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TOPIC: PUBERTY

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(M. 64 yrs.)

I'm one who used to circumsised boys in the ^{early} ~~olden~~ days of my life. The circumsion is done in the traditional way by the used of bamboo. The bamboo is btrought then cut into ² halves with the inner layer to be brought and carve properly.

This neatly carved piece of bamboo is brought and placed inside the penis flesh. The bamboo is inserted in so that the top layer of the skin slides over the bamboo. Before the bamboo is inserted the penis flesh is thouroughly massaged and pulled continously to make it very fine and thin before ~~ixax~~ the cut is to be made.

I also used a certain leaves for medicine which is called LALAWAIVOU. This ^{medicine} ~~medicien~~ is applied if the wound continue to be bleeding regardless of the first wound-medicine.

If I cut a flesh of penis and the blood continue to flow, this ^{LALAWAIVOU} ~~mg~~ ~~x~~ when applied will surely stop the flow of the blood.

When the top ^{flesh} layer of the penis is ^{thoroughly} thouroughly masaged, the bamboo is inserted inside the flesh to the desired mark and the cut is made on the ^{flesh} ~~flesf~~ from the mark to the top end tip of the ~~penis~~ penis.

The cut is ~~made~~ on the ~~flesf~~ ~~fram~~ ~~the~~ skin flesh with the bamboo

preventing any injure to the penis flesh.

In the Olden days the ancestors used ~~to~~ bamboo and the mussels shell~~x~~ for the cutting of the flesh. In the days of my duties, I used the long razer. The procedure for the cutting is the same except for the useage of the long blade. ~~E~~

When the cut is made, the two disected flesh shrink~~ed~~ to the bottom side of the penis. The medicine LALAWAIVOU is us~~e~~d or applied to the bottome side of the penis. The medicine LALAWAIVOU is used or applied to the stop the blood before the bandage is to be done. The masi or tap~~s~~ is used for the bandage. Before ~~the~~ bandage is done, the leaves which is called BATIBATIKORO~~X~~(mile-a-minute) is wrapped around ~~ix~~ the wound. After that the ~~x~~ bandage is done.

The boys who are circumssised will stay indoor for about four days. During these four days, I would be with them attending to their wound. Beside me there would be also some ~~axixx~~ assistant wh~~o~~ will help me in the changing of the boY's bandage.

Every morning and afternoon the boys, my assiatant and I would go to the river to wash and ~~a~~ change the bandage ~~ix~~ of the wound.

Everyday during those four days the parent and the relatives of the ~~axixx~~ circumssed boys would bring food to~~us~~. They would bring dalo, yams, chickens and all sorts ~~xx~~ of food to us. On the fourth night there would be a feast which is called the VAKA BOGI VA or the fourth night ceremony. During this ceremony, the parents and the relatives would bring clothes mats and food such as ~~pigs~~ and presented them to us/

At one time I circumssised 6 boys. On the go fourth night ^{of} our staying

together with the boys, the parents presented me with mats, clothes and food to take ^{home} ~~home~~ ~~with~~ with me. I really gain much from the ceremony. All the materials which I ~~used~~ brought, I gave them to my parents.

It was the year of 1952 was my last ~~year~~ ~~circumcision~~ for the boys. After that the boys are taken to the hospital for circumcision. Before when I used to practise circumcision, I would have a ^{lot} ~~lot~~ of food, ^{mats} ~~mats~~ and other gifts. Today, as I can see; the hospital method of circumcision is ^{quick} ~~quik~~ and easy.

- Talking about circumcision, I believe the boys age would be.....

There would be no age limit concerning the ~~circumcision~~ of a boy. As long as the boy wishes or the parents wishes, circumcision can be done. There is no certain age for this ceremony.

Before the boys are to be circumcised in the olden days, they would be asked first if they had been in bed with a girl or not. If one of the boys had been out with the girl, that particular boy would be the last to be circumcised. This is because the boy would faint ^{or} feel very weak during the process of circumcision. Regardless of the ~~a~~ age group, the boys or ^{young} ~~young~~ man who are to be circumcised are ^{first} ~~first~~ of all asked if they are out with a girl or not.

Those who are ^{with} ~~with~~ a girl would be the last on the list of ~~circumcision~~ As I've mentioned already, those who are with a ~~xx~~ ~~girl~~ girl would ~~feel~~ ^{weak} ~~weak~~ or even faint but these ~~are~~ who are not with the ~~girl~~ girl would go ^{through} ~~through~~ the ~~circumcision~~ ~~without~~ without any difficulty.

- I wish if you could tell me if a father ~~wants~~ his son to be ~~circum~~ circumcised, what procedure would the father take; would he ^{takes} ~~takes~~ some gifts and present to them man, ~~or~~

There a

There are two ways in which circumscion can be planned. One is that the father can go to the circumcission man and ask him; or secondly the boys may planned to go together to the circumcission man and ask to have their flesh cut.

Boys wh~~o~~ planned to come together are conscious that they are grown up and it is time for them to be circumscised. Boys are sometimes forced themselves to be circumscised through their shame of staying uncircumscised. Boys who stayed uncircumscised are often the target of criticism. Words or ~~terms~~^{terms} like BOCI or TOKAWALU (indirect ~~term~~^{term} for ~~a~~ uncircumscised) are often called out to them. In the olden dyas it is a shame for a boy or young man to saty uncircumscised.

- I wish if you could tell me; since you are ~~aiik~~ one of the circumcission man, is there any special occassion or time for the circumcission to be carried out or depend on the desires of the other parties?

No, there is no~~e~~ specific time for circumcission. When I ~~saty~~^{stay} in the village, I always ready for the practise. If anybody comes to me anytime asking to be circumscised, I would do it ~~right~~ there. There is no special occasion in which this practised could be carried out.

* - I wish if you could ~~teal~~ me where ~~axixax~~ would you carry out ~~ya~~ your practised?

The place of circumcission will also depends on the guts or courage of the boys. The boys and I could go out inot the forest without anybody in the village knowing and carry out the praetise. If the

boys have great courage, the practise of circumcission could be done in just a house.

I forgot to tell you that before a boy's flesh ~~is~~ to be cut a piece of hard wood is given to him to hold in his mouth. This piece of hard wood is to be bitten during the moment of the cut. Before the cut ~~is~~ just to start, the circumcission man would tell the boy to bite that piece of hard wood very hard. This was only done to lessen the pain done on the flesh cutting.

In the village if you will ask a boy if he is circumcised or not, you would ask him in the indirect way by saying if he has already bitten the wood or not. Hearing this the boy would know what you are ~~ask~~ asking about.

- You mentioned that you and the boys would go ~~in~~ out in to the forest so that nobody would know that the practise is about to be done.

I ^{wish} ~~wish~~ if you could tell me who are to ~~present~~ present ~~in~~ if the practise is to be done.

I would be giving the boys my assistance. My assistant would be responsible in the holding ~~the~~ tight of the boys during the moment of the cut. My assistant would ~~fold~~ fold the boy's hands while I would be ^{busy} ~~busy~~ with the razor sliding the skin-flesh of the penis.

- Could you yell me what kind of bamboo was specially used in the olden days for circumcission.

The bamboo used for circumcission in the olden days is a thick one which is called or termed as the BITU NI VALAGI or the European bambbo This bambbo is brought then c₂rved very carefully. It is said~~it~~ to be very shrap _as a razor blade. If you touched it c₂arefully, you could be injured.

- You mentioned that the ancestors in the early days were using mussels shells for circumcision, is that possible?

Yes, that's true. When the shells is skinned ~~ie~~ ie. the outer ~~is~~ layer of the shell is peeled off, the shell is then very sharp and ready to be used for cutting. The thinner the edge of the shell the ^{sharper} sharper it is.

- You mentioned that when the flesh is cut along side the bamboo the flesh fall apart. Could you tell me about these ^{fall} apart flesh and ^{what} ~~how~~ is done to it or is there any special care towards it? The two flesh would just shrink to the bottom of the penis. The medicine is ^{then} applied to this area thoroughly and bandaged properly. The two flesh would automatically fall apart to the desired position.

- You mentioned about the mark to be made before the cutting ^{is} to be made. Could you tell me where would place this mark and how this is done.

The mark would be done exactly on the spot where the skin of the penis becomes tight when it is massaged towards the abdomen.

At this point when the cut is made, the two rear flesh would easily ~~fall~~ fall apart.

- What about the piece of hard wood?

Sometimes when the piece of hard wood has fallen to the ground after the cutting, it had fallen into the two pieces. That shows how hard the bite had been. The thicker the skin of the penis, the harder the bite would ~~be~~ have to be.

* - You mentioned about the medicine called the LAIAWAIVOU. Is there any other medicine used for the practice? I heard that the bud of the breadfruit tree is also used for the practice, is this true?

For instance if after 1 day or 2 days the wound is ~~ix~~ still swollen the bud of the breadfruit tree is brought and wrapped around the swollen area of the wound. The bud of the breadfruit tree would lower and lessen the swollen area. Another medicine which could be used instead of the bud ~~is~~ of the breadfruit tree is the leaves which is called the TEIDRAU.

As for the MASI it is throughly wrapped around the wound. This is done carefully and neatly.

Sometimes when the boys, who are circumcised, started to have erection they would have hard times because the ~~pressure~~ pressure of the bandage on their wound. I always have few bottles with cool water to give to the boys if this happen. When erection starts the boys would first take the bottle ends place it between their legs. At once the penis wound shrink to normal and things would be cool again.

Sometimes erection can cause blood to flow gain on the wound and it is advised to the boys to have their bottles feady as soon as the erection is about to occur. The cool water cools the erection off.

- You mentioned that you will be staying with the circumcised boys until the fourth night. Could you tell me is there ~~is~~ a special place for all of you to ^{stay} saty in or would just use your house for you and the boys ~~x~~ to ^{stay} saty in?

When the news of the circumcision is heard among the parents, they would decided which house is best for us to stay in. There is no special house. We ~~is~~ would go to any house and all the parents would cater for us until the fourth night.

On the fourth night the parents would present ~~me~~ me with gifts ~~ix~~

and feasts.

- During your stays with the boys, is there any advise or things to talk about for the boys?

All the time we would be chatting and making little jokes now and then to make them happy.

- Could you tell me about the changing of the bandage?

The changing is done twice a day- morning and in the afternoon.

The changing of the bandage is often done in the water.

The boys would go and dip themselves down to soften the bandage.

After the bandage is soft, then only it can be changed. Sometimes changing of the bandage is also a hard thing because if this is not done carefully, the wound would start to bleed again.

- You mentioned that gifts would be presented to the boys, especially the mats in which they will lay upon. ~~What~~ Could you tell me which sides of the boy's family would be doing the presenting of this mats and gifts.?

First of all the parents would present their gifts to their boys. After, both sides of the boy's relatives could present their gifts. The boy's relation could also help in the catering until the fourth night.

- I wish if you could tell me what would actually happen on the fourth night.

On the fourth night there would be a ceremony which also mark the end of the circumcision ceremony. There would be feasting and dancing (meke). People would be in a merry mood on that night. The whole village would participate in that joyful night.

- I heard that the already used bandages(masi) are to be hung.....
Yes, that is true. The used bandages are often hung on the branches of the trees near the river where the changing of the bandage used to take place. It is believed that by hanging the used bandages; the wound on the penis would cure fast and very well.

People who would come to the river would ~~know~~ immediately ^{know} that some boys are being circumcised by just looking or seeing the hanging used bandages.

- Is there any TABOO which you would advise the boys to follow before or after the circumcision?

Yes, I would forbid them from eating salty things because this would not healed the wound quickly.

- You mentioned that you would be receiving alot of gifts during the fourth night ceremony. Could you tell me what kind of gifts would you expect or ^{what} kind would your relatives present to you? When I used to go this practise I give no concern to gifts presented to me. I only care for the food which is preapred for me. The gifts for me is the only concern of my parents.

- You mentioned that there are ^{two} ~~two~~ categories of people to be circumcised/ One is for the virgin boys and the other is for boy who had ~~been~~ been with a girl. Could you tell me is there any different procedure in the process of circumcision you would take in ^{regards} regards to the two catergory.

The virgin boys are easy to cut. Their flesh is tender and soft and give me no trouble. Whereas in the other group it would be difficult because the ~~skin~~ skin would be thick. The cutting of the ~~thin~~ skin would take a bit of pressure; and sometimes the

boy who are circumcised would faint and the piece of stick he is biting would torn ~~out~~ into 2 piece.

- I heard that in some places of VANUA LEVU, the circumcised boy is forbidden to see a pregnant woman. Is this so in this place of yours?

No. This is not so in the place. The only thing is that the young girls are advised not to come near the place where the boys are staying. If young girls come near, they are too tempting and they may spark an erection to the boys which would only make things worst for the wound on the penis.

- Thank you very much. If there is anything ~~you~~ ^{wish} you wish to add or tell concerning the circumcisi~~on~~ of the boys in ~~the~~ olden days? In the olden days ~~circumcision~~ ^{is} id not an easy thing like waht you are experie~~ncing~~ it today. It take alot of pain for a boy to be circumcised. Today, it is easy and it is very fine. I really appreciated ~~for~~ ^{for} the modren idea of circumcisi~~on~~ which are ourboys of today are going through.

In the olden days after circumcisi~~on~~, boys are still very afraid of girls. Eventhough we are ~~regard~~ ^{regarded} to be a step ahead in the ~~manilhood~~ ^{manilhood}; but we are still afraid of girls or woman.

There ~~are~~ sickness which are common among the sexual cont~~act~~ in the oldens ^{day which} is called DOGAI. The victim would ~~be~~ be very pale and weak ~~everytime~~. The victim may see a house-fly thinking that it was a big bird. This sickness happen ed to boys when in contact with the woman. That is why circumcised boys is ~~often~~ ^{often} careful and afraid of girls.

That is all I could tell you.....

Thank you very much.