

SUMMARY NOTES ON HISTORY OF FIJI-

YEAR 9 SOCIAL SCIENCE

(Note: **Copy** the following history notes in your **Social Science Exercise Books**. Remember, it's a **new chapter** hence you'll be starting on a **new page**. Moreover, do the activities also in your books as it appears in the Notes)

CHAPTER TWO: TIME, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

UNIT 1: HISTORY OF FIJI

Pre- Contact Period

- It is a period before the Europeans arrived in Fiji.
- Before the arrival of the Europeans, Pacific Islanders have already settled in the Pacific at least for 40 000 years.
- They established themselves and created a social structure and organization.

EARLY SETTLERS

There were three periods of early voyaging:

a. **1st Period:** 50,000 – 60, 000 years ago.

Movements of people from South China and the first Aboriginal people moved to Continent Australia and New Guinea.

b. **2nd Period:** 30,000 – 40,000 years ago.

People continued to move into South East Asia, Australia and mainland New Guinea islands and nearly Solomon Island.

c. **3rd Period:** 3500 – 3000 years

People moved quickly through voyaging from Melanesia out into the South Pacific, and into the North Pacific from Philippines/Taiwan into the atolls of Micronesia.

THE SOCIETY OF THE EARLY FIJIANS SETTLEMENTS

- ✚ First settlements in Fiji- started by voyaging traders and settlers from Melanesia about 3500 years ago.
- ✚ Early travelers were using Fiji as a transit.
- ✚ Due to the fact that Lapita potteries have been found in Lakeba, Beqa, Natunuka, Naigani and other parts of Fiji, it suggested that the first Fijians shared common cultural aspects with the people of the Western Pacific or Melanesia.
- ✚ Stone adzes found in Samoa and Fiji suggested that Fijian culture has a link to Samoans culture.
- ✚ Huge canoes made from Fiji trees were found in Tonga.
- ✚ Pots made in Fiji have been found in the Marquesas Islands.
- ✚ All these contacts could have been the result of people of other places coming to, through and from Fiji.
- ✚ This could also explain the number of languages or dialects used within the Fiji Group.

SOCIAL ORGANISATION

- ✚ The i-Taukei (taukei ni qele) settled and worked the land.
- ✚ The first settlers' society was made up of many different people, some staying while others moved on to the other new districts.
- ✚ People cleared the bush, levelled land and made gardens in different ways.
- ✚ New settlers introduced new patterns or designs in Lapita pottery.
- ✚ Gradually, through this sharing process, a unique Fiji culture developed

EFFECTS OF POPULATION GROWTH ON SOCIAL STRUCTURE

As the population increased, people settled permanently which resulted in the formation of social organization known as the “mataqali” or the family unit.

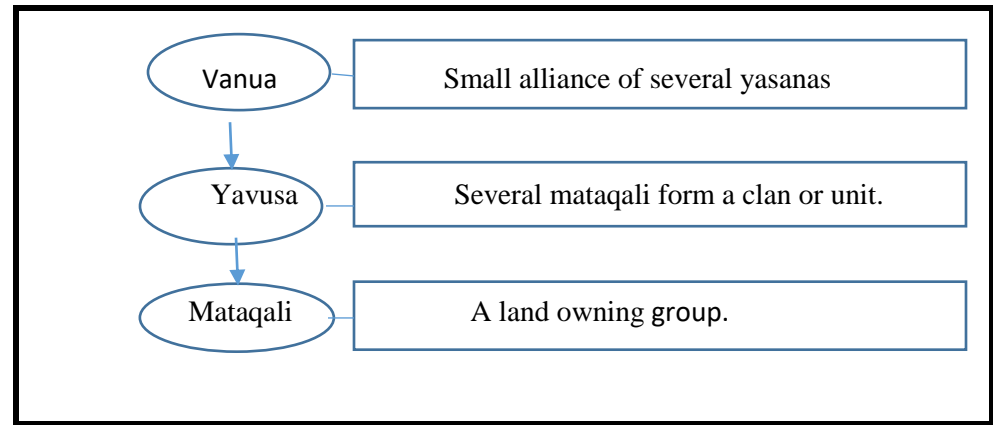
- ❖ The “mataqali” was headed by a “**Turaga**” or chief
- ❖ Land use was decided by the “ mataqali” and in some parts of Fiji by a smaller group within the village known as “**tokatoka**”.
- ❖ Political authority was organized within, whereby everyone was given a position: chiefs, the chief’s assistance, speakers and orators, organizers of ceremonies, priests and warriors.

Chiefs at different levels	Chiefs responsibility:
a. A chief of the leading family of each village b. A chief of whole island or large district c. A great chief – ruling several islands and other regions	a. Control of food production b. Decision about village life c. Protection of the people from attackers d. Uphold village law

- ❖ These chiefs had power of all life and death over their people and they commanded great respect.
- ❖ As the population grew and competition for power and status increased, the “**yavusa**” joined to form a “**vanua**” (a small alliance).
- ❖ Later, several **vanua** would join to form a larger political group the “**matanitu**”.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

(copy structure below)



WHAT WAS EARLY FIJI LIKE?

- i. I-Taukei lived a life regularly threatened by war.
- ii. I-Taukei were busy tending animals, fishing, ceremonies and domestic chores each day.
- iii. Agriculture was very important.
- iv. They used wet-field methods to grow taro and protected the soil by leaving fields fallow.
- v. **Practice of sacrifice** - for ceremonial and spiritual reasons; people were used as rollers to launch huge war canoes or buried in the postholes of new buildings.
- vi. Practice of barter system.

EVIDENCE OF THE PAST

- Old structures such as forts and ditches
- Customs passed down through the generations
- Messages in the forms of ceremonies, rituals, songs, myths, chants, body decorations, house carvings, “masi” patterns
- The shape of sail

- Hand and body movements in dances
- Stories passed down through generations
- Diaries and letters of Europeans who saw Fiji before it was affected by western habits, goods and ideas
- Photographs (after 1840)

EUROPEAN DISCOVERY OF FIJI

*(Note: Students, under this topic you will have to paste the table diagram given on the **European Explorers of Fiji.**)*

Activity: (Answer the following questions after going through the notes)

- What was the daily lifestyle during the pre-contact period?
- Why was the need for social structure in the Early Fijian Societies?
- Who was the first- European explorer to visit Fiji?

EARLY EUROPEAN CONTACT

1. The Sandalwood trade

- ✚ Europeans first came to Fiji in large numbers in search of sandalwood.
- ✚ A profitable trade in sandalwood could be found in China and India as they were used for religious articles and scent.
- ✚ It was highly priced in Asia and buyers would pay high price for it.

1800 OLIVER SLATER

1800 – Olive Slater discovered sandalwood at Bua Bay.

- Was picked up by the ship El Plumier (was sailing to Manila in the Philippines)

1804 – Slater found a market for sandalwood & passed on the news to Simeon Lord, the owner of the schooner, Marcia.

1805 – First cargo of Sandalwood from Fiji

1808 – 1809 Sandalwood trade reached its peak

1813 – Very little sandalwood left and traders turned their attention to beach- de-mer.

1830s – **Bech –de-mer** trade reached its height.

ITEMS USED FOR TRADE BY EUROPEANS FOR SANDALWOOD

- Iron hoops and bars
- Fishing hooks
- Bottles
- Clothes

EFFECTS OF THE SANDALWOOD TRADE

- Brought in a **source of wealth** (items brought in the Europeans)
- I-Taukei were eager to sell their sandalwood for the traders, “tabua”, iron, goods and tools
- Jealousy among other chiefs** without access to traders and European goods.

EFFECTS ON ECONOMIC LIFESTYLE

- New western items were traded in the exchange of goods by the tribes.
- These new items brought other benefits to Fiji.
- Fijians became exposed to European diseases such as measles and the common cold.
 - Men were away from their village a long time cutting trees and loading them on trader's ships.
- Fijians started to get jobs on board the trader's ships like temporary pilots, cooks and translators.
- Woman had to make do while men were away from the village

2. BEACHCOMBER

- Beachcombers **were such men as shipwrecked sailors, runaway convicts and ship deserters.**
- They brought with them not only their immoral ways of life, but also firearms and alcohol thus more serious changes were brought by these people which influenced the Fijian way of life.

REASONS FOR ESCAPING FROM SHIPS

- To escape poor conditions on board
- Low wages
- Severe punishment

EFFECTS OF BEACHCOMBERS

- They lived with Fijians and also brought them new ideas of Western Technology, including fire arm sled led to the change in

the communal lifestyles because these people lived with the Fijians.

- They settled and married in villages.
- They fought amongst themselves

CHARLES SAVAGE: 1808 (A Beachcomber)

- Beachcomber who survived a shipwreck and found his way to Bau.
- Savage took a supply of muskets and ammunition from the wreck
- Bau was then able to conquer its rivals and establish itself as one of the most powerful links in Fiji.
- With his ability to speak both Tongan and Fijian made him become accepted as the Vunivalu of Bau's Whiteman

3. WHALING

- ❖ The whaling era in the Pacific lasted from **1789 – 1860.**
- ❖ It was dominated by **Whalers from the New England coast of North America.**
- ❖ By **1840** there were **700 American whaling ships** in the Pacific. They provided employment for the people in the Pacific.
- ❖ Even though Fiji was a long distance from the whaling areas, it established a **small whaling settlement** using the sheltered harbor at **Levuka by 1830.**
- ❖ The Rotumans obtained whales teeth from the whalers and used them for trading with i-Taukei during inter – island voyages