

TOPIC: MARRIAGE

Investigator: Willie

Informant: Vilivo Nairuwai.....from Navunikabi, Waikoroiluva,

NAMOSI. M 58yrs.

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MARRIAGE

We have a man, Vilivo Nairuwai who is 58 **yéats** of age, he is from Navunikabi here in Wainikoroiluva here in Namosi. He will talk on the subject marriage and its customs and traditions for our ancestors here in Namosi during their age.

For Namosi people, the beginning of marriage is when the ~~xx~~ girl's hand in marriage is asked first from the parents. When the meeting happens, it is between the two male parents, the father of the girl and the father of the boy and also this can include the girl's father's younger brother. They first discuss over this and also the girl might be willing to marry this man, then there is a meeting of the sub-clans or mataqali concerned. When they meet with their own sub-clan, then this calls for the collection of whales teeth or tabua. We collect tabua and then we go to the girl's house and this time to perform the chiefly ceremony in asking for the girl's hand in marriage involving the whole group there in the family and village. We take the tabua and then we ask the girl if she is willing to marry me. If the girl agrees, we will ~~ask~~ **ask** her still for three times and also the girl should reply three times she is willing. After they have asked the girl, then comes the boy's turn and the girl's turn to ask the other if they are to get married. The boy asks the girl first whether she will marry him and also he asks the girl three times, he might ask, 'Are you ready to marry me, to be my wife and also you will not sleep or want other men-'

Then comes the girl's turn to ask the boy and also she asks him three times. The only reason why they have been asked to do this because they have been arranged to be married by their own people who think this marriage suits the two people. The first step is taken by the fathers of the two people who will get married. The two fathers will consider first what the girl thinks of this marriage. After they have agreed to do this, they return to their own homes, then there is a ceremony of MATAKARAWA in which the boy's side is ready to perform the chiefly ceremony of asking for the girl's hand in marriage in the presence of other people from both their different sub-clans. They might prepare a bowl of yaqona, after, the boy's side return to their own homes again. The girl's father inform the boy's side that the decision is theirs on the date which they might like to have the engagement ceremony to be done, and also this calls for the registration for their marriage in maybe in twenty one days time.

The boys's side decides on the day when the ceremony of DRESU I VOLA and they inform the girl's father when they will hold it. The day it is held, they have two males from the girl's side and also two mothers, they have to be present here at the place where the ceremony of dresu i vola should take place. After they have performed this ceremony, then comes the time when the shopping of clothes, and the keys are done by the two fathers and mothers from the girl's side who were present there during the dresu i vola. And also they are responsible for buying some food like bread and tea for the people who are waiting for them at the village. This is only to show and also to sink in their minds that one of their daughters and one of their girls who is precious to the family will soon be married.

After they make use of this small tea which the girl's side pre-

pared, then the leaders and the parents talk on when should they hold the wedding or the marriage ceremony for the two people, not only that, they also discuss in details all the things they wish to hold for the day. They discuss as to who should be responsible for the plates or eating utensils used for the wedding feast, the family or person who can help with the lights provided for the night on that day, the one who is responsible for the traditional mosquito net which they will put up for their bed at night and this is the gatu mat since at that time they did not have these mosquito net which we have today, they also have their own which they use when the time comes. As for us today, these are the things which Europeans and other foreign people brought here to our country.

After they have done that, then their registration certificate is left there at the priest's house or even at a reverend's house for one whole month, it is left there at any of these houses or missions I mentioned.. When comes to the time when the two get married and also on their wedding ceremony, both of them are clothed in traditional clothes which is respective and also worn only during ceremonies. They wear traditional clothes for their wedding and they get married. After they get married, they return and remain again in their own homes. Before they had the wedding ceremony, the girl's side will do all they can for their daughter and they bring her to this place where the wedding takes place and also the boy's side will bring their son to the place where the marriage ceremony takes place. After they have done everything for the wedding, then comes the contribution of food by the two sides, the mother and the father of the girl prepared a large feast which they bring to the place where all the ceremonies are taking place and also this is the place where the wedding reception takes

The boy's side also prepare their own food for the feast and they all eat it together at this place where the food is set out on a table or eating ground. The reason why they prepare so much food and also eat all together, because this would be last time for the girl's side to eat with their daughter, and also this would be the last time for the boy to eat with his family and relatives and friends. It is like a farewell party for the two of them and also to celebrate their marriage which they have just done. Like for the girl, now she leaves her father and also the command and the rules which she lived ~~abided~~ with when she was a small child and to this age. And also now, this is the time when we say that the man starts calling his wife's parents as his in-laws, and also the same thing is for the girl, now the husband's parents are her in-laws.

Then comes the time for the tevutevu. The boy get dressed and also the girl get dressed from their own homes. So the girl is brought over to the boy's house by the girl's family. And when they come over here, they bring ~~them~~ with them two tabua. After they have taken care of the marriage ceremony through the law, then comes the church service in which they are untied together by the church and now the last lap is the wedding ceremony through the customs and tradition of the people. Both the boy and the girl bring with themselves a tabua each and when the girl comes into the house, the girl's mother will be sitting there near the door. The girl comes in to sit there on the mother's lap. After that, the mother of the boy will then also have her lap occupied by the girl. The girl will sit on the boy's mother's lap, and after she sat there for a few minutes, then she stands up and then the boy will also come and the two are wedded through the customs here inside the house. As for the

gesture of the fitting of the ring onto the girl's finger when they got wedded in the church, as for our customs, this is the way in which two people get married through our traditions and customs. And also this is another time when the ring is once again slipped into the girl's finger and also into the boy's finger. As for the ring, this is represented by the tabua which the two people hold in front of them. The girl presents the tabua to the boy and the boy receives the tabua from the girl before he gives the girl the tabua which he brought with him when he came into the room. The tabua which the boy brought is then given to the girl's father but first it is given to the girl and then later on to the father. After the two people received the tabua the other presented, this is the end of the wedding done in the traditional sense. The traditional clothes of wedding ceremonies which the girl wore to the house is taken off and given to the boy's side, the traditional wedding clothes which the boy wore to the ceremony is removed and given to the girl's side. This is to show and to signify that the two are now married also by the traditions and the customs of our own place. After this, the two return to their own homes again. Then comes to the time, say after fifteen minutes of this traditional wedding ceremony, the girl's side and also the boy's side led by their own mothers bring food and this is for the feast which the two people will have for the two people who have just got married.

After the two people got married, they have their feast and after they ate, then comes to the time when the old women and also some other mature women come together and they stay there in this house where the married couple will spend their nights there. This is how it is done here for the Nabukebuke people and also for the other people of Namosi when it comes to traditional marriages.

The girls' mother and the boy's mother and their own relatives are there in the house where the two people who are newly wed will spend the night. The women won't do anything there but they will stay there in the house with the two people and also they will watch to see what happens after some days of these two people staying together. Then the boy's father comes into the house and he says that he is going to close up the place where the two people will remain for their night and also for spending sometime alone together. This is the lowering of the curtain which they have already prepared for this. They pick someone from the girl's side and also someone from the boy's side, these are the two women who will guard and also remain there inside the house with the two newly wed couple. They do not sleep there behind the couple which the people have prepared for the two people, the two keep to the side which is curtained off and the other two people sleep there inside the house. The two people spend their night together and also this is the time when the man will learn the truth about this girl whom he married, he will know that this girl is still a virgin when the two will have sex together, also for the two women they will know that this is the first time for the girl to have sex with a man because of the sign which they find out after the night is over, on the next morning. The two mothers know what they ~~are~~ expect to see and find if this is so. As for the mothers, also they spend their time talking and asking the man what is it with the girl whether this is the first time for her to sleep with a man or not. This is the only answer that all the other people are waiting for, whether it is yes or no. The man is asked and he answers, 'This is my girl alone.' So it means that he is the first man to have sex with her and also the first man to be known to her who is also her husband. Then the

boy's mother is going to let the girl's mother that they have received a good mother and also they have made a good choice to choose her to be the mother of their people. Also she was a virgin until she got married to her husband the man whom she will remain with for the rest of her life. As for the happiness and the joy, this is found mostly with the girl's father and his people. They receive this with open hearts and they know they have done their part well in protecting the girl and also in making sure that everything goes well in this thing. After they have known about the truth, then comes to the time in the morning, when the girl's people and the girl will go down to the sea where they will fish from the sea. Also for the boy's side, they will be preparing themselves with the things which they will give to us when we come, they will present us with whale's tooth and also mats. These are the things which they have to prepare themselves with so that they can present it to us when the girl's side returns from fishing. And this is to return them with since it is the custom of the place.

So in the morning, they do the magiti or the food for the night on which it is known that this is the first time for the girl to sleep with a man. As for the magiti which they presented this is to thank the girl and also the parents of the girl for keeping their girl well and also to make her reach her house without being spoiled by any other man but by her husband alone. This is how they do marriage in their days and also they have a lot of things to do before they settle down in their own homes. This is all about marriage and also this is the end of a marriage ceremony which they hold here in Namosi.

- Can you tell me how do the elders, the girl's parents and also the boy's parents choose the partner they would like for their daughters and also for their sons. Do they choose a partner for their children from someplace far from their own home or they pick someone who is

belongs to their own sub-clan, someone whom they know they are quite related to?

As for our ancestors, they pick anyone whom they know is going to be good to them and also will be able to give the people children.

As for our people, they do not pick anyone or a woman whom they know does not work and also a woman whom they know is lazy. Our elders only pick those women whom they know is helpful and also a woman whom they know can do the work when she gets married and come to live with the boy and his family. They ask for these girls hand in marriage for their sons and also for their own young men there in the sub-clan or lineage. They know that this is the only way in which they can do things and they also deal by following all the customs and the traditions. Also for the family, they want someone whom they know they have some sort of relationship with them and then it goes on and on, there is also another young man in this other family and they might be thinking of having this marriage ceremony between him and one of our own people. As for marriage ceremonies, these are arranged between the girl and the boy's parents, the two people who gets married do not know anything at the beginning, until the parents have agreed to let them be married. And also when the boy's parents goes to the girl's house to ask them if they could let their girl marry him, they do not ask like that but instead there is a phrase which they use and this is 'to get her to be my mother and also to be responsible for the milk that is cooked for me.' This is how they say it when they come to ask for the girl's hand in marriage. And also when they do this, this is known as VAKATABA-ILAGO. As for the I LAGO, this is part of the door of a house. When you enter from a door, there is a small piece of wood that lies across this place where you cross the door and this is the part of the door which they call the I LAGO. This is the threshold of a door.

So for the girl, she is said to sit there on the threshold and then the boy's father is going to lay his hands there on the girl's head or on her shoulders before they declare the ceremony over. This is how they do this for the girl when they know that she should marry this boy whose father came to perform the ceremony there on their house. They might say, 'I want my name-- sake to cook milk for us,' and it is known to the people there that the girl's hand in marriage has been asked by this man. As for the girl's father, he will think of it first before he gives his answer and also he involves the wife in it too. As for the girl, she will call her mother in law with the name NEI. And to the father-in-law as MOMO. So for the people of Ngamosi, the person who will perform this ceremony by placing the hands on the girl's ~~xxx~~ shoulders or head is the brother of the father. And it is done there on the doorstep of the girl's house, and so everyone knows that she has been betrothed for this boy and soon they will get married. But the asking through the mentioning of the milk to be cooked, this is the only phrase which they can use when they come to ask for the girl's hand in marriage. This is the custom here for the Nabukebuke people during their age in the olden times, but still there are some people who still observe these and they keep it with themselves. As for the girl, she will not say no or refuse to do what the father or the parents have decided for her. The only answer that comes from the girl, 'Yes father, your decision is accepted and is right. I am willing to marry him.' This is how they do it and the reply which they get when the girl is asked after they have performed the other ceremonies involved.

- Can you tell me, when is the right age they pick when they perform the ceremony of Tabailagotaki for a girl, is it done when she

is still a little girl, or they do it when she has reached adolescents and also of puberty age?

As for the man also they should know that the girl they are picking is someone who can work and do the things which is there for a housewife, and also there are a lot of things which the man have to consider before they get to know which is the best women to marry their son or their young men in the family and also in the sub-clan.

- I heard that in Failevu, the parents of the girl and the parents of the boys perform this ceremony which they call the TEKI NI SAU, and this is when they inform the girl's parents that their daughter will grow up to marry their son who is also a young boy who might still be in his teenage. Do you also have this ceremony which they call the TEKI NI SAU here in Namosi?

Yes, the same thing happens here too. Say for these people, then they decided that it would be best for them to come and to ask the girl's parents when she is still a young child there. And also it could be that for these women, they are known as his VASU, and this is something which they are concerned about. Also for the people, say for this parents, they have children of their own. And the eldest could be the man and then the sister gets married to another man from another village. The child of the sister and the child of the brother can be done that the two of them can be married. This is how they arrange marriage for the people in the olden times. Also when it is time for them to be big and to be married, then the parents of the two people who are brothers and sister, this is the time when they come and they ask the other to do all the things through their mataqali and also of the family.

Also the time when the women and the fathers would be opening their eyes in looking for the right partner for their children, they can notice the little girl when she is still growing up and it could be when she takes ~~part~~ part in the village function that might be held there in the village. Those who knows that they are closely related to the child, this is the child whom they will look for and also think of to be the suitable child for their family or for their child. So for the two children, they have their marriage decided upon when they are still young and when they grow up the parents knows who should they let them marry and they do not hesitate to do everything for the child and also for the girl whom they have picked to marry their son. This is how they do it in the olden times, so when the children are big, and also they know that they understand themselves and make their own decision, then this is the time when they make the arrangements for the rest of the things that is to be done there in the family and also for the arrangement.

- You told me something about the Tabailago ceremony. Can you tell me what do they do when they go over to the girl's house to perform the ceremony of Tabailago, do they take a tabua or something which they present to the girl's family first before they perform the ceremony of tabailago?

If there is a whale's tooth there with me, then I am going to give the whale's tooth to my wife and then ask her to perform the ceremony of tabailago over the girl who is to be her future-in-law. First, when she comes over to do this ceremony over the future daughter-in-law, then all she needs to do is to clap her hands first before she places her hands over the girl's shoulders or head, but before that, there is a speech which they present, and this calls for the speech which they make when the tabua is presented to the father of the girl, and the things ~~which~~

which they say is the same as I've already mentioned. First the boy's father clap his hands and there on his hands he holds the tabua for the ceremony, and his speech, he says, 'Here is a tabu asking for the girl if she could be at home to cook milk for us and also to be our mother.' And then the tabua is then presented to the girl's father, this is how the ceremony of tabailago is done here in Namosi.

- As for all the arrangements which they are doing, the father of the girl and the boy's father are the only two people who will make the meeting and also the discussion on what they should do and what they should not do? Yes, the father of the two children ready to be married are the two people who will discuss and also meet to know about everything for their family or for their children.

- After the girl agrees to what the two fathers have discussed, then the two fathers will then let their own sub-clans know about the arrangement?

Yes, after the girl agrees, then she remains there in her house while the boy's father return to his house and then they discuss about all the things which they are to do for the marriage and also for the other chiefly ceremonies which they need to do for the two people, they have the ceremony of dresu i vola and also the ceremony of which the two will get married. After they have done this then they mix some yaqona there on the bowl of yaqona and this is for the girl's family and also the rest of the people that might be there. Also for this bowl of yaqona, it is to inform the rest of the people there in the boy's family and also the relatives and the others there in the village that they have gone over to perform the ceremony of tabailago on this girl from this house. It can be said that they have tabailago so and so to be married to my son or to my young child who is

here in the village so that they will not try to go and ask for the girl's hand in marriage because she has already being betrothed to this young man.

- Does the girl's side also does the same thing after they have performed the ceremony of tabailago there in the house or there is something which they do in order to inform the rest of the people of what is going on in their family?

As for the girl's side, they also do the same thing in informing the others of what is going on in the family and also who is going to be the future son-in-law there in the house. They will make a bowl of yaqona in which they ask all the relatives of the girl who belong to the sub-clan of the girl to attend and then they let them know that this family of this boy had come to perform the ceremony of tabailago and so she is betrothed to marry this man when she comes of age. The father of the girl cannot keep the whole thing to himself, the father of the girl cannot keep the whole thing to himself, the father of the boy cannot keep the whole arrangement to himself, they have to inform their own sub-clans they are not going or they are going to let their children to be married. After they have said everything which they know should be known to all the people, then the people will know what they are going to arrange for the two people who will soon get married. So for all the things which they are going to do, they should make sure that the decision and the things needed to be done for the two people are done accordingly and also fair for the other people.

- Can you tell me when it is time for them to tell the other people of what is going to be done for the two people, how are they going to tell the other people of this marriage that is to be done for the two people, whether they have to present a

tabua and all that?

And this is how they do it when it is time for the girl's parents or the boy's parents to present the information to the people that they are ready to do this for their children, the two children will be ready to be married. So to inform all these people concerned about this thing, then they have to present one bundle or one whole yaqona plant to one village if they wish to let the other people know about the marriage that is soon to take place. One village, one yaqona plant, one yaqona plant for one village and this is said to be their i tevutevu. Not only that they have to be concerned about the tevutevu, they also have to be concerned about the wealth and the riches they have to give to the two people who will be married, when it comes to the traditional way of getting married. Also they have to think of the wealth and the riches they have to present to the girl's side when it is discovered that this is the first time for the girl to sleep with a man or to know something about man and it is from her husband. These are all the things they have to bear in mind when it comes to the wedding day and also the other ceremonies which they hold for the two children. First, there is to be a yaqona which they present to the people in the sub-clan, and also there is to be a yaqona presented to the villagers, and then there is another yaqona which they present to the people of other villages which they think should be informed of the coming wedding. Also for them, they do not announce their coming to give something for the two people, all of a sudden they arrive, knowing the link they have for the boy and also for the girl. As for the boy's father, it could be the brother who goes out to do all these for them and also it could be the girl's father who does that in informing those whom he knows that they are ~~xxxx~~ related of their daughter's marriage. So for three villages, they present a total of three yaqona plants.

And when the day comes nearer when they are going to hold their wedding, this is a day on which the parents of the boy and the parents of the girl will have to agree upon. This is the day for their wedding. And so for the people, they call the yaqona as the yaqona NI LOKUBOKU, and this is the choosing of the day when the two people will have their wedding day. Also when they have to do all these things there for the people, also they have their own things with which they thank those who came to inform them about the traditional things which they have done. And so we call this here as VEILOKUBOKUCI.

As for the girl's father, he can send his own brother to go out and to inform their people that this is to be done on this day and also he could send him to go and ask the other people when are they going to hold the ceremony and all those other things. And so it is the duty of the girl's father's brother to go out and to call all the people who is there in this sub-clan. It can be that they are the father's sisters, the brothers and all those other people related both to the girl's parents. Also his uncle, cousins, all these people are asked to come to the meeting which the father of the girl getting married aimed to do for them all. This is how they informed their own people of when the marriage ceremony takes place and also besides many things, they have their own things to do like collecting wealth and all that. Also for the girl's side, they spread out some mats and all that for the girl's beddings when it is time for the two people to be kept there in this house which they will remain in for three nights in the company of some old ladies.

- As for the girl, when they inform the other people of the marriage, they do not present a yaqona to them, all they need to do is to inform the other people about it and that is all, as for the boy they really have a lot to do about this.

As for the father of the boy, he has to present the yagona to the other people because he is thinking of the wealth and all those other things which they have to present to the girl's side, and this is the only way in which he will be able to get help through the presentation of the yagona to these people. This wealth and the other things they will present to the girl, it is called

the I DOLEI NI YALEWA.

-- They said that after they have done all the right things with the girls' father, and then they go over to their own side, this time the father of the boy let his wife know about the arrangement he has done and also he let the other people in his mataqali know about the arrangement they are doing. And then after they have discussed all these with the people, they then come again to the girl's house where they are then to perform the ceremony in which the girl is asked of whether she is willing to marry this boy or not, do they do this or.....?

Yes, they do this, and this is when they do it because it is the custom and the tradition here for the people. Like what people say here, this is termed as the ceremony of I DUGUCI presented to the father of the girl and also the other people of her subclan, the ceremony of i duguci is done there and this is the end of the ceremony in which they keep asking for the girl's hand in marriage, before they take the big step of having them registering their marriage there in the marriage office or at any law office so it is legal and also known publically that the two people wish to get married. As for the people, they say that it is always good to listen to what the people have to say and follow ~~what~~ what the chief might tell them to do. And so for this second tabua which they present, it is like they wish to make it official and also traditionally that for these two people, they will get married and there is nothing to interfere their

marriage, everything is very well arranged.

When they give this, do they give only the tabua or they also give some other things which they might wish to give like other wealth?

As for the people, this is something which they have to do very well, say today they have money, so they use money for all the things which they want, and so if they do not have money then they might present a tabua which is for this, and this is given to the girl's people after they have done all the things which they know is right. As for these things which they call, this is known as the I COVI NI GUSUNA. And they do this because it is to tell the girl's family that they can do all the things for their daughter and also for their son whom they know is going to be married, this is all the things which they need to do and nothing is going to stop them from getting all these things which they know should be given to the girl's side as part of all these ceremonies they are doing for the girl and also for themselves. And so for these things which they give to the girl, this is known as the I SOGO NI GUSUNA, because the girl agreed to marry him and also they have done all they wanted to do for the girl and also for the parents of the girl, this is only to thank the girl for agreeing to marry her. As for us, this is called NA I COVI NI GUSUNA. So for the girl, she takes this tabua and she gives it to the father after she receives it from the boy who is her husband. As for our ancestors, the money to them on those days is the tabua, and this is what they use to thank the girl for saying yes when she was asked if she could marry this boy.

Today, for boys, if they know they can do good things for them, they can give a lot of money in replace of wealth and other things which they used to give in the olden times. If it is a boy who cannot afford to give all these things to the boy, then they settle for the wealth and all those other things like what I have already described in the first place.

In the olden times, for us, money is very difficult to get and also they did not know how they can earn these much money which they use for such purposes.

- Can you tell me what is the number of whale's teeth they take when they perform this ceremony in which the girl's hand in marriage is made official in presence of the other people of the sub-clan? For our people in the olden times, they get three or four whale's teeth and if I am the father of the boy, then it is my brother whom I will sent to ask this or perform this ceremony at the girl's house. This is done in the traditional sense. Today, these things are done just for the sake of having them done, but they do not carry it out the true way like what they used to do in the olden times. But for the presentation of the whale's teeth to the girl's side, it means that they are taking everything seriously and also it is going to happen soon this marriage which they have arranged.

- For how many weeks do they have to wait before they have the ceremony of dresu i vola, in this case, they have already performed the ceremony in officially asking for the girl's hand in marriage in the presentation of the four or more whales teeth? This is decided upon by the girl's father and also they are informed by the boy's side that they are ready to do all the things for them. As for the boy's side, they might later get in touch with them and then inform them that the dresu i vola is to be held on this date, then the girl's and their family will also prepare themselves for this day.

So the decision for the day in which the dresu i vola is performed is decided upon by the girl's family. But for the marriage of the two people, this is decided upon by the boy's side because they prepare a lot of things for the wedding of the two people and also after they have made their preparation then the marriage will take place. Also if the boy might wish to do something on the day they got engaged, then the boy might ask his parents also his relatives for them to prepare a large magiti and this is only to show the girl's side that they can take care of their girl and also they are all for this marriage which is to take place between the two people.

- As for this dresu i vola, or what you called the I VAKALILI I VOLA, do they prepare a magiti there in the boy's side home, or this is something which the girl's side have to prepare for both sides?

Yes, the boy's side also prepare a magiti which they contribute to the other foods and tea which the girl's side have prepared for this day. It does not mean that when the people are told that the girl's side prepares this tea, the boy's side won't prepare anything for the day, no, they also prepare this magiti which they bring to the place where all the food prepared by the girl are laid out ready for the two people to return from their ceremony of engagement in which their registration to get married is put up on the board to let the public know that they will soon get married. It is the duty of the father to prepare this tea and to bring it up for the girl's family and also for the boy's family but the boy also will have a magiti prepared for their own ceremony which they have just performed. As for the boy's side and the rest of the people who did not go to the ceremony, they remain at home and they prepare this magiti which is for the boy and the girl when they return from the office with the girl's father who might

bring some food or tea which they later make use there at the boy's house. They have this feast after they have performed or done the ceremony of dresu i vola. And this is only to show that they have registered their marriage and within a certain time the two people people will get married.

- As for the magiti prepared by the boy's side, are they going to make use of this magiti also or the magiti is going to be presented to someplace else?

Here, the girl's father and also the relatives of the girl who came with the girl, they will have a feast here in the boy's house.

"Also we have to present some more food there at the girl's house because we have made the girl to come out and also to come here at our house for the first time.

- As for this dresu i vola which we have already talked about, is it for the coming of the whole of the girl's clan or it is the coming of only the girl and two of their own people like two from the girl's mother's side and also two from the girl's father's side?

As for all the people who went over to the place where the ceremony is done, they will also come to this place where the feast had been prepared and also it does not mean that the whole sub-clan will go over to the place where the feast has been prepared for the people. Also it is the duty of the boy's father to inform the girl's side if they have prepared all the things for the ceremony. They come to the girl's side and inform the girl and her side that they have prepared a small feast for all of them and it is only to mark the engagement ceremony which they did for the two people who got engaged on that day. It can be said that it is the boy's mother who had prepared this and is inviting the girl's side to share it with them. And after the feast, they can return home again.

- It might be for one whole month that the two young people have to wait before they get married. Can you tell me during this one month, what do the two people do do they spent their time together or the two people are not allowed to do anything at all like meeting and spending their time together. What sort of waiting do the two people do when they wait for one whole month to pat?

The two people are not allowed to do this at all, they are not allowed to spend their time together and also to see the other, they keep to their own homes and they do not try to see the other or spend some time together. They do not speak with one another until the two people get married, then this is the only time when the two speak and talk together, but before they get married they do not see one another at all. The only time they talk is when they are left there in their private place inside the house after they have done with the wedding ceremony both traditionally and also in the church. So for these two people, they are not allowed to talk or to converse during they wait for their wedding day. If they meet there on the road, the girl will hide her face or turn her back to him so that the boy will not get a chance to speak with her, they do not see each other at all until the day they get married.

- Is there a reason why the two people are not allowed to see each other or to talk with one another during the time when they wait for the wedding day?
Yes, there is a reason. You can see that today and also in some other cases, such things do happen. Today, when a marriage is arranged, they do such things through the love of the two people and not the decision of the parents which is important in the olden times. Also for one reason why the two people are kept apart, they believe that if the two people

see each other and also spend some time together, it will encourage the two people to do wrong, and this is the two people might get themselves more involve in their relationship and it happens before they get married, this is the sole reason why they are being kept apart for sometime for one whole month and no talking or anything like that to happen between the two people. And so if they arrange a marriage for this girl, she is not allowed to see this man or to have anything to do with him at all until the time comes when the two of them will get married. If the two people like the other, then this is the time when the two people should keep it all to themselves and wait until they get married. Also if they have a ceremony there, it can be a distance of one chain that they keep to avoid the other person. The girl is the only person who make sure that she is not all that near to the boy. The boy will also make sure that he does not spoil anything with the boy by making approaches to her and all that. They both keep their distance.

- I heard that in Tailevu, there is a time when they have this ceremony of VAKACOKONAKI and this is the food they prepare for the girl. Can you tell me if the same thing too is done here in Namosi, do they have part of this ceremony which they call the I CONAKI?

Yes, the same thing too is done here in Namosi and this is the food which is prepared for the girl, it is said that this is the time when the boy feeds the girl and provide everything for her. If the boy's mother finds something or receives something good from someplace, she will always remember the girl or her future-daughter-in-law with these things she receives from other

peppae or from their own family. Like foods, and clothes, wealth and all those others, she will remember to give something for her daughter-in-law, or the woman whom the son will marry. And when it is time to take it to the girl's house, it is said, this is the food for my I SA, and they know that it is to be taken to the girl's house. Also the same thing is done by the girl, there might be a time when the girl might wish to take something for the husband to be so the mother and the girl is seen taking food across to the boy's house, if not, the boy might decide to take some food over for the woman's Sunday lunch, and this can be taro and fish. But for the two people to meet, they do not allow this to happen or anything like that, always when the mother takes something to the boy's house, she is either accompanied by the daughter or she goes alone. The same thing too is done by the boy, if he wish to take something for the girl, then it is either given to the parents or he takes it there with someone else from his family coming with him, but he does not meet with the wife-to-be alone.

- The day the two people get married, where do they have the wedding, at the boy's place or the girl's village?

Here, the wedding is done at the boy's village so that the girl's people come over to our village so that we have the chance to give them food and also to provide everything for them.

- As for the wedding feast, does the girl's side also contribute something into this or give some food like pork, taro yams and all those, will the girl's side also contribute something to the food prepared by the boy's side?

Here, only the boy's side should prepare all these things which they are going to have for the wedding feast and all that.

- As for the girl's side, do they prepare anything at all?

No, the girl's side do not prepare anything like that, all they need to do is to come and to make use of the food which we

have prepared for them. All they need to do is to come and to make use of the food and it is said that this is the time when the most foods are prepared for the boy's side. As for our people, the girl is something which is very important to the people and also we make sure that we do all the good things for her and also for her relatives. We invite them all, the girl's relatives from both her parents side, and they stay there in our village for more than two or three days, we do not talk about the food which we waste and prepare for them, we only make sure that we do all the right things and the goods things for all of them, we do not want them returning and them complaining that the food is bad. And it can be that they take some more food with them when they return to their own village. The drinks, the food, the yaqona, all those things needed for the feast and the wedding, are prepared by the boy's side, nothing is to worry about the girl and her people, all are for the boy's side and his relatives.

- The day when the two people get married, can you tell me who is going to be in charge of the clothes worn by the girl, is it the boy's side or the girl's side who will make sure that they prepare and also dress the girl up when she is ready to go out to the place where the wedding will take place?

The girl's side will prepare her clothes and they bring it to this place where the wedding is to be held. After they have clothed her up in her traditional clothes for a wedding, then she is brought to this place where the wedding is to take place, but not only that, they also dress up another girl who is to accompany her to this place where the wedding will take place. This is how the wedding is done here in this village and also by our own people.

We prepare our son's own clothes and we take him down to

this place where the wedding is to take place. And also we have another of our own young man who will also dress up with him and the two of them leave together for the wedding ceremony. And for this man and the woman, they will act as witnesses to the two people marriage. They have to sign the book which will show that the two people got married, and the two people are the witnesses for the wedding ceremony.

When it comes to the feasting time, they might have two other women from the girl's side dressed up and sitting there beside the woman during the time they have the wedding reception. But for some other people those who can afford to do all these things, they might have the girl getting married, then they have two other women who will accompany her and they act as her witnesses. Also from the boy's side, they have the boy who will get married and then two other men to act as his witnesses for the wedding ceremony. All of them sit down together when the time comes for the wedding reception. And this is only to show the fact to the people that these two people are now husband and wife, they are married to one another.

- As for the Namosi people and their culture, which one comes first the wedding or the two people sleeping together which they call

I TIKOTIKO?

The wedding comes first then the two people sleeping together. As for me, from what I heard from my ancestors, the wedding comes first than the sleeping of the two people together in this room which they have prepared for the two people. First, they have the church service then the two people engage themselves in their own commitments in which the truth is then exposed of the girl. We cannot perform the ceremony of tevutevu first before the two

get married in the church, so after they are wedded, then the tevutevu comes after.

- Can we talk of marriage or how are they wedded in the olden times like our ancestors have their own ways in which they take care of such things, can you tell me how are these two people arranged to be married and all that happened to show that the two people are now married?

Here, there is no such thing, the only thing to do is that we prepare the food for the two people who got married, there is nothing special done for the two people.

- What can you say about the utensils which they use for eating, do they give it to any one, or the boy's side keeps their own things they do not give anything to the girl's side?

Here, for the wedding, when it comes for the feast, the boy prepares something for the girl and also the girl contributes something which is to be used, like they help in the eating things used for the wedding, and also they help one another in all the things which they might like to use for the wedding reception and beside other things which they hold on that particular day. And so for all these utensils which they use for the wedding reception they do not give it out to other people but these things are then given to the two people for them and this is to start their family of by having their own things for cooking and also for eating. No one from either side is allowed to take anything now that the wedding reception is being held there in the two people's place.

As for all these things which they now have or used on the day the two people got married, these are the things which they can use for starting their own family and there is no one there allowed to use anything which the two people are given, these things are all theirs. This is to help them begin their own family and

also they have something there with them before they begin in buying things for their own selves and also for their own family. Since it is known to us and also to the girl's people that they are starting a new family and so we do not take away anything but all those things which we used on that day is left for them to have and also to start their family with.

- As for the ceremony of tevutevulike what you have just said, do they have the ceremony of tevutevu there on the house where the two people got married, or they have a special house where the ceremony of tevutevu is held?

As for the mats and all those things which they used for the tevutevu, these are spread out there in the boy's house or the house where the two people will spend their time together.

- Who are the people who will spread the mats first for the tevutevu, is it from the girl's side or the boy's side who does it first? The girl's side is the first to do the tevutevu.

No, the first people who perform the ceremony of tevutevu is the boy's mother. The boy's mother and all those who came after her to do the ceremony of tevutevu will be the first people to do this and they bring all their things which they spread there inside the house where the two people will sleep and all that. After the boy's side have done their part, then comes the girl's mother and also those who are from her family to later ~~perform~~ perform their own ceremony.

- When it comes to the tevutevu, can you tell me how are the two sides going to arrange themselves in spreading out the mats for the tevutevu. Will the girl's side spread theirs aside from the boy's wealth and all those other things which they might have prepared or how do they do this?

As for the boy's side, they present a tabua there inside the house and it means that they can now begin to bring their

own things and spread it there for the tevutevu. When it is time for the wedding, it is the girl's side who brought her to this place where the wedding takes place, and then also when it is time for the wedding ~~reception~~ reception, this is also the time when they bring the girl to the house where the feast takes place, and then this is also the time when the two people will then retire to their special room for the night. They have two of their own cousins or their relatives eating with them, after they enjoy the feast which they prepared for the wedding, then the two people retire to ~~their~~ own home or their private part of the house where the mosquito net ~~done~~ in the Fijian fashion is erected there in the room.

- As for the ceremony of tevutevu which we discussed about, can you tell me who will take the tabua which either side presented before they performed the ceremony of tevutevu and also who will keep all the mats and all those other things the two sides presented for the tevutevu?

Here, the whale's teeth left there at the house where the tevutevu is held and also for the place where the two people might spend their night, all those other things left there inside the house when the two sides involved themselves in the ceremony of tevutevu, all these things belong to the two people or the newly wed couple. No one else from any side will take anything from there, they own all these things now. The tabua, the mats, and all those other wealth which they spread there in the house, it now belongs to the two people who got married and this is their tevutevu which their own people are doing. And also for the utensils, eating utensils and all those other things, they leave all these things behind for the two people, they do not take anything with them when they return to their own homes. And all these things which they leave behind, these are the things which the two newly wed

couple will use to begin their family with, there is no need for them to ask anything from anyone else since they have all they need. Nothing is shared out to the other people or to any of their own people, it all belongs to them now. And so when it comes to the ceremony, the girl's side have theirs on one side and the boy's side have their tevtuevu on the other side, they do not place the two together so that we can see where we have the power and the most strength in the supporting of the two people's wedding. Also for the boy's side, they presented yaqona to their own people and also to other people of other villages, so it is from these people that the wealth for the boy's side pours from, they get contribution and help from all these people whom they went to see and also to inform them that they are having this wedding for these people on this date, and they have everything arranged done in the traditional way. If a woman comes from this village where the boy's father might have presented a yaqona, she comes to the boy's village with two mats for her contribution to the boy's tevtuevu. One is for the tevtuevu ceremony and the other mat is called the I DOLE NI YALEWA, and this is presented to the boy's father. Also it is to thank him for the making of the yaqona ceremony with which the father did the ceremony there in her home or there in the village. So here in Namosi, if they go to a wedding, they have two mats to take with them when they go to the girl's wedding or the girl's tevtuevu. And this is what they do when they are ready to take care of a wedding there in Namosi or here in Nabukebuke.

As for the mat which is for the i dole ni yalewa, all these are given to the.....

Yes all these are given for the i dole ni yalewa, and given to the girl's people.

- I heard that one of the ceremonies which they performed there in some other places is called the I KALI NI SUCU, can you tell me if you also do the same ceremony here in Nabukebuke or you have another ceremony but similar to this one which they have and they call it the i kali ni sucu?

Yes, we also do the same thing here in Namosi. For all those people bringing two mats each to the place where the ceremony is held, they present it here at this place where the wedding is held. Also for the boy's mother and the girl's mother, they should make sure that they start their own family off with two large mats, one large mat from the girl's side and also one large mat from the boy's side. They spread there inside the house where the tevutevu takes place. And so for the ceremony, the girl's mother herself might contribute ten large mats for the ceremony of tevutevu and the rest that makes up the whole thing is contributions from the rest of the people of the girl's sub-clan.

Also from the other people, they might contribute whale's teeth instead, and this is only to show that the sub-clan work together to do everything for these people. Also it shows the close link which exists between the two people getting married, through the kind of help and support they get from their own people. As for all the wealth which they contribute to these people, the whale's teeth is the only thing which shows that they really care for all that they are doing for themselves and also for their own people. And so for the boy's side, after they have collected all these mats from their own families and also from relatives and people of their own sub-clan, then they might keep aside, ten to twenty mats which they later present to the girl's side and this is the ceremony which we call the I KALI NI SUCU. As for all the other mats which they might bring from some other villages, we can collect more than 100 mats and all that.

And so for all these mats, they give it or hand in when it is time for the tevutevu, this are all for the girl's side or the girl's parents and this is the ceremony of kali ni sucu like what you asked. And this is also called the I DOLE for the woman whom they asked to marry their son or their young man who belong to their mataqali or sub-clan.

- When do they present the wealth and mats for the i kali ni sucu ceremony?

The ceremony of kali ni sucu is performed after they have spread out the mats, laid out other wealth which they are presenting, and when the girl's side present their tabua or whale's teeth to show they are ready to return to their own village, this is the time when the boy's side will act to perform the ceremony of kali ni sucu for the girl's parents. As for the kali ni sucu, this is given to the girl's parents, both are called and then said, this are the wealth for your nursing and also for protecting your daughter from all that time until she got married the other day, this is only to thank both of you for the care and the upbringing you did for your daughter who is now staying with us and become our mothers also. So they might have ten whale's teeth there and also one dozen or so mats piled out for the kali ni sucu.

- As for the people of Namosi, can you tell me if there is any reason at all for their performing this ceremony and for calling it the kali ni sucu?

Yes, there is a reason for the performing of the ceremony of kali ni sucu. The ceremony of kali ni sucu is only done for the girl's parents, both the father and the mother. And the most important person in this ceremony is the girl's mother. Since from the girl's birth, she was fed with milk from the mother and also it is the mother who kept her and see that she is alive here. Through her care, she is able to live.

So for the mother, she kept her daughter from the time when she was small, she grew up to become a fine young woman and right up to this time when she got married, and it is all through the loving hands of the mother that she is able to reach this level. And so for the boy's father and mother, they have to prepare a collection of mats and all those other things they can give for the kali ni sucu and it is showing other people that now, the girl no longer is tied to the mother and also the mother has no right over the girl after they have performed the ceremony of kali ni sucu to the girl's parents.

Now, their upbringing, their care for her and all that they used to do for her ends here, they will no longer know anything about their daughter or do anything for her because now she belongs to another family, to her husband's family and also his sub-clan. So for the presentation of the kali ni sucu, this is the representation of the girl's side being told that no longer do they have any hold over their daughter. So for the kali ni sucu, it means that they give this wealth to the mother to show that the daughter will now leave her home and leave also the father and come here to live with the husband or this man who had done all the ceremonies for her. And so now, there is no time for the girl to cry to the mother all the time when she needs something, and also no more will the daughter be the pet there in her own house, she leaves her home to live with the husband and ~~baeia~~ is expected to work like a wife who is running her own home.

- When it comes to the presentation of the wealth and all those other things for the kali ni sucu, can you tell me do they also present a magiti or food to go with the things which they have prepared for the kali ni sucu?
No, this is something which they do for the girl's mother alone, it is not considered all that chiefly, it is only for the girl's

~~XXXXXXXX~~

parents.

- Can you tell me when do they perform the ceremony called the i dolei ni yalewa, is it done there on the fourth night or when they have the vakabogi va?
- This is also done on the vakabogi va, or on the fourth night. After they have done all the other ceremonies necessary there on ~~their~~ vakabogi va, then comes the ceremony of i dolei which they perform for the boy and the girl.
- In the olden times, the newly wed couple spend two or three nights and ~~stay~~ days there in this part of the room which they kept aside for the two people. Andso when it comes to the two people come out to join the other people, then the ceremony of i dolei is then carried out for the girl's people.
- Coming to the important part of marriage which the ancestors considers during their time, and this is a woman being a virgin and coming here to her own home. Can you tell me who will ask ~~the~~ girl whether she is still a virgin, is it the boy's mother or the girl's mother who will ask the girl this, or there is another mature woman chosen to ask the girl of how she is on the day she got married?
- The boy's mother will ask her whether she is still a virgin the night she slept with her husband.
- Will the boy's mother ask the daughter-in-law, or she will ask her own son?
- The boy's mother will ask the son of what the girl is whether she is a virgin or not.
- Can you tell me how is the boy's mother going to ask her son. In **Tailevu**, they ask by using the phrases, 'the fire is out' the fire is lit', and by any one of these answers, they know what the girl is like on her wedding night. Do they also have

any special ways in which they discover what the girl is like before they let the other people know of what it really is? Here, done in the Namosi way, we ask the boy, "is she good from her home" or "is he bad" and when the boy replies that she is good, the mother and the rest of the family knows that she is still a virgin until she got married.

-- So when the boy's people learn that she is a virgin until then, what do they do for this matter, is there anything that they celebrate or what are they going to do for this?

As for us, there are a lot of things which we do, we celebrate and also this is only to show the importance of the girl and also of the parents. We wait for this matured lady to let us know of the truth and then it is also our duty to let the girl's father know of how her daughter fair well in this wedding, whether everything goes according to ~~xxx~~ what that should have happened, or there is nothing at all useful from this wedding, because the girl is not a virgin when she got married. And so for this matter, we do all the things we can to protect **both** the parents name and also of the girl, this is only to show of how the girl's father is that important to our people. If the girl is not a virgin, we make sure that there is no rude story or any leak to the people outside who do not have any right at all to know what is going on, we protect the girl and also we protect the father although the girl came to the house where she will then live with nothing to offer her husband because she had already have outside affairs with other men. The only person who is told of his daughter being in this condition is the father and then after that, everything is forgotten as if nothing happened at all. Also for the boy's family, when they learn that the girl is not a virgin and she has already engage herself with other men, for all the food

which we prepared, this is the time when we know that it has all gone to waste and also of the other things which we might have prepared for the girl's side, we know it is not worth it because the girl's people did not keep their part of the bargain and that is for the girl to reach her home and still a virgin. This is something which really hurts the boy's side when they learn that this girl is not a virgin after all after the two people got married.

- If they know that this girl is a virgin, can you tell me how do they show this to the other people, like in some other places, this is shown by the food which they present to the girl's side after they have done all the things for the fourth night. Can you tell me if there is a way in which they show that the girl is still a virgin it could be through the kind of food they present or something like that, can you tell me if they do have it here in Namosi also?

One way in which this is done, the boy's side will prepare a pig and when they come to present it to the girl's side, coming through ~~the door~~, door, the rear end of the pig is shown first to the people in the room. The rear end of the pig is brought first into the house and the head of the pig is towards the door. This is only to show the people of what is it with their little girl or the women who got married, they do not have the head presented first to the people but the rear end of the pig. This is the only sign to let the other people know that the girl has already slept with a man from outside before she got married.

- When it comes to the fourth night, what are all the things which they do for the girl and the boy also?
When it comes to the fourth night, the boy's side will prepare this magiti which is for the fourth night celebration. And also the boy's side really have a lot to do for their own people and

also for the girl's side, they have their own things which they do for themselves, but all are happy when they know that the girl reached her house well and also she did not have any affair with any other men except for the man whom she married. The girl's side also cooked or prepared a pig there in the lovo and they present this to the boy's side. And for this magiti which they prepared, this is known as the KINI SOVU for the girl which they present for the boy.

Q - Can you tell me more about the kini sovu which you mentioned, what is this and also what it means for the people to present it to the other people?

As for the kini sovu, this is only to show that this is to allow the girl to take her bath and also to let the other people know that they have done all they could for the girl since this is their duty before she got married.

- On the fourth nights, can you tell me what do they do, if they prepare a magiti, will the girl's side also contribute something for this magiti which they prepare for the vakabogi va, or is it only the boy's side who will prepare all these things for them? The boy's side will prepare all the food, magiti and all other things after the fourth night or when it comes for the vakabogi va. As for the girl, the only thing they prepare is this food which they call the kini sovu. After they have prepared the food and all those other things for the girl's side, then the girl and her people also arrive with the pig which they have prepared to present to the boy's side, this is the only food which the two sides will make use of when the time comes for the feast and this is to mark the fourth night of their staying together or after their marriage, this is how they take part of the vakabogi va, after they have done everything for them.

- Is there any exchange of gifts do they do there on the fourth night?

No, there is no exchange of gifts done between the two people when it comes to the fourth night or this night which they call the vakabogi va.

- I heard that in some parts of Fiji, on the fourth night the two people go down to take a special bath in the river or down at the sea side. Here in Namosi do they also do the same thing or not? They have not even done it once here in Namosi. Like in some other parts of Fiji when it comes to the preparation or the doing of the vakabogi va, the two people who has just recently got married goes down to take a special bath like what you told me, but here, they have not done that at all and also this calls for the presentation of more wealth and all those other things from both sides, so bathing is out of the question here in Namosi.

- Thank you, is there anything else you would like to add to this interview on marriage and how it is taken care of here in Namosi? I believed, the things which I have shared with you covers all the aspects and also the small sections relating to marriage. And also these are the things which I know, if there are some others which you might be thinking, well maybe there are some other people who might share this with you because this is all that I know of marriage and also of traditional marriage for our ancestors in the olden times.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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FINISHED.