

PROTOCOL.

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Interview is done by Willie D.

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Livai Rokotala .....

Tonia, Taveuni.

Vatania ni Vose ni Vanua ni Taveuni  
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Topic: The death of a chief.

- When a chief of the village died, the relatives will call a meeting to tell the people of the village what should be done. From here also they will talk about the bitting of the lali, who is suppose to bit the lali. The bitting of the lali is always done by the person who is responsible about it. There always a special person about it. After the meeting the relatives of the chief who stay in that place will have to send the message along to those relatives who are very far away from them so that they can know about the death of the chief. So then the relatives know the about the death of the chief, from here they will know what should they bring along with them. During this time people from different parts of the village will come to give their last respect to the chief who had just died. When the other relatives arrived they would be told to wait in a special house. So this people will have to wait because there still some people to come. But when the relatives of the chief who had just arrived have to come, they will bringing the tabua with them. They will have to place the tabua on the chest of the chief replaced it from the one which was there before. This tabua is called the Vatu ni Balawa. After the tabua had been placed then the relatives who lived there has to come and get the tabua which was placed from the ones who came. But during the death of the chief there always a certain group of people will guard the dead body and also the chief's compound.

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- These people who are guarding the chief's dead body and the chief's compound are called Bati. This people can order anybody, if they say no noise then there should be no noise. During the death of the chief there should be nobody going around in the village or making noise which can be heard. This people can punished anybody who is loafing around the village. So when the relatives of the chief who does not lived there arrived brought a kind of shelter which they make from the bamboo. In this shelter they will have to placed mats on top if it and well covered with mats and masi. In the house where the dead body is being placed, they will have to come and give their last respect to the chief. When they reached the dead body they will placed the tabua on the chest of the chief and take the ones which was there before. After that then they will covered the body with mats and masi and did nicely. When that is done then bring the body and placed on top of the small shelter which they brought. Before going outside they have to turn the head inside three times, so after that they can go outside on their way up to the placed which has been prepared for the dead body of the chief to be buried. When they had reached outside then the bit of the lali will ~~finish~~ stopped. From here the funeral lali from the church will be beaten. It will and always beaten slowly. When the people reached that place the relatives will present another tabua which is called as the Vakasobu. From here then the Reverend will do his service about the funeral. After that is finished then they will layed down the boyd of the chief into the hole in its right position. After the funeral is finished the people will have to come back to the village.

- Returning to the relatives place the relatives who lived there will say and asked the other relatives to stay behind until the fourth night. Also from returning from the funeral those people who buried the body does not have to touch any food. In here when they had come back from the funeral, they will have to prepare the yaqona and drink it. From drinking this yaqona it shows that they are washing their hands in the tanoa and they will be taken to another house and have their meal there. This meal will be prepared by the ladies. After the funeral when the chief's relatives say that the relatives who came to stay behind until the fourth night, then the people of the village will have to prepared the food for this people. They will be given a place to stay and lived there for the time being. Also this time nobody has to make noise otherwise he will be punished given by the relatives of the chief. This punishment is called Ore, it means that if somebody make a noise during the funeral she will punished. As his punishment he will be told to bring a pig or a cow or anything at all which the relative of the chief said. So everybody must follow the Fijian role. So that is why it is very bad to make noise during the funeral. After the fourth night the relatives will have to prepare another magiti. This magiti will be given to those who came with their items to the death of the chief. This magiti will be given together with the Yau. The Yau means mats, tabua, masi they will be given to each one who takes part in the funeral. After that they will presented another tabua (whale's tooth) to tell the people that the fourth night had finished and asked them to come again on the tenth night. Same thing happeded on the fourth night they will do it again on the tenth night. From here everbody can

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- go back to their place or to their village and come on the tenth night.

The meaning of the shelter which is being brought by the relatives who came are called Vataavata. This shelter will be covered with mats and masi and on top of it, the relatives will put the body and covered it nicely. Leaving the body inside the hole this shelter will then break into pieces and put it on top of the soil which they bury the body with. These pieces of bamboo should not grow again, if there is a bamboo no other plant can grow there because the bamboo is very strong. So that is why they have to break the bamboo into pieces so that it can not grow again.

For those people who guard the dead body of the chief will be well dressed in Fijian clothes like they will be wearing a kind of leaves from the tree and they will have to paint there face in black charcoal and oiled themselves in the Fijian oil. And on top of it they will have to carry their Fijian club called Wau on their shoulder. They can punished anybody if they make noise during the ~~fm~~ death of the chief. Regarding the Vakasobu in here ~~xxx~~ they have to use the tabua. This tabua is mainly for the bury of the chief and after the tabua is being presented then they cal layed down the body of the chief inside the hole. Also this Vakasobu is done just beside the hole which the chief is to buried. This is always done by one of the chief's relatives.

- Can you tell more about the Vataavata?
- In here the Vataavata is made by bambooo. They will have to weave the bamboo and make it a strong one then place two big ones on the sides.

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- This two bamboo are tied up to the ones which had been weaved.
- So they will use this Vataavata to put the body on top of it and carry it along to the cemetery. After they layed the body into the hole then they have to break the bamboo into small pieces and put it on top. This bamboo does have to grow again.
- From taking the body outside what is the meaning of turning the head of the chief three times inside the house before going outside.
- This mainly because that is a Fijian role, also when a chief die before taking the body to the cemetery they will have to turn the head three times inside the house. After that then they can bring the body outside.
- What is the Vatu ni Balawa?
- The Vatu ni Balawa means it is the last time to see the chief's face and their last respect to the chief. They will bring a tabua for that and placed the tabua on the chest of the chief. This is also done by our great grandfathers.
- Do they always perform the meketaki yaqona in here?
- When the chief died it means the chief had died so they can not perform the meketaki yaqona in here.
- Is there any taboos toward the chief's death ?
- There is none in particular otherwise it is told by the chief's relatives that is a taboo. In here they will also have to tell the people a certain day to come back and remove their taboos.
- Is ther anything else you want to say ?
- When the chief or a man die it is always said that they will go straight to place called Naicobocobo. Also sometimes it is said the dead person always come back. As nowadays there is more beliefs in God , the dead person has go back to God.

T H E E N D