

MARRIAGEInvestigator: Willie.DariINFORMANT: Seimimili Ranadi.....Yaqeta, Yasawa.SUBJECT: MARRIAGE CONCERNING A WOMAN.

When a small girl is growing up to be a young woman, it is the duty of the parents to look after their daughter carefully. They will care for their daughter until the day she is married.

A time will come when the parents of the daughter or girl will be visited by the parents of a boy. In this meeting, the parents of the boy will inform the parents of the girl that they had been planning to come and ask the hands of their daughter. In this conversation, the boy's parents seek the approval of the girl's parents if the girl could be married to their son.

In the meeting a decision will have to be made whether yes or no. All the conversation which the two parties are participating in is not heard to the two, the girl and the boy. It will be a surprise to the girl when she would be called upon by her parents to be questioned. The parents will ask their daughter if she is willing or agree to a proposed marriage to a boy. If the girl agrees, her parents will accept the Tabua which the boy's parents brought. But, if the girl might disagree, the girl's parents will present and offer another tabua to the boy's parents informing them that their desire will is not accepted. This is done in a very ritual and respected manner. This presenting of the tabua thus informing the girl's refusal is called the DIRIKI NI TABUA (slight hitting of tabua).

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- The Tabua which the boy's parents brought to offered it to the girl's parents is called the TABUA NI DUGUCI or the asking tabua. The ceremony of asking the daughter's hand is called the DUGUCI.

If the girl had agreed, the boy's parents will come back to their home. From then on, the food of the girl will be taken to her house. Everything the girl needs, should be given by the boy's side and parents. To offer things to the girl means that the boy's parents and relatives really wanted that girl to come and marry their son.

As time goes on, a decision is reached that the ceremony of DRESU I VOLA (paper bursting) should take place. This is a ceremony of official declaration of marriage in which both the boy and the girl will sign. After signing their marriage document they will return and have a small feast which is prepared by the boy's parents.

After the marriage documents had been signed, the date of marriage is then fixed by both parties. The decision of the date is solely decided by both parents. After the date is decided it is then would be preparing and looking forward to the wedding day.

- What would happen if one of the girl's parents disagree with the proposed marriage.

- The decision is solely from the girl to be married and in the olden days girls often listen and obey what their parents command. When a girl is wanted the boy's parents will take the tabua to consult the girls parents. If the girl agrees, there will be very little objection from her parents. If the girl agreed, the boy's parents should return home, and thus start supplying the

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- girls food and othe needs such as clothes. This shows the girl and her relatives how much the girl is wanted by the boy and his relative.
- If the marriage is to be held, where would it be held?
- The marriage ceremony will be done at the boy's house or place. Before there is no church building and marriage service or ceremony is done, usually on the boy's house. Both the girl and the boy will be dressed up in full traditional clothing such as mats, Kumi and all their body will be throughly annointed with oil. Round their neck the couples will be wearing garlands. All the YAVUSA or big mataqali will be present when this ceremony is going to be held. For couples to be married, their age will be around twenty.

When the wedding day is to be held, the girl's relatives will be seated and have their food on the side where the bride is seated. The food which the girl's relatives brought for the wedding is taken to the boys relatives. As for the relatives of the boy they will be seated where the bridegroom is seated. They sit on that side and have their food.

When the wedding occassion is to be done, the bride is brought into the marriage ceremony area by her uncles and aunties. This will particularly be from the bride's mother's side, for example the younger sister of the brides mother.

The girl is brought and offered to the boys relative at the ceremony arena, where she is offered to be married to the boy. But there is another time with another ceremony in which the girls relatives will bring the girl and offer her to the boys relatives for good.

When the bride is dressed up to come to the ceremony

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- arena, it is really marvellous to see how she is dressed. She will be wrapped in big Kumi and Ibe. The body will be nicely shiny with oil and her hair is annointed with oil.

By dressing the girl nicely and decorating her is an indication shown by the girls parents relatives that the girl is from a family which is capable of providing everything for her need. So when the girl is dressed up in this manner, she is encouraged to go freely without embarassment to her new home.

The boy too shall be dressed up in full customes. Each one of them will be carrying a tabua on their hand and goes to the place where the wedding is to be held. The tabua which the bridegroom is holding is the token sign in the requesting of the girl's hand, for ever marriage.

When the feast begins, the close relatives of the boy will feed the bride, and the close relative of the girl will feed the groom. During that feast, there is another cooked food which is prepared by the boy's relatives to be presented to the girl's relative. This will be their MAGITI or big feast. The girls relatives will also provide and present a magiti to the boy's relatives. It is something of an exchange.

After this exchange of MAGITI or big feast, the both parties will then participate in the big feast.

After the feast the girls relatives will bring all the girls belongings to the boy's house. After that the TEVUTEVU(spreading) ceremony is take place. This is when both relatives will bring their mats and kumi and spread it, thus making a bed, on which the couples are to sleep on.

In the ceremony of mats and kumi spreading, this will indicate

-how strong-handed is the parents of each couple.

All the items which had been spread or brought by the relatives of both parties will solely under the responsibility of the boy's mother. From all the piles of mats and kumis and etc; she will decide who shall the items be shared to or it will be only for the two couples.

In the TEVUTEVU(spreading)ceremony, each party will compete to outstand the other. Each side will try to present the overall best. It is a typical among women to gossip later on about this TEVUTEVU ceremony.

The girls family will try their best to present the best because this show the boys relatives that the girl is not brought from a poor house. By this success, the bride will always be proud of what her relatives had done to her during her marriage ceremony. This is something the girls parents always look to.

As the first night, the two couples will sleep together. There will be some very old ladies sleeping that house too, that night. The next morning the old ladies will ask the groom if the bride is a virgin or not.

As for the bedding prepared there will be a sign on the mats and Kumi. On top of the bed, there will be a white masi in which the sign of the girls virginity is to be shown.

Sometimes a boy will not have sex with the bride because her genitals membrane may be hurting her. So the boy will try from now and then to have intercourse with his wife.

Every morning the old ladies will ask the boy of the girls virginity. The boy will answer that he had not yet had intercourse with the bride because its hurting her. But on the third night, the

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- be a big woman. But if the boy's relatives are told by the boy that the bride is not a virgin, the feast offered to the girls relatives will be the sign. For instance if a cattle is to be presented to the girls relatives or on that feasting day will be pierced badly or placed badly. This will be seen by the girls relatives and they know at once that their daughter had entered her new home touched or blemish by someone else. This will bring very much shame to the girls parents and relatives.

In the olden days, girls are very seldom found to roam around the villages. Even they are forbidden to go to the plantation. The food which is brought from the plantation is done by the parents. The girl which is brought up in a home are often given indoor duties. Every parents in the olden days often recommend their daughters to stay indoor.

The marriage ceremony is a happy occasion, because she will go to a new house where she is going to be one who will built a family up.

The marriage of the girl will also depend on the parents. In Yasawa if the boy's parents are to request the daughter of the two parents, they will announce this in a very formal manner such as We come to ask your daughter if she could be TAKITAKI NI MEQU WAI, or willing to bring my water from the well. This is how a girl is approached to the parents.

In the olden days, a marriage ceremony is a very happy because it is through this occasion that friendly ties between places and people is initiated.

- Beside the TOBE(hair loop) is there any other sign which the Yasawan women wore or carry to indicate their virginity?

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-In the Yasawa the woman do their hair style too. The women will cut her hair style the day she will sleep with a man. That's all.

THANK YOU.

FINISH.

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- boy manages to have sex with his wife. Soon after he enter the girl, he could feel that he had spoiled her. When the boy's penis is penetrated back, he will see that his organ is covered with blood. The boy will take the white masi or cloth and rub the blood on his penis. This will be the evidence of the girls virginity.

The next morning then, the old ladies will ask the boy of the same questions. The boy will answer them saying;"KADRUSA NABILO". meaning that the fruit had been broken.

When the news about the girl's virginity is heard, the old ladies will make loud noises in the home of the couple. The news is then brought to the boy's mother, who will come to see the evidence. The boy's mother will go to the bedding and check for the proof.

When the boy's mother sees blood on the white masi or cloth she will jump up in joy and continuously bang empty biscuit tins. Laughter will be heard in the house.

When people hears all this noises, they will know at once that the girl had enter her new home in a good form or untouched. When a young girl is growing up and the parents know that she has not been in bed with anyone, the parents will comb one side of the girls hair and make a loop out of it. This will show the people that the girl is a virgin.

The day the girl is married or in bed with a man, her hair will be cut. There will be a small feast prepared by the boy's relative and thus presented to the girl's parents and relatives concerning the virginity of their daughter. This is an occassion which the girl's relatives are proud of. The girls relatives will be happy to know that their daughter had been now considered to