appropriate leader, and they chose this Tongan stranger named Wakanimolikula. During the 18th or early 19th century, Tongans adventuring along the south coast of Viti Levu attacked Beqa and moved on to Nadroga. Here they landed in the area known as Korotogo, and moved inland, establishing themselves near Tavuni hill fort on the lower reaches of the Sigatoka River. Their descendants still live in the villages of Narata, Nawamagi and Nadrala.

Nawaka itself is an independent polity of particular interest because its later development was inevitably associated with involvement in the post-1855 Christian wars and the wars of the Cakobau Government in the early 1870s. Cakobau was attempting to impose Christianity and the force of his rule on those in the west and the interior of Viti Levu who did not consider that they came within his traditional sphere of influence. These wars caused many quarrels among the western polities. They however eventually provided, on a basis of force on the one hand and the need for mutual co-operation on the other, for a situation which led to the establishment of medium socio-political polities, comprising a number of smaller polities and an increase in the number of levels of hierarchical complexity. The heartland of the polity based on the village of Nawaka was renowned as a place of experts whose powers of assistance or destruction were derived from their association with the Fijian spirit world. Independent Nawaka (especially those with these arcane powers) were therefore naturally hostile to the attempts of the Church Militant of the Cakobau Government to extend their powers of influence over Nawaka, either directly or through the polity of Nadi.

Nadi, which played a large part in the forceful attempts to Christianise Nawaka in the course of the wars known as Na iValu ni Lotu or ‘the Wars of Christianity’, had earlier accepted Christianity and the authority of Cakobau. Their reasons for this acceptance may have been either because they knew that the military power of Cakobau was too great to be resisted, or because they saw an opportunity to extend, under the guise of helping Cakobau, their own sphere of influence over Nawaka and the other inland polities which had the same attitude to Cakobau as had Nawaka. The situation provides interesting evidence for the mechanics and emotions of polities being subjected to influence from forces, both political and spiritual, outside their own customary world. Later, this spirit of independence and a stern refusal to accept the authority of outsiders, especially the Christian warlords of Bau at the time of the Cakobau Government, led to attacks on these groups including Nawaka, by armies of polities such as Nadi who realised the strength of Cakobau and were seeking allegiance with Bau. Similar sentiments also led to attacks on their neighbours up the Sabeto valley by the troops of the Cakobau Government, which resulted in their deportation to Koro (see Sabeto account). After Cession, these people were brought back and resettled on their lands.

Though far from Bau, Nawaka became subject administratively to Bau’s influence when Ba (of which Nawaka was a part) became a province under the pre-Cession Cakobau Government. Although Sigatoka and Nadi had accepted Christianity and the military might of Christian Cakobau earlier on, those polities sympathetic with, or subject to, the powers of Bau and the
associated Church Militant and those polities opposed to Christianity and Cakobau’s Government (which they considered to be one and the same) became involved in struggles that tended at first to confirm old socio-political alignments. Later the military might of the forces of Cakobau brought about new confederations by compelling or persuading the recalcitrant Nawaka people to accept the new religion and to heed the authority of those paramounts who had bowed earlier to what they saw to be the inevitable. These paramounts had, under the guise of accepting Christianity, found favour with the Cakobau Government and had gained its support for their ambitions to extend their spheres of influence over the defeated pagans.

Nawaka is important linguistically too because it is furthest geographically from the east and should be expected to have the fewest connections linguistically with the communalects of the east. People of Nawaka who wished to show how, traditionally, they had so little in common with the polities of Bau and the east, could point out how different their communalects were in the spheres of phonetics, grammar and vocabulary. Their communalects were certainly mutually incomprehensible. Language was very much a symbol of unity and differentiation within and between polities.

Nawaka is also important spiritually because it is furthest geographically from the Nakauvadra Range and the pan-Fijian culture heroes associated in myth with the Range. One set of origin myths current in the west of Fiji related to these culture heroes arriving in the Vuda area, where some remained. It is interesting to explore whether the original ancestral spirits of Nawaka are associated more with the Nakauvadra, or with those who remained behind at Vuda, or with other original ancestors who may have come from the southern interior of Viti Levu or from the southwest coastal areas of Nadroga with their Tongan associations. In particular, I shall question whether the Nawaka polities considered the Nakauvadra Range to be important as a basis of the spiritual unification of Fijian society, or whether the Nawaka and others in the west were not so much concerned with the concept of a pan-Fijian society as with their own unity against the increasing influence of those major polities of the east, especially Bau, with whom they had no traditional socio-political association of confederacy. It is a popular notion nowadays to regard 19th century Fiji as two societies, the east and the west, and to believe that there is no real basis for the concept of a monolithic society, but the dichotomy of Fiji into east and west is certainly at best an oversimplification and at the worst is simply not true. The case of Nadroga to which I have referred shows that there were patterns of association between the western Nadroga and the eastern Rewa. I suggest that, to pursue the geological analogy, Fijian society has features in common with conglomerate or pudding stone, with an overall matrix made up with a quantity of pebbles of different size and quality; although in the case of Fiji it is not a random mix.

Socio-politically, linguistically and spiritually, Nawaka itself is among the western areas least affected by the polities of the east. This is largely because of its distance to the west, but also because of its determination to remain independent of eastern socio-political and ideological influences. Thirdly, the mountainous and, in some parts, the thickly-vegetated nature of the terrain of upland Nawaka meant that distant association and difficult communication mitigated against the easy development of a closely knit complex polity. But I suggest that the overriding factor in the development of Nawaka was its distance from the east and from the expansionist policies and ambitions of powerful and able eastern chiefs for whom the Tonga semi-monarchical influence was so much stronger than were the relatively minor incursions and settlements for the polities of Nadroga. Even so, in far-away Nadroga, the respect by Fijians for Tongans was so strong that they accepted Wakanimollikula as a ‘stranger king’. Nawaka itself may be regarded as typical of an area in which the pre-Christian independent polities were of a relatively simple nature from being least influenced by the complexities of the eastern polities and with communalects and spirituality similarly least affected by the east. The traditional accounts of these western polities

Nawaka is also important linguistically too because it is furthest geographically from the east and should be expected to have the fewest connections linguistically with the communalects of the east. People of Nawaka who wished to show how, traditionally, they had so little in common with the polities of Bau and the east, could point out how different their communalects were in the spheres of phonetics, grammar and vocabulary. Their communalects were certainly mutually incomprehensible. Language was very much a symbol of unity and differentiation within and between polities.

Nawaka is also important spiritually because it is furthest geographically from the Nakauvadra Range and the pan-Fijian culture heroes associated in myth with the Range. One set of origin myths current in the west of Fiji related to these culture heroes arriving in the Vuda area, where some remained. It is interesting to explore whether the original ancestral spirits of Nawaka are associated more with the Nakauvadra, or with those who remained behind at Vuda, or with other original ancestors who may have come from the southern interior of Viti Levu or from the southwest coastal areas of Nadroga with their Tongan associations. In particular, I shall question whether the Nawaka polities considered the Nakauvadra Range to be important as a basis of the spiritual unification of Fijian society, or whether the Nawaka and others in the west were not so much concerned with the concept of a pan-Fijian society as with their own unity against the increasing influence of those major polities of the east, especially Bau, with whom they had no traditional socio-political association of confederacy. It is a popular notion nowadays to regard 19th century Fiji as two societies, the east and the west, and to believe that there is no real basis for the concept of a monolithic society, but the dichotomy of Fiji into east and west is certainly at best an oversimplification and at the worst is simply not true. The case of Nadroga to which I have referred shows that there were patterns of association between the western Nadroga and the eastern Rewa. I suggest that, to pursue the geological analogy, Fijian society has features in common with conglomerate or pudding stone, with an overall matrix made up with a quantity of pebbles of different size and quality; although in the case of Fiji it is not a random mix.

Socio-politically, linguistically and spiritually, Nawaka itself is among the western areas least affected by the polities of the east. This is largely because of its distance to the west, but also because of its determination to remain independent of eastern socio-political and ideological influences. Thirdly, the mountainous and, in some parts, the thickly-vegetated nature of the terrain of upland Nawaka meant that distant association and difficult communication mitigated against the easy development of a closely knit complex polity. But I suggest that the overriding factor in the development of Nawaka was its distance from the east and from the expansionist policies and ambitions of powerful and able eastern chiefs for whom the Tonga semi-monarchical influence was so much stronger than were the relatively minor incursions and settlements for the polities of Nadroga. Even so, in far-away Nadroga, the respect by Fijians for Tongans was so strong that they accepted Wakanimollikula as a ‘stranger king’. Nawaka itself may be regarded as typical of an area in which the pre-Christian independent polities were of a relatively simple nature from being least influenced by the complexities of the eastern polities and with communalects and spirituality similarly least affected by the east. The traditional accounts of these western polities
feature the basis and development of the polity and its leadership, internal quarrels as much as quarrels with neighbours, internal disputes about leadership, and social fusion and fission. Such features are found frequently in the accounts of the major eastern polities, and give rise to treachery and open combat often on a mighty scale. In the west, by contrast, they have more the flavour of family squabbles arising from what were seen to be personal insults, such as the presentation of the wrong part of a pig or subtle variations in the procedures for *yaqona* drinking. The implications of the latter are important generally, but especially so in the circumstances of minor western polities.

One such case involved the presentation of *yaqona* to two different brothers in what they considered to be either in the wrong order or in a manner inappropriate to their respective status. This was superficially a matter of personal insult, but it may have reflected an underlying feeling of ill-will between the two brothers, or it may have been a manifestation of the ambitions of the younger brother to supersede the elder brother. It may indeed have been a sign on the part of the people preparing the *yaqona* by which they wished to indicate that they preferred that the younger brother should be the leader, either because he was a more competent leader or was one more kindly disposed towards and more considerate of his people.

Minor independent groups occurred in the far west of Viti Levu and were least susceptible to the influences of Tonga. They are therefore of particular interest because they provide examples of the least developed forms of polity, typifying one end of a continuum of forms of polity in late prehistoric and early historic Fijian society. The other end of the continuum is typified by the highly complex polities of Bau and Rewa.

There are actually several uses of the term Nawaka other than that of the New *tikina* which is the one used here. The literal meaning of the word, Nawaka, could be ‘the root’ (based on *na waka*), but I could find out no satisfactory explanation for such a meaning. Some said in Nawaka village that it referred symbolically to the place where the Nawaka people first took root. I suspect that this was an *ex post facto* reconstruction. The basis of this problematic explanation will become apparent when I discuss the mythical origins of the Nawaka people.

Nawaka then, is a name with several referents, such as:

(a) The general name for the mythical place of settlement of the four original ancestral spirits of the four descent groups which currently comprise the Nawaka socio-political complex;

(b) After Cession, the Old Fijian Administration *tikina* of Nawaka, which comprised the area between the Old *tikina* of:

(i) Namataku (to the east, now part of the Colo or mountainous interior of the province of Nadroga/Navosa),

(ii) Rukuruku (to the south, see below),

(iii) Nadi (to the west, see below),

(iv) Vaturu (to the north);

(c) After the enactment of the 1945 Fijian Affairs Ordinance, the New Fijian Administration *tikina* of Nawaka, comprising the three Old *tikina* of Rukuruku, Nawaka and Vaturu;

(d) Nowadays, commonly used to refer to the main socio-political complex in Nawaka *tikina*, otherwise referred to as Vunatoto, after the name of the leading *yavusa*, or as Nalagi, after the name of the currently leading *mataqali*;

(e) The present village (Nawaka) and the old village (distinguished, when necessary, by the use of the modifier *makawa* or ‘old’, as Nawaka Makawa).
The main polities: Nawaka tikina—a geographical and political snapshot

Nawaka New tikina comprises the Old tikina of Nawaka, Rukuruku and Varutu. These are the Old tikina which I covered in the course of my research project in Nawaka tikina.

The main polities based in these Old tikina were at the time of Cession and are still recognised as follows:

**Nawaka Old tikina**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of vanua</th>
<th>Leading yavusa</th>
<th>Title of paramount</th>
<th>No. of yavusa</th>
<th>Levels of hierarchy</th>
<th>No. of villages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nawaka</td>
<td>Vunatoto</td>
<td>Momo or Tui Nawaka</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the wars of Christianity, the Momo of Vunatoto (now referred to by the eastern title of Tui Nawaka) had heeded the authority of the Momo Levu of Navatulevu, Nadi. Before this, the Momo of Vunatoto was independent.

Na Yavusa Ciwa (The Nine Yavusa), as follows:

| Utiloaloa   | Korolevu | Momo or Vunataqwa | 4 | 2 | 1 |

The term Utiloaloa also covers the Noi Vatuma or the Navo (accounts differ).

| Yamisa      | Nasevaravara | No title | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Before the wars of Christianity, each yavusa was independent.

Three (one now extinct) equal yavusa

| 3(2) | 2 | 1 |

After the wars of Christianity, the three yavusa of the Yamisa group and the heads of the three (now two) individual yavusa heeded the authority of the Momo of Korolevu, head of the Utiloaloa, who in turn heeded the authority of the Momo of Vunatoto, Nawaka.

**The Rukuruku Old tikina, which includes:**

| Noi Sesevia | Nawaqesara | Tui Sesevia | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| Noi ni Yasawa | Naqalitala | Tui Rukuruku | 6 | 2 | 3 |

These were two independent complex polities, the paramounts of which heeded no higher authority.

**The Vaturu Old tikina, which includes:**

| Viyagoiranitu | Viyagoiranitu | Momo | 1 | 1 | 1 |

This yavusa was evidently associated at some time and in some way with the Rarawaqa group.

| Noitubai | Noitubai | Momo | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Nanuku | Nanuku | N/A | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Nasau | Nasau | Momolevu | 1 | 1 | 1 |
These three *yavusa* were previously recognised as separate and politically independent. They were regarded as forming a loose social unity, known collectively as the Nadua. Nowadays the Nanuku and the Nasau are regarded as sub-groups of the Noitubai.

This *yavusa* has a spirit-based connection with the Nanuku group referred to above.

The accounts which follow will show the origins and development of the structure of these polities up to the time of Cession. Since Nawaka polities do not extend across Old *tikina* boundaries, I am not producing separate tables for the geographical and the political structures. It should be noted that some Old *tikina* include more than one *vanua* (for instance, Rukuruku includes both the Noi Sesevia and the Noi ni Yasawa *vanua*). Similarly one *tikina* may include not only one or more *vanua* but also one or more independent *yavusa*.

**The main polities: Nawaka *tikina*—details of structure**

**Nawaka Old *tikina*: the Nawaka socio-political complex**

In more detail, the origins and development of the polities which were found in the Old *tikina* of Nawaka and which comprised the Nawaka socio-political complex as it was at about the time of the Cakobau Government are found in the following accounts to emphasise the simple nature of the polities and their determination to remain politically independent of outside authority.

The accounts show how the individual *yavusa* or loosely federated groups of *yavusa* reacted to pressures from physical attack, and to intrigues by ambitious leaders. Such attacks and intrigues involved not only neighbours whose behaviour they understood but also eventually involved military and ideological forces far removed from the spheres of communication and interaction with which the westerners were familiar. Attacks and intrigues came about either directly from the eastern military might of the Cakobau government, or indirectly through neighbours who had accepted the new regime. They may have done so themselves under pressure. They may equally have accepted the regime voluntarily, probably hoping for some socio-political advantage or military aid in their local struggles and in forwarding their own local ambitions.

Nawaka Old *tikina* includes the following elements:

(a) **The Nawaka polity**, which comprises the following four *yavusa*, based on the present village of Nawaka:

(i) The leading *yavusa*, Vunatoto, whose head is titled the Momo of Vunatoto or, in eastern phraseology, Tui Nawaka;

(ii) The three *yavusa* of Nawaka, Bemanu and Senibua.

Myths of origin state how four original ancestral spirits came down separately from the spiritual centre on the Nakauvadra Range in Ra and headed in a westerly direction. These four took different routes but arrived eventually in the lowland area known generally as Nawaka where they settled together. As each successive spirit arrived, he was welcomed by those already there and he married one of the women associated with the other spirits. By common consent, each newcomer was recognised as the leader. These four spirits became the original ancestors of the four *yavusa* which comprise the polity of Nawaka. The last to arrive was the original ancestor of the Vunatoto *yavusa*. He in turn was recognised as leader, being presented with *yagona* (kava) to drink ceremonially. He was endowed with *mana* or spiritual power and Vunatoto became recognised as the leading *yavusa* of the polity of Nawaka which is of particular interest in showing how a number of descent groups can combine into a relatively small and simple socio-political
complex polity on the basis of their mutual feelings for each other and a feeling of spiritual unity. This feeling was derived from the myth that their respective original spiritual ancestors came from the same place of origin, settled together in harmony and reached agreement on leadership.

The original ancestral spirit of the Vunatoto had two sons. One day those living at Nawaka planted a garden for the elder son who duly prepared *yaqona* to thank (oco) the workers. The younger son arrived to find that all the *yaqona* had been drunk. He was so upset by what he regarded as a serious insult that he left Nawaka and went east to the mountainous interior where he stayed at Natauva. His descendants formed the Korolevu *yavusa* and refused to go back to Nawaka and rejoin their confreres, the Vunatoto. Instead they remained a *yavusa* separate geographically and socio-politically from the Vunatoto and the polity of Nawaka. They later went and settled at Vatutu, with the Utiloaloa polity (see below).

The elder brother arriving at Nawaka had two sons, who were the progenitors of the two *mataqali* of Vunatoto and Nalagi. These two sub-groups came to hate each other, starting from the younger brother’s arrogance towards his elder brother. This led to warfare in which the Korolevu, remembering their old quarrels with the Vunatoto, came to assist the Nalagi. There was continuing hatred and jealousy between the brothers, and rivalry between the Vunatoto and Nalagi persisted and was manifested in warfare in which neighbouring groups became involved through bonds of relationship. Nawaka became involved in warfare with the neighbouring polity of Navo, based on insult when a man of Navo offered raw *vudi* or plantains to some visiting Nawaka people. The then head of the Nalagi, Nabatuiteci, was so successful in taking revenge on the Navo that the chiefly Vunatoto *mataqali* offered the leadership to Nabati. From this time, the leadership of the Vunatoto *yavusa* and of the Nawaka polity remained with the Nalagi.

The rest of the descendants of the four original ancestors remained together and established the village of Nawaka Makawa which was divided into four. When Nawaka was attacked by Nadi during the wars of Christianity, all four *yavusa* scattered to the hills and took refuge with groups with whom they had marital relations. After the wars, they were brought back on the orders of the Nadi chiefs, with whom they formed a loose affiliation while remaining socio-politically independent. All four *yavusa* are currently associated with the present village of Nawaka.

So it came about that the paramount of the four groups came and still comes from the Nalagi sub-group of the Vunatoto, and is installed with the title of Momo or Tui Nawaka. The Nalagi was not originally the senior sub-group, but a change of recognised seniority came about through internal rivalry and resentment, based on the arrogant behaviour of the leader and quarrels. A covert but deeply felt feeling that Nalagi is an upstart became more apparent to me as over the years I became more attuned to the nuances of the internal affairs of this polity. Leadership was first achieved by mutual consent, but this amiable atmosphere of consent which was the basis of the initial development of the polity was countered by the rise of rival ambitions for leadership. This led to internal struggles, a change in the hierarchical structure of the *yavusa* of Vunatoto and to feelings of discontent which still prevail. This was a slightly different situation from that leading to fission within the *yavusa* of Vunatoto that resulted in members of the *yavusa* leaving their relations and the emerging polity of Nawaka and going away to form a separate *yavusa* in a different geographical area and in association with a different polity—the Utiloaloa of Vatutu (see immediately below). This fission however affected the internal rivalries of the remainder of the Vunatoto because the Korolevu (descended from the younger brother) came to the support of the Nalagi (the junior *mataqali*) against the senior Vunatoto *mataqali*. 
(b) Na Yavusa Ciwa (The Nine Yavusa) comprise the following nine yavusa, the survivors of which are based on the present inland villages of Vatutu and Namulomulo, and the further interior and upland villages of Yavuna and Tubenasolo.

The features of these simple western polities were very different from those of the highly complex polities of the east in late prehistoric and early historic Fijian society.

Although they had some connections based on spiritual associations, it was not until the wars of Christianity and of Cakobau that they developed into a more elaborate confederation. As a case study for the development and structure of simple polities in the far western coast and interior of Viti Levu, a consideration will be given in some detail to the Nine Yavusa and their associates, as follows:

(i) The four yavusa of Vunataqwa, Korolevu, Korotogo (Toga), and Yaumali, based on Vatutu, about 3km south-east of Nawaka—known collectively as the Utiloaloa (Black Penises).

The original ancestral spirit of the Vunataqwa came from Nakauvadra Range and followed the coast westerly and southerly. He came to Nawaka which was already occupied. So he went on inland to Vunataqwa, and his descendants formed the yavusa of Vunataqwa. He married a woman of Nadi and had two children, and they and their descendants formed the leading mataqali or sub-group. He also had an affair with a female spirit, Lewatu, his penis extending to the black sands of Wailoaloa beach. Lewatu’s children and their descendants were the mataqali Nagaga.

The exact significance of this myth is not clear. On close investigation, it appears that the vuti aca (symbols of identification and unification of descent groups) of the two sub-groups are different. These are generally symbols of unity and identification of a single descent group. The evidence of two sets of symbols suggests that instead of being a single descent group, the Vunataqwa are a construct of two separate groups or part-groups of different origins. This may be reflected in the myth that one mataqali are the descendants of the ancestor and his recognised wife, whereas the other are descendants resulting from an extra-marital adventure and therefore not of quite the same background.

The original spirit of the Korolevu came from Nawaka after a fraternal quarrel already referred to in the Nawaka account. On the invitation of the Vunataqwa spirit, he settled at Vunataqwa and then moved inland, leaving his descendants at Korolevu, near Vunataqwa. They formed the yavusa of Korolevu.

The Korolevu remembered the insult to their original spirit when at Nawaka he was not given a share of the yaqona to drink after he had helped his brother preparing a garden. They were preparing to attack Nawaka to avenge this old insult, when Nawaka learned of the pending attack and instead attacked the Korolevu and the Vunataqwa who scattered to the hills between Nawaka and the Nasilatoka River. Seeking refuge with the Vatuma people, they were joined by the Korotogo people and the Yaumali people. At Vatuma, a strong man of the Korolevu, was recognised as the leader of the four yavusa.

The Korotogo are a part of the descendants of a canoeload of Tongans who came under their leader, Maile, from Niua in Tonga to Rewa, thence to Serua and finally to south-east Nadroga. Some remained here and their descendants who live in villages by the lower reaches of the Nasilatoka River still maintain their connections with Tonga. Others went up the river and then west into the hills between the river and Nawaka where they joined the local Vatuma and the refugee Korolevu.
The village of the Korotogo in the hills was burned in the course of local warfare, and the villagers took refuge with the Korolevu who by now were back at Vunataqwa. After further attacks, they settled with the Korolevu, the Vunataqwa and the Yaumali.

One account which is now denied by the Yaumali, says that the Yaumali were of Tongan origin. They were part of the Korotogo people, being descendants of the youngest son of Moala.

All other accounts including those given to me in 1953 and 1995 indicate rather a spiritual origin with the Nakauvadra Range, an origin which is the spiritual basis for the association between three of the Nine Yavusa and also a connection with the coastal polities of Nadi. There is no independent evidence of which I am aware to confirm or discredit these two irreconcilable accounts. For the purposes of exploring the origins and development of the Nine Yavusa and particularly their connections with each other and with the western coastal polities, it is tempting to emphasise the Nakauvadra accounts, bearing in mind that these could be ex post facto explanations.

I will give an account of the myths of origin from Nakauvadra, which will also refer to the yavusa involved other than those of the four at Vatutu.

Two spirits came from Nakauvadra to Koroba, the mighty mountain overlooking the south-western part of the tikina of Nawaka and in particular the hilly periphery of Rukuruku (see below). They had four children, referred to as Oitou na Le Va or 'The Four'. The eldest was the original ancestral spirit of the Nakorovau people (one of the Nine Yavusa) at Tubenasolo, far into the mountainous interior of Nawaka tikina. The second was the ancestor of the Yaumali. The third was the ancestral spirit of the Koroba people, one of the Nine Yavusa living at Yavuna, in the interior between Vatutu and Tubenasolo. These three were land spirits. The fourth was a very powerful sea spirit guarding the entrance through the reef and the general reef line from the island of Malolo to the island of Beqa, who came to be regarded as the original ancestral spirit of the Navatulevu people, the paramount group of Nadi.

The brother who became the ancestral spirit of the Yaumali was at Koroba when he was told to go and draw water. He was very annoyed at being given such a menial task and he left and went towards the coast where he settled. The original spirit of the Korolevu came to visit the place where the spirit of the Yaumali had settled and was given some yams to eat. The yams were so small that the Korolevu spirit was angry and the hosts planned to kill him. However the Yaumali spirit successfully pleaded for his life, and they became friends.

This was the spiritual basis for the later association between the Yaumali and the Korolevu when the former went to join the Korolevu (together with the Vunataqwa and the Korotogo) at Vunataqwa. This was before the coming of Christianity. Later they were burned by the Nawaka people in the course of the wars of Christianity and again they scattered to the hills. At this time the person who was accepted as the leader of the four yavusa was a man of Vunataqwa, because he had a gun. In due course, the leader of the Nadi people who was the champion of Christianity in the area ordered the four yavusa to return to their own territory and so they settled in the craggy area of Korotabu, where it was that the ancestral spirit of the Vunataqwa had had his extra-marital experience with the spirit Lewatu. These four yavusa, the Vunataqwa, the Korolevu, the Korotogo and the Yaumali, together with their former hosts in the hills, the Vatuma, are referred to informally (kacakacivaki) as the Utiloaloa, the Black Penises, perhaps reflecting the myth of the ancestral spirit of Vunataqwa whose penis extended to the black sand beach of Wailoaloa.

Because of these past changes of recognised leadership, a current problem is whether the Vunataqwa or the Korolevu should be recognised as the head of what was once a loose polity but after the wars of the Cakobau Government had become more formalised through the development of the polity of Nadi and its associations with neighbouring polities such as Nawaka. This affected the
position of the four yavusa in the overall federation of the Nine Yavusa which then acknowledged the authority of the paramount of Nawaka, the Momo of Nalagi/Tui Nawaka, who in turn acknowledged the authority of the paramount of Nadi. At Vatutu, I was told by the Vunataqwa that they were the original inhabitants and should be recognised as senior. The Korolevu were, however, recognised by the other yavusa as the senior yavusa. Nowadays such rivalry for seniority is a feature of Fijian society, either because larger sums of rent money go to the paramount or simply because social and political ambition has increased among non-paramounts.

The varied yavusa origins and socio-political factors affecting the affiliations and developments of the Utiloaloa are against a background of:

- the frequent wars (based at first on local matters such as insults and personal slights and, later, on the coming of Christianity and the expanding influences of the Cakobau Government, at first through Nadi and later by direct intervention); and
- the changes in leadership by consent (based on achievement rather than inheritance) which make the Utiloaloa an interesting polity to study.

These yavusa are also of interest because their communalec is significantly different from that of Nawaka, and shows features more characteristic of the Nadroga communalec, such as a change in the word for ‘pig’. The Nine Yavusa starting from the village of Vatutu used the same word as was used in Nadroga—that is, voro; whereas the Nawaka yavusa in the village of Nawaka used the same word as was used in the chain of communalecs in areas stretching north and north-east from Nawaka as far as Rakiraki—that is, qo. The eastern word for ‘pig’ is vuaka (with phonetic variations such as puaka or pua’a).

(ii) The two yavusa of Saumata and Leweinaqwal (now extinct), based on Namulomulo, four miles inland from Vatutu.

The original ancestral spirit of the Saumata came from Nakauvadra Range and followed the coast westerly and southerly to Nadroga, and then turned inland to settle in the area known broadly as Rukuruku, now the southernmost part of Nawaka tikina on the Nadroga border. This became the first settlement of the Saumata.

The original spirit of the Leweinaqali also came from Nakauvadra and settled in the general area where the spirit of the Saumata had settled and established the first village of the yavusa.

Later, caught in the course of fighting between local groups, the Saumata and the Leweinaqali scattered and together took refuge with the Noi Nabau, a group at Naqwavula below Nausori, who gave them a village in their territory in the very interior of eastern Nawaka. The Saumata and the Leweinaqali were both independent polities, each owing some customary allegiance to their ‘landlords’. Then they were attacked by Nawaka at the time of the wars of Christianity and they once more scattered until the Nadi leader brought them back and settled them on land belonging to the Bolabola (see below). From here they moved to Namulomulo.

These yavusa, their origins and development in a background of local warfare are typical of the simplest forms of polity settled by refugees far from their ancestral acres. Though the Leweinaqali became extinct, the Saumata are still at Namulomulo, and though independent before the wars of Christianity, afterwards heeded the authority of the Momo of Korolevu of Vatutu who in turn heeded the authority of the Momo or Tui Nawaka of the Nawaka polity. This line of authority arose after the wars of Christianity and the Cakobau Government before Cession which saw the development of more complex forms of polity. This was due partly to the expansive ambitions
of Navula, the powerful and able leader in Nadi, and partly to the influence of Cakobau’s
government which had been established as pan-Fijian and therefore needed to demonstrate its
authority especially in the independent west.

(iii) The three *yavusa* of Koroba, Nasevaravara and Bolabola, based in the upland village
of Yavuna, four miles inland from Namulomulo—known collectively as the Yamisa.

The original ancestral spirits of the Koroba and the Nasevaravara came from the Nakauvadra, but the
original ancestor of the Bolabola came from the opposite direction from the Djavutjukia people inland
from Sigatoka, Nadroga.

The ancestor of the Koroba who was one of four siblings (known as Na Le Va or ‘The Four’)
who were the basis of a spiritual unity between the inland *yavusa* of the Koroba, the Yaumali of
Yavuna, and the Nakorovau of Tubenasolo as well as with the coastal polity of Nadi.

Each of the three spirits arrived in that order in the mountainous area overlooked by Koroba peak and
settled there in harmony. Although the three groups maintained their political independence, they agreed
to accept the leadership of the Nasevaravara for the purposes of communal duties and responsibilities and
for mutual protection.

The importance of the Yamisa is that three groups came together from different areas of spiritual
or actual origin, settled together and agreed on changes of leadership. These three *yavusa* suffered
similar fates to the others already described. They became threatened by local wars and scattered
and took refuge with other *yavusa* in the interior or even with the Naua people (now of Saunaka) in
the coastal plain near Nadi. Different *matagali* went to different people with whom they could
claim some connection such as by marriage. Following the wars of Christianity, the three *yavusa*
were brought back by those under the authority of Nadi and Nawaka, and were finally settled
together at Yavuna.

These three *yavusa* had a loose social association based on the myth that their respective ancestral
spirits, though not related, had lived together in harmony. Nevertheless, like those based on
Namulomulo, they were politically independent of higher authority in the times before the wars
of Christianity. After these wars, they formally recognised the Nasevaravara as the leading *yavusa*,
and the head of the Nasevaravara heeded the authority of the Momo of Korolevu (Vatutu) who
in turn heeded the authority of the Momo or Tui Nawaka.

(iv) The single *yavusa* of Nakorovau, based in Tubenasolo, which lies among craggy
mountains 13 km inland from the village of Namulomulo.

Tubenasolo is even now inaccessible save on foot or horseback, and when I visited the village, it
was still surrounded by thick bush. It and the village of Natawa in the Old tikina of Vaturu (to
which I shall refer later) are the most isolated upland villages in my project areas.

The original ancestral spirit of the Nakorovau people came from the Nakauvadra Range. He was a brother of
the original ancestors of the Yaumali of Vatutu; and of the Koroba of Yavuna; and of the coastal spirit who
was the original ancestor of the Navatulevu of Nadi. With his parents and siblings, he lived first at Koroba,
and then moved south-east to the general area known as Rukuruku (see below) on the Nadroga border.

His descendants were chased away by local groups, and they moved to the Nabau people at Naqwavula (see
above). Here they were attacked by the Magodro people from the interior, and they scattered to Tubenasolo,
which was then owned by the Nasevaravara people. They took refuge here and provided services (*vakalala*)
for the Nasevaravara, the Bolabola and the Koroba (the Yamisa), but their hosts turned on them and
attacked them and they fled to Nawaka. They remained under the authority of the Nawaka people who settled them nearby until after the wars of Christianity, when they went back to Tubenasolo.

In spite of their isolation and their determined spirit of political independence, the Nakorovau had, through the sibling relationship between the various original ancestors, recognised spiritually-based social connections with other interior and coastal polities. The Nakorovau, Yaumali and Koroba were regarded as *vitacini* or brothers, because of these spiritual connections. It was through these spiritual connections that those living at Tubenasolo (the Nakorovau), those at Yavuna (the Koroba) and those at Vatutu (the Yaumali) maintained a social connection and, after the wars, a socio-political connection not only with each other but also with Nadi through the sister of the spirits of the three groups named here.

After the wars of Christianity, the Nakorovau became part of the recognised association now referred to the *Yavusa Ciwa* (The Nine *Yavusa*). The head of the Nakorovau heeded the authority of the Momo of Korolevu (Vatutu), who in turn heeded the authority of the Momo or *Tui Nawaka*. In this way the *yavusa* of Nakorovau became an element of the Nawaka polity.

*Rukuruku Old tikina: two separate socio-political complexes*

The two polities recorded as associated with the Rukuruku Old *tikina* were independent of each other and of any other polity at the time of Cession. Indeed the twelve *yavusa* of Rukuruku never seem to have developed into a single socio-political complex with a recognised paramount leader. Instead six of the *yavusa* comprised the socio-political complex known as the Noi Sesevia and based on the three adjacent villages of Nawaqadamu, Uto and Vunamoli. The other six *yavusa* comprised the socio-political complex known as the Noi ni Yasawa and based on the three villages of Tore, Rararua and Narata which lie to the east of the Noi Sesevia villages.

As the result of provincial boundary changes, Narata now falls outside the boundary of Rukuruku Old *tikina* (the administrative province of Ba) and lies within the boundary of the administrative province of Nadroga/Navosa.

The twelve Rukuruku *yavusa* were almost constantly involved in local fighting resulting from or leading to the fission and fusion of the *yavusa* within and between the Rukuruku polities and their neighbours. This local fighting was similar in nature to what occurred in the socio-political environment of polities described in other areas in the New *tikina* of Nawaka.

These Rukuruku *yavusa* were also affected by the wars of Christianity and the wars of the Cakobau Government. At first, under the guise of spreading Bau’s traditional sphere of authority, Cakobau attempted forcefully to impose Christianity on the pagan west and especially the hillfolk. Later, his government attempted to assert itself outside the traditional sphere of authority of Bau and again found itself at odds with the many polities of the west. On the Ba/Nadroga boundaries, the Kwa Levu of Nadroga and the government’s armies attacked those in the mountainous interior who were traditionally opposed to the Kwa Levu and had come to be highly suspicious and hostile of the intents and personal ambitions of Cakobau and the eastern chieftoms with whom they associated the forceful spreading of Christianity to what they saw to be the detriment of their own spiritual power base. The attacks affected many polities in Nawaka *tikina*, and the Noi Sesevia and the Noi ni Yasawa especially became either directly or peripherally involved. These polities suffered in battle, were split up and joined others as refugees, or eventually accepted Christianity and paid lip-service to the Cakobau Government, at any rate so long as his armies were in the neighbourhood. After Cession, many in the mountainous interior initially refused to accept the Colonial Government, because they said that they were not represented at discussions agreeing to Cession, nor did any recognised representative sign the Deed of Cession. The Governor Sir Arthur Gordon’s ‘Little War’ against those who did not recognise the Colonial Government did
not affect other parts of Nawaka. At Cession the Rukuruku lands became administratively the Old tikina of Rukuruku in the Fijian Administration of the Colonial Government. After the amalgamation of tikina in 1945, Rukuruku became part of Nawaka, under Buli Nawaka.

Rukuruku was recognised as including, at Cession, the two socio-political complexes, as follows: 

(a) **The Noi Sesevia polity**, which comprised the following six yavusa:

(i) The leading yavusa, Reiwaqa (or Raiwaqa in Standard Fijian), whose head was titled the Tui Sesevia. Tui Sesevia, who was independent of higher authority, lived at Nawaqadamu, although most of the yavusa was based at the village of Uto with the Noi Rukuruku.

The origin myths differ about the name and immediate origin of the original ancestor, though an ultimate origin in the Nakauvadra Range is generally agreed upon.

The Reiwaqa had first settled at Vunamoli with the Rukuruku people until they were attacked by a neighbouring group and both groups scattered to take refuge with the Vatuma. During the time of the Cakobau Government, the Reiwaqa left the Vatuma, some going to Nawaqadamu and others going to Uto where they heeded the authority of the Rukuruku people.

Those at Nawaqadamu claimed one spirit as the original ancestor of the Reiwaqa, whereas those at Uto claimed another. Each claimed to be the leading group.

This probably reflects a split in the group. The position of the Tui Sesevia was certainly the subject of disagreement between the Reiwaqa of Nawaqadamu and those of Uto on the occasions that I visited those two villages.

Disputes about leadership within a yavusa are typified by this situation within the Reiwaqa. Such evidence for ambition-driven or quarrel-based rivalry within the yavusa is in contrast to the ideology of unity which is associated with the official model of a descent group.

(ii) The two yavusa of the Nawaquesara and the Noi Vatuma, based at the village of Nawaqadamu, together with some of the Reiwaqa yavusa.

The original spirit of the Nawaquesara came from Nakauvadra with the original spirit of the Noi Tualeka and they settled at Waicoba on the Nasilatoka River. The Nawaquesara had split up earlier, when two brothers became jealous because one of them had a tall masei (chiefly palm tree) shading his part of their house whereas the other had only a little digi or fern. The Nawaquesara and the Noi Tualeka split up, and the former went eventually to Nawaqadamu and settled with the Reiwaqa who were there.

The original spirit of the Noi Vatuma came from Nakauvadra and settled at Uto. His descendants split because of a quarrel based on one person drinking all the yaqona, but later came together again until news of attack by the Noi Yasawa and Tavarua people caused them to split up and take refuge with four different groups with whom they had relationships. After the wars, they re-united and joined the Nawaquesara. More fighting ensued and then the Nadi war-leader, Navula, began to forcefully impose Christianity on the hill-folk. After peace returned, the village of Nawaqadamu was established for the Noi Vatuma.

(iii) The single yavusa of Rukuruku, based on the village of Uto.

The original spirit of the Rukuruku came from Nakauvadra and settled at Vunamoli. The Reiwaqa arrived at Vunamoli and settled under the authority of the Rukuruku people. The Rukuruku were attacked by neighbours and fled to be with the Noi Goro at Uto on land made available by the Noi Vatuma who were living at Nawaqadamu. While the Noi Rukuruku were living on the land made available to them by the
Noi Vatuma, they presented food to the Noi Vatuma by way of Ne itau ni quele or traditional form of rent, but they did not heed their authority.

All three yavusa were equal in the socio-political hierarchy, but all three heeded the authority of the Tui Sesevia at Nawaqadamu.

(iv) The two yavusa of the Noi Naboro and the Noi Tualeka, originally from Nadroga and later based on the Rukuruku village of Vunamoli.

The original spirits of the Noi Goro, the Noi Tualeka and the Nawaqesara came from the Nakauvadra, and they and their descendants settled on the upper reaches of the Nasigatoka River.

The Noi Naboro later went lower down the river to Nadroga. From there they went to the Rukuruku area and attacked the Rukuruku and Reiwaqa yavusa and burned their villages at and near Vunamoli, and drove them away. The Noi Naboro then settled at Vunamoli themselves.

The Noi Tualeka who had first settled together with the Nawaqesara were attacked and driven away by their neighbours and settled with some Nadroga people. Later when the Noi Tualeka in Nadroga were trying to escape from the measles epidemic which was devastating Fiji just after Cession, the Noi Naboro invited them to come and settle with them in the village of Vunamoli.

The Noi Tualeka heeded the authority of the Noi Naboro, and the Noi Naboro heeded the authority of the Tui Sesevia of Nawaqadamu.

The origins, wanderings, disputes and periodic co-residence of these six yavusa which comprised the Noi Sesevia socio-political complex were typical of the circumstances in which polities developed in these upland western areas at these times. The Noi Sesevia polities, though more complex than the simple polities of the Nine Yavusa and of Vaturu, tended to remain relatively less complex than those of Rakiraki and very much less complex than those of the east.

During all the disputes and quarrels among the Noi Sesevia polity, no one leader emerged who had a sufficiently strong character to conciliate when internal disputes split a yavusa, or who was astute enough or sufficiently powerful or politically acceptable to prevent the various yavusa from quarrelling among themselves and thereby making themselves vulnerable to outside attack. During all the outside attacks on Rukuruku, no one leader emerged to combine all or many of the yavusa into an alliance strong enough to resist the outsiders who persistently attacked them.

(b) The Noi ni Yasawa polity, which comprised the following six yavusa:

(i) The leading yavusa, Noi Yasawa, whose head was titled the Tui Rukuruku. Tui Rukuruku, who was independent of higher authority, lived at the village of Rararua.

The original ancestral spirit came from Nakauvadra Range and went to Vuda and then to Nadroga, where the first settlement was established.

This is particularly interesting, because the Noi Yasawa thus connect themselves spiritually with the main Fijian culture heroes of the Nakauvadra Range. They also connect themselves with those of the original culture heroes who sailed to Fiji from the west and settled in the general area now known as Vuda (see above under Vuda tikina). The other culture heroes then went on to the Nakauvadra.

So it was that the Noi Yasawa had spiritual connections with both Nakauvadra and Vuda. These connections were important as spiritual symbols of validation for the Noi Yasawa to adopt a leading position in a hierarchical socio-political complex. The Noi Yasawa also connected
themselves historically with those mighty Nadroga people on the Nasigatoka river whose leader was a ‘stranger king’ from Tonga. This Nadroga/Tongan connection was important as a secular symbol of validation for the Noi Yasawa to establish themselves as leaders.

The Noi Yasawa’s spiritual and secular background was thus impeccable. All they lacked was the military might, the negotiating powers and ability, and the overweening ambitions which characterised the leaders in the east, and brought about the conditions under which the widespread and multi-hierarchical polities of the east were able to develop successfully.

Little is known about the early movements of the Noi Yasawa who later established the Rukuruku village of Rararua. Here they were attacked by a pagan army from the interior which was avenging the incursions of the Nadroga armies when, backed by Cakobau, they were forcefully imposing Christianity on their traditional enemies, the mountaineers. They took refuge with Navula, the Nadi war leader, who later resettled them on their own lands back in Rukuruku.

It was at this time that the two paramounts, the Kwa Levu of Nadroga and the Momo Levu of Nadi, on behalf of the Cakobau Government fixed the boundaries of Ba and Nadroga. The Rukuruku village of Narata was included in Nadroga.

(ii) The two yavusa of Tavarua and Werelevu, who lived with the Noi Yasawa in the village of Rararua.

The original ancestral spirits of these two yavusa as well as the ancestral spirit of the Noi Yasawa came together from Nakauvadra to Vuda and then to the Nasigatoka River, and at first they all three settled together.

Reflecting the spiritual bond between their respective original ancestors, these two yavusa are closely associated with each other and with the Noi Yasawa.

The spirit of the Tavarua was female, and became pregnant through drops of rain. Her son was called Waituruturu, meaning ‘raindrops’.

This is the only case which I have recorded of such a birth, and may suggest that the spiritual origins of the Tavarua were not only associated with the lofty ranges of Nakauvadra but with an even loftier and more mysterious element, na lagi or the sky.

Both yavusa were split internally in the course of local wars, some sub-groups siding with one side while others sided with the other. A major split occurred among the Tavarua following the presentation of yaqona to two different brothers in what they considered to be either in the wrong order or in a manner inappropriate to their respective status. This split resulted in one group seeking their neighbours to attack the other group, and each group settling separately.

Each group of the Tavarua and theWerelevu were involved in constant warring not only with neighbours but also with the forces of Christianity, the pagans of the mountainous interior and the army of Cakobau.

Eventually, the Cakobau Government gathered together and settled the Tavarua, partly in Narata, partly in Rararua and partly in Tore; and the Werelevu in Rararua.

Both yavusa were equal and independent of each other, but both acknowledged the authority of the Tui Rukuruku. Both these yavusa and the Noi Yasawa yavusa were socially connected, having a spiritual bond based on the mythical symbiosis of their original ancestors.

(iii) The three yavusa of Ketenatukani, Naqalitala/Vodawa and Sawene, of which the first two lived in the village of Tore, and the Ketenatukani lived in the village of Narata.
The original ancestral spirits of these three *yavusa* came down separately from Nakauvadra Range and following different routes (two following the coast through Vuda, and one following the Rewa River and coming across land), they settled on the upper reaches of the Nasigatoka River. As the name indicates, the original ancestral spirit of the Ketenatukani (The Band of Elder Brothers) was the first to arrive, and he married a woman of the Noi Yasawa who had already settled there.

Next to arrive was the ancestor of the Tavarua who married a woman of the Ketenatukani; and he was followed by the ancestor of the Naqalitala/Vodawa who married a woman of the Ketenatukani (the name of the group varies, but I think that the group name was Naqalitala, and their first settlement was Vodawa). He was followed by the original ancestor of the Sawene who married a woman of the Noi Yasawa.

The socio-political relationship that developed between these three *yavusa* and the *yavusa* of Noi Yasawa was based not only on the spiritual symbiosis of the original ancestral spirits but on intermarriage. The latter feature enforced the bond which formed the ideological basis for the socio-political relationship not only between these *yavusa* but ultimately between all of the six *yavusa* of the Kai ni Yasawa polity of Rukuruku.

The consequent histories of the Ketenatukani, the Naqalitala/Vodawa and the Werelevu relate to squabbles, fissions, movements and involvement in local warfare similar to those already described in accounts of the other *yavusa* in Rukuruku. Further, these three groups which bordered on Nadroga were particularly involved in the wars of Christianity and the Cakobau Government, in which the Kwa Levu or paramount chief of Nadroga sided with the Christians and the might of the Government armies and took advantage of this situation to legitimise attack on his old enemies of the mountainous interior. Even after Cession, there were internal security problems for the Colonial Government which led to Gordon’s ‘Little War’ which peripherally affected the Kai ni Yasawa. In spite of this continuing saga of warfare, fission and fusion, the *yavusa* of both the Kai ni Yasawa and the Noi Sesevia became united into the two minor socio-political complexes described. The Colonial Administration fossilised the situation and made it a lasting reality.

It is the very flexibility and fluidity of the situation as it developed in place and time in the Old tikina of Rukuruku which show why a study of these back-blocks polities are so pertinent and interesting from the point of view of exploring the development of socio-political complexes in late Fijian society in the west. The contrast between the structures of these polities in the back-blocks of the west, and of the structures of ambition-driven polities in the Tongan-influenced east is highly significant.

**Vaturu Old tikina: some loose socio-spiritual associations**

The five *yavusa* of Vaturu never seem to have developed into any one recognised socio-political complex with an acknowledged paramount leader. It was made quite clear to me in 1953 and again in 1996 when I visited the area that in the past as well as nowadays each *yavusa* regarded itself as independent, and did not heed the authority of any hierarchically superior group. The groups however appear to have fallen into three recognised associations, the Viyagoiranitu (Grandsons of the Original Ancestral Spirit); the Noi Tubai (Those within the War fence), now a single *yavusa* but at the time of Cession three *yavusa* known collectively as the Nadua; and the Yalatina (Those on the Boundary). There is record of a sixth *yavusa*, the Rarawaqa.

These five or six *yavusa* have similar features and are similar in origin and development to the independents *yavusa* of the Nine *Yavusa* described and commented on above. The main difference between them is probably their experiences with Cakobau’s military forces. Apart from internal quarrels and neighbourly disputes resulting in temporary fission and resulting fusion with neighbours with whom they were related spiritually or by marriage, the Vaturu *yavusa* like many
others encountered the violent hostility of the Cakobau army which, on behalf of the Cakobau Government, was marching from the coast to the interior, ostensibly avenging the murder of some European planters in the Ba district. In reality, the army was determined to expand by force the sphere of influence of Bau over territories that had traditionally not acknowledged its supremacy, as well as to demonstrate and enforce the powers of the Cakobau Government as a newly established pan-Fiji authority. Some of the Vaturu people sided with the Cakobau army, but those who opposed the army were deported to the island of Koro in the eastern Lomaiviti group. After Cession they were brought back; and after a probationary period either with the Fijian Administration official, Roko Tui Ba, or with the Sabeto people who were recognised as Cakobau-philes, they were resettled on their own lands. These lands became administratively the Old tikina of Vaturu in the Colonial Government.

The five yavusa forming the three socio-spiritual groupings of the Old tikina of Vaturu are now described in more detail.

(i) Viyagoiranitu, an independent single yavusa, based on the village of Nagado, about seven miles inland from Sabeto and at the east end of the Sabeto valley.

The original ancestral spirit came along the Tualeita, the spirit path following the mountain ranges from Nakauvadra to the west coast at Edromu just south of Vuda. He settled in the area known as Vaturu, where it is overlooked by the Tualeita range, and married a woman of the Noi Tubai (see below) living in another part of Vaturu.

This spiritual marriage was the basis of a close bond between the Viyagoiranitu and the Noi Tubai.

When the Noi Tubai later quarrelled among themselves, some went to join the Viyagoiranitu. The rest of the Noi Tubai attacked the dissident Noi Tubai sheltering with the Viyagoiranitu. The Viyagoiranitu scattered and heeded the authority of the victorious Noi Tubai until the latter were successfully attacked by the army of the Government of Cakobau.

The Viyagoiranitu thus regained their independence from the Noi Tubai. However they had not accepted Christianity nor the Government of Cakobau, and so they were attacked in turn by the Cakobau Christian army. They were deported to the island of Koro.

On their return to Vaturu, various sub-groups were settled in various places, but, in due course, they came together again. It says much for the strength of the spiritual bonds uniting the yavusa that in spite of all these tribulations and wanderings, together or separate, the Viyagoiranitu still regarded themselves, and were recognised by others, as an independent unity.

(ii) Noi Tubai, Nanuku and Nasau, three separate and independent yavusa known collectively as the Nadua, based in the village of Nagado.

The original ancestral spirit of the Nanuku came first from the Nakauvadra Range and settled at Nadua, in Vaturu; and he was followed from there by the spirit of the Nasau who also settled at Nadua. Then came the spirit of the Noi Tubai, though myths differ as to whether he came himself direct from Nakauvadra or whether he settled elsewhere on an islet of the Malolo group and his children went to Nadua.

The co-residence of the ancestral spirits at Nadua, albeit for a short time, formed the mythical basis for a loose socio-spiritual association between their descendants; and an ideological basis for the feeling of unity between members of the three yavusa. This feeling is said by them to account for and be reflected in the overall name of Nadua (The Unity). Nadua is also the name of the place first settled, but it is not clear whether the place was named after the unity of grouping or
the unity of grouping was named after the settlement where the spirits had first been in one (dua) place. This may be an ex post facto explanation, because although the word for “one” in eastern Fijian is ‘dua’, the equivalent in the local communalec is ‘lia’.

Because of the prior arrival of their original ancestor at Vaturu before those of the Noi Tubai or the Nasau, the Nanuku had the status of Na Ulumatua (First-born or Eldest) of the three yavusa of the Nadua. Reflecting the friendly relationship between their ancestral spirits, the Nasau had the status of Na Tokani (Companions or Partners) with the Noi Tubai.

This association between the three yavusa continued to be very close, not only during the times of internal squabbles (at one stage the Nasau were split over a case of adultery) and local fighting, but also in the face of the ‘invasion’ by the Cakobau army. It continued after the deportation to Koro and return to Vaturu. Thus no objection was raised when their numbers were so diminished that it was considered inappropriate to continue to regard Nanuku and the Nasau as two separate yavusa and they were made out to be mataqali of the numerically greater yavusa of Noi Tubai.

(iii) Yalatina, an independent single yavusa, based in village of Natawa, 14 km east of Nagado, and situated in the mountains on the very eastern boundary of the Old tikina of Vaturu.

The original ancestral spirit came from Nakauvadra to Vaturu and settled there; and later the ancestral spirit of the Nasau group arrived and settled alongside him. This created a spiritual bond which was the basis of the close but independent association between the Yalatina and the Nasau of Nagado.

The Yalatina became peripherally involved in an incident of adultery which split the Nasau people and led to fighting. The Yalatina sided with one of the parties to the quarrel and were worsted. So they fled north to the Vuda people and sought refuge with them. When the armies of Cakobau arrived, the Yalatina were with the Vuda people who were prepared to acknowledge, albeit not very enthusiastically, the new Government and the new religion. Vuda was not attacked, but the Cakobau army proceeded to sweep up the Sabeto valley and through Vaturu, bringing death and destruction and eventually deportation, to Koro, for many of those who opposed the Cakobau Government forces.

The Yalatina did not suffer the indignity of being deported to Koro which most of their neighbours suffered. This was not because of any regard they had for Cakobau or for Christianity, but because they chanced to be under the protection of Vuda at the time of the wars.

After Cession the Yalatina were taken back to Vaturu where they remained independent of any group, but acknowledging the authority of the Colonial Government and the Fijian Administration, and acquiescing to the authority of the Buli Vaturu, administrative head of the Fijian Administration Old tikina of Vaturu.

(iv) The Rarawaqa were once recognised as a sixth separate independent yavusa living on Vaturu land, but information about this group is sadly lacking.

Their original ancestral spirit had come from Nakauvadra to Vaturu, and settled at Rarawaqa where they were independent. An old man of Rarawaqa manhandled and chased away a woman from a nearby group who had come and stolen some dalo (taro). She reported this incident and the Rarawaqa were attacked and driven away to another place where they were until attacked by the Cakobau army and scattered. They were captured and deported to Koro. On their return, they heeded the authority of the Viyagoiranitu. The whereabouts of the Rarawaqa, or indeed their very existence, is at present a mystery to me and to all in Vaturu with whom I have discussed the matter. It was suggested to me that they
are now extinct, and I have no reason to disagree. I simply include them in order to show that there may well have been other *yavusa* in the late prehistoric or proto-historic times for which no account survives.