

TOPIC: FUNERAL

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Translation sheet.

INTERVIEWED: BULOLO S. VAVAITAMANA VABEA, ONO, KADAVU.

SUBJECT: MATE (DEATH)

Adi - When a chief dies in Ono Kadavu, that is in Kadavu the news is taken with a Kamunaga to the four Yavusa's. The Yavusa Uluni Koro, Matusara, Natuvu and Kuvei Vabea. Each yavusa is responsible for a particular part or itavi. The Yavusa Karua ni Bilu is this are those from Jiliva is responsible for the Tagi ni Davui. This tribe is also responsible for handing the chiefs body. They bath him, cloth him, place him in his coffin and are also coffin bearers and grave diggers. We the chiefs children have no say to what is being done to the chiefs body. We only listen to the responsible tribe. Its a taboo for us to touch the chiefs body and we will only wait for the time that is given to us to kiss our father for the last time. This is the only time we came in touch with our fathers body. The Qiri Lali is for the Yavusa - Kai Wai. They will start beating the lali from the news of the chiefs death is known to the time he is laid in his grave. He only stops when the chief body enters the church and starts again when

the body leaves the church. There is a tribe for the Lose Yaqona and the Yavusa Bati and Yavusa Natuvu are responsible for Guarding the body and the whole village. They are Security Guards.

A magiti and ya ni vanua is prepared by the chiefly family for the Yavusa Karua ni Bilo this tribe are our Vu ni Kalou. The mat this coffin bearers walk on from the house to the grave is theirs. Everything they use when handling the chiefs body is theirs. After the funeral when they go down to the river to wash their hands the river is Taboo for 100 nights. As a sign to us when the Taboo of the river is nearing to an end a particular fish that is the Ika ni Masi would bite up a saqa and through it on land. This is a sau from the Vu.
JOE - After the funeral, what follows to the 100th night who's saying is heard in the funeral ceremony. The chiefs children or?

ADI - No we don't have any say. It is the lewe ni Vanua who runs everything. They set the plans and would only come up to us to show us or tell us what they have in mind and they carry out what they have planned. In all villagers there is a special grave yard called the Yavu Tabu that is for the chiefly family only. No common villager is buried here.

JOE - I heard of Vatikilikili....?

ADI - They do that in Lau but in my place it is the bogi va. On this bogi va a magiti is prepared a salusalu is made from Masi for the grave. On the 10th night a Masi salusalu will again be taken up. On the 100th night a big feast is prepared for the Luva ni Tabu. The salusalu that is taken up on the fourth and tenth night is a remembrance of the chief. This shows that the lewe ni Vanua still mourns for him. Only the Sau Turaga will have a say on the Tabu. They are responsible for the length of the Wai Tabu. The sea is taboo for

- ADI - a 100 nights. No one is allowed to fish or swim or eat any fish from the tabu region. If a person goes against this the fish that he eats is poisoned.
- JOE - I hear of Ore....?
- ADI - Ore is given to those who go against the set of rules that is laid down by the Sau Turaga. The door where the coffin is carried out is closed until the door is opened with a Kamunaga than the Ore is over. Those who are given the Ore are to prepare a magiti cooked in the lovo. If they don't do these they are to buy tins of biscuits. When Ore is given to a person his mataqali is responsible for making lovo etc. there are special people who gives the Ore. Only the tribe Sau Turaga gives the Ore. They are the mouth piece.
- JOE - I refer to the taboo you have mentioned above. What tribe is to taboo when a chief dies?
- ADI - That is up to the Sau Turaga. If they say, only the chiefly family are to tabu than only us will tabu no one else or if they say the lewe ni vanua, than the chiefly family won't tabu. Because the taking off the tabu will be done to the chiefly family if the lewe ni vanua are told to tabu. This is the other way round too.
- JOE - You mentioned tabu, what is meant by this?
- ADI - When a person is told to tabu she will be wearing mourning clothes, that is black clothes for 100th nights. Everywhere she goes she'll be wearing black. She is not allowed to go to feasting etc. In the olden days even to comb our hair is against the tabu. But now we allow it. No jewellery is allowed for her to wear etc. This will than be taken off on the 100th night to the lewe ni Vanua that is if the chiefly family is told to tabu. The other side who waits for the tabu will prepare a magiti, clothes, mats, waliwali etc. and all to give to these who tabu. Those luvaluva will also be dressed in Fijian masi, mats, and tabua this yau is for the lewe ni Vanua who waits

ADI - with the magiti for those you will be taking off their mourning clothes. Exchange of gifts takes place between the chiefly family and the lewe ni Vanua.

JOE - Is there any difference between the funeral of a common villager and a chief?

ADI - The difference here is that when a chief dies the whole place where he rules are responsible for carrying out particular duties. Whereas when a lewe ni Vanua dies only the Yavusa responsible and the chief would plan and are responsible for the funeral. Chiefs death or funeral is complicated.

JOE - Is there any difference between the Yau taken to the Reguregu and that of the Boka.

ADI - Boka we only take tabua and drums of Keresone, the Reguregu. We take mats, masi, tabua, and bread etc.