

**The Importance of Kinship, *Vanua* (tribe, land) system and *Veilomani* (mutual compassion) in Fiji and their influence on the Social and Spatial Response to Climate Change.
A Case Study of Dawasamu, Viti Levu Island.**



Photo: G.Randin, 2017. Sikeli, Iva, Vatimi and Joseva –brothers and cousins. Delakado village, Dawasamu, Fiji.

Grégoire Randin
Under the direction of
Prof. **Christian Ghasarian**

2018
« travail hors-cadre »

Table of contents

1. Introduction: Dawasamu district, Viti Levu island

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 A Case Study of Dawasamu

2. The Fijian Kinship System

- 2.1 Structure of the Kinship System
- 2.2 *Tabu* and Joking relationships
- 2.3 The Importance of Age and Seniority
- 2.4 The Importance of Intentionality and *Veilomani* (compassion)
- 2.5 Fijian kinship as a very extensive system

3. The *Vanua* (land, tribe) –the Fijian tribal structure

- 3.2 The *Vanua*
- 3.3 Social Structure of the *Vanua*: the *Yavusa*
- 3.4 Caring, loving, sharing and the practice of *kana veicurumaki* (sharing the land's resources) within the *Yavusa*

4. Climate Change in Dawasamu and the influence of kinship and *Vanua* system on the Social and Spatial Response to it

- 4.1 The Effects and Interpretation of Climate Change in Dawasamu
- 4.2 A social and spatial response to Climate Change: the practice of *veilomani* and *duavata* (togetherness)
- 4.3 Synthesis of the Influence of kinship and clans on the social and spatial response to climate change

5. Conclusion

1. Introduction: Dawasamu district, Viti Levu Island

1.1 Introduction

I discovered Fiji's villages back in 2015 when I volunteered 5 months as a teacher in Dawasamu District School through the NGO "Global Vision International", which was based in the village of Silana in the District. It allowed me to experience directly the Fijian 'way of life' within the villages and at school, to learn the culture and language and to become increasingly close to the people (especially to my Fijian host family). Since then, I have lived between Switzerland and Fiji and spent so far about 10 months in Dawasamu in the villages by myself and will go back soon. I am thus firstly personally and emotionally attached to that place and to certain people and I did not go there especially as a social researcher; my ethnography is rather "secondary" and most of my observations come from what I could experience in my everyday life in the villages (Silana and Delakado) beside my other activities.

My given assignment was to study the kinship system in Dawasamu, bearing in mind climate change and its consequences, as it is nowadays such an important matter in the whole of Fiji (Janif et al. 2016). Kinship and tribal structure play a very important role in the social interactions and shape the way they occur (Nabobo-Baba 2006). Moreover, during my time in Fiji, I found out that they are also crucial to understand the social and spatial response to climate change in the district of Dawasamu. **Therefore, the aim of this paper is to show how we can partially understand this response through understanding kinship and tribe structure in Dawasamu.** I want to highlight the fact that I do not aim to detail the whole of these phenomenon, kinship, tribe and climate change as they are complex and depend on a high number of elements. Likewise, I do not intent to proclaim that only through these we can understand the response to climate change; kinship and tribal structure are just two concepts that I found out to be important in that specific case and from my point of view. I will consider here kinship and tribe structure in Dawasamu as a way of "interpreting the world" by the people (Geertz 1973) that create a sense of identity and meaning to them (Ravuvu 1983: 77).

Hence, all the information I am relating in this paper are a mix of my daily observations and experience of the everyday life in the villages, a serial of semi-directive interviews I

conducted for this specific occasion and the reading of the literature on the subject. More specifically, I will mostly rely on the work of Fijian scholars such as Asesela Ravuvu (1983), Nayacakalou (1955) and Nabobo-Baba (2006, 2014) as well as other researchers such as Torren (1999), Ghasarian (1996), Janif et al. (2016) and more.

1.2 A Case Study of Dawasamu

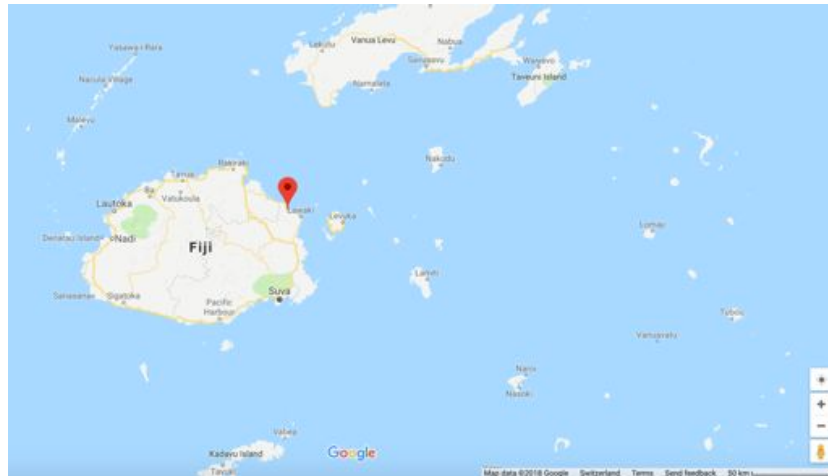


Fig.1 Location of Dawasamu district in the Tailevu province, on Viti Levu Island

Dawasamu is a rural district located in Tailevu province, on the north-east of the main island Viti Levu. It encompasses a dozen of villages, but we will focus in this paper on the two in which I spent most of my time in Fiji, *Silana* and *Delakado*. The walking distance between the two is approximately one hour to one hour and a half; *Silana* is a coastal village and *Delakado* is a little bit inland (30min walking from the sea) located by a river. There is about 200 people in *Silana* and 500 in *Delakado*.

1. The Fijian Kinship System

In every human societies kinship plays a consequent role and is important to determine the social position of a person (Ghasarian 1996: 11-12). Nevertheless, many modern anthropologists have criticized the structural and classical analysis of kinship for being too theoretical and therefore excluding its sociological implications (H.T Fei 1939, Nayacakalou 1955, Hall 1976). Hence, we will rather focus in this paper on the social interactions that kinship creates, as the latter has an extremely important role in Fijian everyday life and thus has a big role in shaping the way interactions occur (Ravuvu 1983, Nabobo-Baba 2006, Nayacakalou 1955); this is also the reason of choosing kinship as a potential key to understand the social response to climate change.

Structure of the Kinship System

Only *some* aspects of the kinship will be discussed here, as understanding the whole of it would require extensive research and fieldwork on the subject.

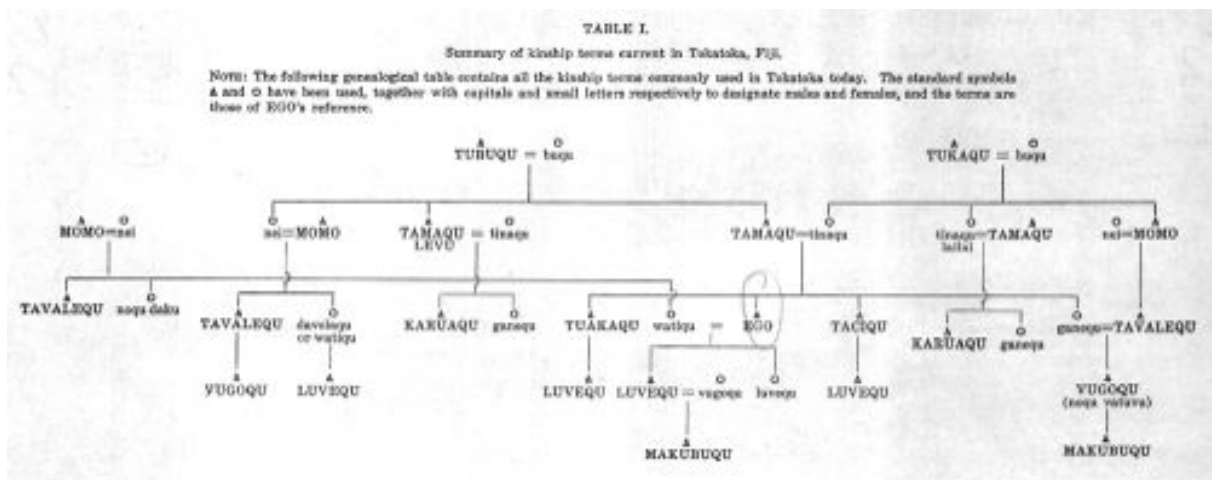


Fig.2 Diagram of Kinship terms in Tokatoka made by Nayacakalou (1955: 46). All of the terms are described from the perspective of EGO. The term "QU" at the end of each word means "my". For instance TAVALE is cousin and QU is mine.

TAVALEQU is "my cousin". TAMAQU is "my father", LUVEQU "my child" etc...

Here above is a table made by Nayacakalou containing all the kinship terms used in Tokatoka, which is located in the same Tailevu province as Dawasamu. As we will see in the next chapter, Fijian kinship is closely connected to the structure of the clan and a common ancestor shared by the members of a kinship group (Nayacakalou 1955: 46) which creates a

“lineage group” (Ghasarian 1996: 79). Nayacakalou (1955: 46) highlighted two fundamental principles to understand Fijian kinship structure: the first one is the principle of common descent which binds together the members of a lineage group. More specifically, this principle is auto determined by a “unilinear descent” (Ghasarian 1996: 58) and in that case by a **“patrilinear descent”** and male emphasis (Nayacakalou 1955: 46, Ravuvu 1983: 1) which means that the title and kinship position of an individual is inherited through the father. The second principle is that of **“common parentage”**, which binds together the members of a sibling group in an extended way. In addition, Ghasarian states that one of the characteristics that binds together the members of a same lineage group is that by sharing similar duties and rights, they become united and somehow are merged into one encompassing “moral person” (Ghasarian 1996: 79). Once again, this is a characteristic that can be found into the tribe structure that we will see in the next chapter.

The first thing we can notice in Fijian kinship as represented in the diagram is that the brothers of one’s father (TAMAQU) are also considered to be one’s fathers, calling them TAMAQU LEVU (or more commonly TA LEVU)-meaning “big dad” or TA LAILAI –meaning “small dad”, according to their seniority compared to one’s father. However, the sister of one’s father are not one’s mother (TINAQU, or just NA) but the NEI (its closed translation in English would be ‘aunty’). On the mother side, the mother’s sisters are also one’s “big mothers” or “small mothers” (NA LEVU or NA LAILAI). The interesting thing is that it is not one’s mother’s brother who is also a TA LEVU/LAILAI, but the husband of one’s NA LEVU/LAILAI. One’s mother’s brother is the MOMO (‘uncle’).

Therefore, through the principle of “common parentage”, the children of one’s father’s brothers (parallel cousins) are considered to be one’s true brothers and sisters and must be treated as such (Ravuvu 1983: 7) . However, the children of one’s father’s sisters (cross-cousins) as well as all other children of our different MOMOS, are the TAVALE with whom one have a different kind of relationship (‘joking relationship’ that will see afterwards). Even though they not considered to be “true” siblings like the parallel cousins, their children will be called LUVUQU (my child), which is the same term used for the children of one’s parallel cousins or brothers and sisters.

'Tabu' and Joking relationships

The relationships with one's kin are sometimes regulated by specific behavioral codes which are the two opposite "avoidance relationship" and "joking relationship" (Ghasarian 1996: 190-195) and these play a big role in Fiji's kinship interactions. The "avoidance relationship", translated *tabu*, especially occur with one's MOMO (be them the brothers of one's mother, the father of one's wife or the husbands of one's father's sisters) with whom one should respect, avoid and limit conversation with as a mark of respect. (Ravuvu 1983: 6)

Ravuvu also highlights that there is a "brother-sister taboo" (also between parallel cousins) and that they should maintain a certain bodily distance between themselves, especially when growing older (1983: 6). I did not see that phenomenon in the houses around me when I was in the villages, especially between older siblings towards younger ones who seemed to me very touchy with no apparent taboo.

On the contrary of the *tabu* relationships, "joking relationships", which allow persons to mock and tease each other with a mix of kindness and antagonist complicity (Ghasarian 1996: 192, Radcliffe-Brown 1940), are very present in Fiji and especially with one's TAVALE, or cross-cousins. At the same, one's cross-cousins are also the preferred group of potential husbands and wife (Ravuvu 1983: 6) even though one can have joking relationship with anyone with whom one like to joke or have fun with as long as they are not *tabu* (also through the principle of kinship extensiveness that we will talk about in the next chapter); actually, I feel that this relationship also happens a lot with people who don't belong to the same kinship group. For instance, I started to regularly play with one of my Fijian small cousins, Akini (4 years old), and to lift him upside down by the feet every time I saw him, making him laugh; one time his grandfather saw us and told him, smiling and pointing at me: *tavale*.

The Importance of Age and Seniority

The notion of age is also extremely important in determining social behaviors and economic activities (Ravuvu 1983: 7). Family members are ranked in order of seniority of birth; the younger should obey and respect the older (ibid.). I have witnessed this pattern especially for elderly people where there is a clear "age hierarchy"; the older they are, the more

respect people should have for them. This pattern is also very useful for us to understand the response to climate change, as we will see. Concerning children, the older brothers and sisters have more responsibilities and should take care of their younger siblings who will, in return, listen to them and do what they say (this, I must say, is sometimes a little bit different in reality, obviously).

The importance of intentionality and *veilomani* (compassion) in Fijian kinship

Cooperation, care and love within one's kin group is a very important notion in Fijian kinship, especially among children (Ravuvu 1983: 3, Torren 1999: 266, Nabobo-baba 2014). It is true that the first time I went to Fiji, I was astonished to see how much siblings loved and were taking care of each other in a much more expressive way that I could have witnessed in Western countries (which does not mean that they do not fight or argue like every kids). Through a serial of interviews conducted with Fijian children in 1999, anthropologist Christina Torren has found out that complicity, love, care, compassion (once again, which does not exclude fighting, arguing and teasing at times) was a key principle to understand how children were interpreting the fact of being kin with their peers and how important these notions were to them (Torren 1999).



Fig 3. Sikeli and Joseva (my Delakado brothers) with two of their parallel cousins (small girls). G.Randin 2016



Fig 4. Maika Tui (one of my Silana brothers) holding his youngest sister, Lusi Randin (who also bears my name). G.Randin 2017

Fijian kinship as a very extensive system

One of the other specificities of the Fijian kinship system is that it is very extensive (Nayacakalou 1955: 48, Ravuvu 1983: 3, Torren 1999: 266) and this is one of the first thing about kinship I have experienced and noticed. As we just saw, **affinities and feelings** can not only enhance or not one's relationship to someone within one's group of kin, but I think it can also somehow "create new kinship". This would resemble what Ghasarian calls a "spiritual kinship" (1996: 188), but probably with more social implications. Thus, in some cases, kinship it can "created" based on people's affinities with each other (Torren 1999: 271) and therefore can also be applied to people who a not necessarily blood related in any way. I think that it might be one of the reason why kinship plays such a role in the everyday life, because its structure is applied on almost every relationships; friends, even acquaintances, as long as there is a "friendly" and emotional bond between the persons. I can illustrate this phenomenon with two personal example (that I chose among many of them):

While I was teaching in Dawasamu District School back in 2015, I became friend with the then school's head boy, Sikeli, and he invited me for a sleepover in his village, Delakado (this is how I first came to the village). As I had a very good contact with his family, I came back the next year to spend more time in this village. As soon as my relationship with Sikeli was considered to be "true" and solid, I "became" his true brother in the eyes of his family and I was thus completely included in his kinship position. In a practical way, it means that his *tata* and *nana* became mine, his *momos* became mine, his *ta levu* and *na levu* became mine etc... with all the tabu and rules, the kinship's "do's and don'ts" that come along. For instance, I now cannot call his father's brother by his name anymore, I have to call him *ta levu*; and if I don't, I will be remembered to do so! However, because I am a *kaivalagi* (foreigner, westerner) and thus have a different status -my unconscious misbehaviors will be more tolerated- and also maybe because of my personality, I do maintain a "joking relationship" with a lot of people and even my *momos* (which is a lot of fun) with whom Sikeli could not joke for instance, or at least not as openly as I do it.

The other example, also with Sikeli, shows the same pattern the other way around. Because I always navigate between my two villages (Silana and Delakado), I started to sometimes take

Sikeli with me to Silana, mostly to go fishing and enjoy the sea; thus he would sleep over with me in my Silana's family. There is one thing astonished me about his behavior toward my family there: very quickly, even though he had never been to Silana, he addressed to the mother, Esita, as *nana* (mum) who called him in return *luvequ* (my child) and he actually behaved like an older brother with the other six children, taking care of the small ones and performing some chores in the house (without being asked for it). He now always call Esita *nana* when he sees her. Hence, as I have adopted his kinship position in Delakado, he adopted mine in Silana and my "kin" became his. I was particularly marked by this as it happened regardless of my non-existent blood relationships with anyone as I am also "adopted" in Silana; we can thus see here the importance of affinities with people, the little importance of "true" blood ties as well as the extensiveness and inclusiveness in the kinship system in Fiji.

2. The *Vanua* (land, tribe) -the Fijian tribal structure

Outside of towns owned by the government, a big part of lands in Fiji is still owned by clans and tribes (Nabobo-Baba 2006) and everyone who go to these places, be them locals or foreigners, must adopt its rules and *tabu*, the “do’s and don’ts” that can be traced to very ancient origins, way before the arrival of English colonizers during the late 18th Century. We will focus on these parts of Fiji in this paper.

The term *Vanua* has different meanings all interconnected. Its direct translation is ‘land’; however, it does not only refer to the physical and geographical dimension of the land but also to cultural and social dimensions linked to it. We can call this term a “high-context term” because its meaning changes with its context (Hall 1976). The Vanua thus refers to the vegetation, the animals, but also to the people, their traditions, beliefs, customs, values and all the other institutions established to achieve harmony solidarity and prosperity within a particular social context (Ravuvu 1983: 70). Ravuvu highlights the fact that the social and cultural part of the Vanua are a source of security and confidence for the people and that it creates a sense of identity and belonging (ibid). Each clans have their own vanua and they are spiritually connected to it, to its *mana* (spiritual energy). There are two major parts of the vanua: the *vanua tabu* (sacred place) and the *vanua tara* (secular place). The *vanua tabu* have a religious importance to the community through the supernatural belief in spirits and ancestral gods and should be avoided. The *vanua tara* encompass every part of the *vanua* that is not sacred in any way and can be utilized for its resources (Ravuvu 1983: 82-84)-



Fig 5 and 6. Two examples of different parts of the *Vanua*. On the left the *Wailevu* (river) in Delakado village and on the right *Tova* (mountain) in Silana village. Photos G.Randin 2017.

Social Structure of the *Vanua* : the *Yavusa*

The *Vanua* (in that case meaning tribe) can be understood as an extended kinship system, this time not with one's blood family and relatives but with the people who belong the same land and are physically connected to it. The *vanua* also has a spiritual dimension: each member of the same tribe are considered to be the soul of the geographical land; without the people, the physical *vanua* would be soul-less and incomplete and thus needs humans. In the other way around, the people would also be incomplete without the connection to their land (Ravuvu 1983: 70).

The next diagram represents the human manifestation of the *vanua* that one can find everywhere in Fiji.

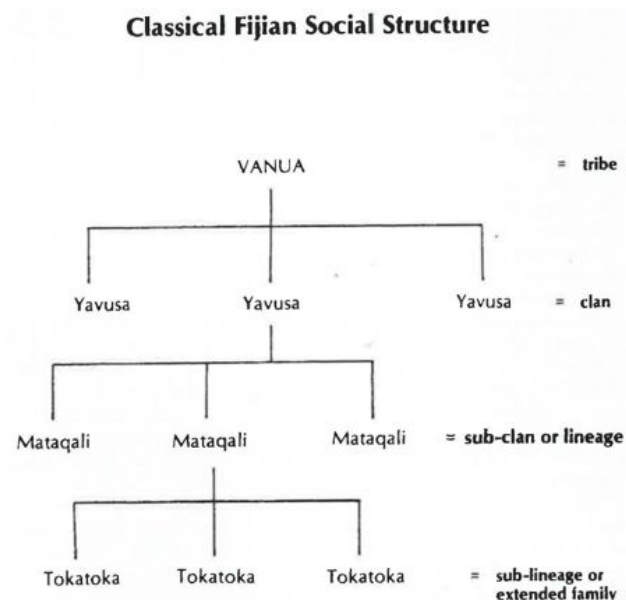


Fig 7 tribal and clan structure. (Ravuvu 1983: 70)

We can see here that the next social unit after the *vanua* (tribe) is the *yavusa* (the clan), a group of people who trace their descendants on the male line to a common ancestor or ancestor god (Ravuvu 1983: 76). However, when I asked my Fijian father Bati (Sikeli's father), he told me that the *Yavusa* is the tribe and that the *Vanua* is actually bigger than the tribe; in that case, he told me that *Dawasamu* itself was the *Vanua*. THE *Yavusa* is then sub-divided into groups according to kin and chiefly relationships: the *mataqali* and *tokatoka* (Ravuvu

76). My family's (and thus mine as well) *mataqali* and *tokatoka* in Delakado are the same: the *Wailevu* (meaning river). The *yavusa* is *Navunisea* and there are three of them in the village.

The village, *koro*, can be understood as a part of the *vanua* itself where people from different clans have gathered to live together. It is also important to highlight the existence of a **hierarchy between clans** which is expressed within the village structure: the closest the houses are located to the center, the highest "ranked" in the clans hierarchy they are (Ravuvu 1983: 78). Hierarchy between clans is complex and not easy to completely understand for me; "chiefly" families (such as my family in Delakado for instance) are expected to have a certain behavior that is regarded as chiefly (Sahlins 1963), especially in situation of troubles. Some physical and social actions in the *koro* and *vanua* are allowed or not according to the hierarchal positions of the clans people belong to. Further research would be needed to understand better this pattern, but from what I could have heard, hierarchy between clans partly depends on ancestral history, such as ancient tribal wars won or lost. We can see here that clan hierarchy has a major spatial impact on the social organization in the villages.

Caring, loving, sharing and the practice of *kana veicurumaki* (sharing the land's resources) within the *Yavusa*

In an economy which is still very much subsistence based, the idea of caring and sharing with others is an important aspect of the value systems of Fijian people. Indeed, the members of a same community often depend upon one another for their various needs for their survival (Ravuvu 1983: 81). According to Ravuvu, the responsibility of Fijian villagers to take care of one's immediate blood relatives is extended to the wider kinship relationships system that we already talked about earlier. Moreover, this responsibility of taking care of one another is also extended to the members of the same *tokatoka*, then *mataqali* and finally *yavusa* (according to a system of priorities based on the closeness of the relationships with the people) (Ravuvu 1983: 81). Torren states that the principle of compassion found across the clans, villages and chiefdoms is an actual extension of the *veilomani* found in the relationships within the kin group (Torren 1999: 266).

Sharing and caring is embodied in several Fijian ideal terms: *veivukei* (offering a helpful hand), *veinanumi* (the act of being considerate), *veilomani* (loving and friendly one another), *duavata* (togetherness), *yalovata* (of the same spirit). (Ravuvu 82).

These Fijian ideals are manifested through the practice of ***kana veicurumaki***: the land resources of one group or individual can also be used by others and vice-versa (Ravuvu 82).. As we will see in the next chapter, I believe this principle to be extremely important to understand the spatial response to climate change in Dawasamu.

3. Climate Change in Dawasamu and the influence of kinship and *Vanua* system on the Social and Spatial Response to it

The Effects and Interpretation of Climate Change in Dawasamu

Like all the Pacific Islands, Fiji is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and especially its coastal and rural communities (Campbell 2015, Janif et al. 2016). Although there may be a lack of communication about climate change in some rural parts of Fiji (mostly in the remote islands) (Janif et al. 2016), the issue is widely discussed through different media (radio, newspapers, Facebook, television, school...) in Viti Levu (the main island), especially after the events of 2016: on the 20th of February, Category 5 Cyclone Winston, the most powerful tropical cyclone recorded in the Southern Hemisphere, made a landfall in Fiji and literally wiped out the island nation. Consequently, 350,000 people had their house destroyed or damaged, 40 people died and a big part of Fijian population lived chaotic situation for months (Diamond 2017, Fritz 2016). The trauma created by Winston induced a huge increase of interest about climate change by the government and media in the whole of Fiji, and is now a major topic among the Fijian population (Lagonilakeba 2017).

I asked Sanaila, the chief of Silana village (one of Dawasamu villages) the question “What are some effects of the climate change in the village?” and this is what he answered:

“The rise of sea level, getting hotter, cyclones going up to category 5, soil and sand and sea erosion...”

I also asked the same question to Samu, another dweller of Silana village (who is technically one of my *momo*) and he answered me this:

“The washing away of the sand; before when it was high tide it didn’t wash away coconut trees; nowadays there is one line of coconut trees that has been washed away. So that is an effect of climate change. That is what I see. “

We can see that some of the major climate change effects highlighted here by both of the men are linked to the ocean: the rising of the sea level, the withdrawing of the beach and of the first line of vegetation as well as the warming of temperatures and the strengthening and loom of tropical cyclones. Samu went on:

“It’s also happening in the trees bearing fruits. When I was small, we used to eat the mangoes here, but nowadays it’s not a lot. Only a few. What we can see on mangoes, that’s the effect of climate change”

Samu also highlights changes in the abundance of mangoes and other fruits; they are scarce compared to what it used to be during his childhood and are, according to him, part of the recent environmental perturbations brought by climate change.



Fig 8 and 9. Example of destruction in Silana village caused by Category 5 Cyclone Winston in 2016. Photo G.Randin 2016.

A social and spatial response to Climate Change: the practice of *veilomani* and *duavata* (togetherness)

As we have seen throughout this paper, love, compassion, unity, sharing are keys to understand social relationships in Fijian embodied in those terms: *veivukei* (offering a helpful hand), *veinanumi* (the act of being considerate), *veilomani* (loving and friendly one another), *duavata* (togetherness), *yalovata* (of the same spirit). (Ravuvu 82). Therefore, as climate change (which is, as we have seen, a relatively new notion in the Pacific islands) has proved itself to be a major and presumably long-lasting issue in Fiji and thus seems to be taken seriously by the people, I believe that the same values that we have seen in kinship and clans will also be applied to it in order to response to the phenomenon. Here is a quote from chief Sanaila that shows this pattern:

“In the village we work as a community, we live as a community...So we help one another. In that way, we can also face climate change; like planting more trees, so here we do it as a village. We work together.”

Sanaila highlights that “working as a community” and “helping one another” were happening before the “arrival” of the effects of climate change and that they are just extended to its response, which confirms my point.

But how is this notion of sharing practiced concretely? I talked with my Delakado father, Bati, about what he would precisely do if he came to the point of lacking a basic resource. Here is an extract of the conversation:

(Bati) -Ke se sega na suka au kerekere kana dua (*if there is no sugar I will go and ask*)

(Me) - Who will you ask first?

(Bati)- My family. Yeah the one that stay beside you. Like Sikeli’s namesake, bubu Sikeli. Then if no sugar there, I’ll go to Ta Levu¹; then Bubu Tagane²... Family first. Yavusa, Mataqali, Tokatoka imuri (*the clans afterwards*).

As we can see, Bati would go and ask sugar to his closest family first (brothers and sisters, father and mother, “big dads”) who are living close to his house, as families group their house near one another. He would then go to the members of his clan, then tribe. It is also interesting to note the non-differentiation he is making between his “big father” and “real father”, and the extensiveness of kinship as he includes me as his son.

We come here to the main point of this paper: **sharing the resources, helping one another and working in unity as a response to climate change in Dawasamu is not practiced through a random scheme; it partly depends on the clans and kinship bonds between the people which will create a complex system of sharing priorities between them.** In other terms, veilomani (compassion, love) is at the base of the three phenomenon studied in this paper, kinship, clans and social response to climate change. But it goes beyond that: the “hierarchal way” veilomani is socially applied through the clan and kinship system will be similarly applied to the social response to climate change.

¹ *Ta levu* meaning “big dad”, he is addressing to me as his son, so he is talking about my *ta levu* and thus his older brother

² same story ; *bubu tagane* (grandfather) from my perspective and thus his father.

Synthesis of the influence of kinship and clans on the social and spatial response to climate change

I tried here to synthesize in key points the aspects of kinship and clans influencing the social *and* spatial (respectively) response to c.change that we have seen throughout this paper.

*Some of the aspects of kinship and clans influencing the **social** response to c.change:*

- 1) the existence of a priority of sharing with the close relatives first BUT the simultaneous notion of extensiveness of this family (e.g. common parentage) which creates a larger “immediate” family to share with.
- 2) The existence of a secondary priority of sharing with members of the same *mataqali* and *tokatoka*, then *yavusa*.
- 3) The existence of “avoidance relationships” and “joking relationships” that can respectively hinder or facilitate the process of sharing.
- 4) The importance of seniority that can enhance the process of sharing with elderly people first, for instance.
- 5) The notion of affinity and extensiveness to non-related people, which complicates the influence 1) as it can include those random “spiritual kin” in the close family circle.
- 6) The hierarchy between clans; people belonging to “chiefly” clans may have more responsibility and thus have to take care of people from “lower” tribal positions

*Some of the aspects of kinship and clans influencing the **spatial** response to c.change:*

1. The members of the extended family build their house close to each other. Thus, the majority of people to firstly share with live in a relatively small perimeter around one’s house.
2. Same pattern as in 1.; but applied to the *mataqali* who build their house in a slightly larger perimeter than the extended families do.
3. The existence of “avoidance relationships” and “joking relationships” can imply the sharing outside of one’s house perimeter as they can occur with random people (especially with joking relationships).
4. The notion of seniority can also “break” the sharing perimeter around one’s house as the elderly with whom to share with may live in other parts of the village.

5. The notion of affinity and kinship extensiveness to non-related people can also imply the “breaking” of the sharing perimeter around one’s house if they occur with people living in the same village. It will not impact the sharing perimeter if it occurs with people living outside of the village, as they will probably stay in one’s house.
6. The hierarchy between clans implies a sharing pattern going from the center of the village to the edges of it, as “chiefly people”, who are expected to help others, are living in the center.

4. Conclusion

Throughout this paper, we could see how complex kinship and clans structures determine social interactions in Fiji (more specifically in Dawasamu district) even though we only had a superficial overview on them. We could also see how these principles shape the social response to climate change and the adaptation of the people to the phenomenon, and that anyone who wants to understand or face it will be advantaged if he/she has a knowledge of kinship and clans. However, it is again very important to mention that I only described in a rapid way very complex phenomenon; thus, it would require further research to understand them better and more completely. There are also probably much more aspects that shape the social and spatial response to climate change in Dawasamu, but once again, kinship and clans were the ones that I caught my attention the most while staying in the villages.

A Special Thanks to Prof.Christian Ghasarian and Prof.Ellen Hertz for allowing me to do this research while I was in Fiji, Peni Bati, Samu and Sanaila for letting me interview them and Salote Waqanivalu in Geneva for correcting me

References

- CAMPBELL J.R
2015. "Development, global change and traditional food security in the Pacific Island Countries." *Regional Environmental Change* 15(7). P 1313-1324
- GEERTZ Clifford
1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New-York: Basic Books
- GHASARIAN Christian
1996. *Introduction à l'étude de la parenté*. Paris: Editions du Seuil.
- HALL Edward.T
1976 *Beyond Culture*. New-York: Doubleday and Company
- H. T. Fei
1939. *Peasant Life in China*. London.
- JANIF Shaiza Z. et al.
2016. "Values of traditional oral narratives in building climate-change resilience: insights from rural communities in Fiji". *Ecology and Society* 21(2):7. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-08100-210207>
- LEVI-STRAUSS Claude
1949/1967. *Les Structures élémentaires de la parenté*. Paris-La Haye: Mouton.
- NABOBO-BABA Unaisi
2006. *Knowing and learning. An Indigenous Fijian approach*. Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies, the University of the South Pacific.
- NABOBO-BABA Unaisi et al.
2014. "Talanoa as empathic apprenticeship". *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, vol.55 (n°3), December. P. 319-330
- NAYACAKALOU R.R.
1955. "The Fijian System of Kinship and Marriage: Part.1". *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*. Vol. 64 No.1, March. P.44-55
- RADCLIFFE-BROWN Alfred
1940. "On joking relationships". *Africa*, 13.
- RAVUVU Asesela
1983. *Vaka i Taukei. The Fijian Way of Life*. Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies, the University of the South Pacific.
- RUDIAK-GOULD Peter
2013. *Climate Change in a Small Island State*. New-York: Routledge
- SAHLINS Marshall D.
1963. "Poor Man, Rich Man, Big Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia". *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.5, No.3, April. P.284-303.
- TOREN Christina
1999. "Compassion for One Another: Constituting Kinship as Intentionality in Fiji". *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. Vol.5. No.2 (Jun.). P.265-280.

Non-academic sources

LAGONILAKEBA Tukai

(2 January 2017) "Climate change awareness". *The Fiji Times Online*. Consulted 5th of February 2018

FRITZ Angela

(19 February 2016). "Catastrophic Cyclone Winston bears down on Fiji's main island in worst case scenario". *The Washington Post*. Consulted 2th of January 2018

DIAMOND HOWARD

(5 July 2017). "Southwest Pacific Enhanced Archive for Tropical Cyclones (SPEArTC)". Consulted 4th of February 2018