

Ministry of Education  
abakarata Suva  
Institute of Fijian Language and Culture  
Government Buildings, Suva, Fiji.

MARRIAGE

Investigator: Leata. S

Informant: Poate Matairavula.....Cautata, Bau  
Male

TOPIC: THE WAYS OF MARRIAGE IN THE OLDEN DAYS.

- Thank you very much as in the olden days I would like to tell you about the ways of marriage, for we the natives. As I can say that it is very different in other parts of Fiji, but I will only tell you the ways they always do in Cautata, and sometimes it goes with the Bauan ways.

Well thank you when there is the girl who is the eldest in the family then the family from another place will looking towards this girl. They will look according to her ways that they want that girl to come and be the mistress of that house. What they always do in the olden days in this matter they will perform it in their traditional way but the young girl and young boy would not <sup>know</sup> anything about it. As I have seen today it is very big difference from the olden days as we can see today.

So that is why it can not go together with the ways that they always do before like the people are doing it today. As you have come to take something about the ways of marriage in the olden days, so that is why I will talk about Cautata only. So what the people will do is that they will go the father

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- of the boy and the brothers then they will have to go and ask the girl in the family. Another word that they always use for this matter is that they call it the TABA I LAGO, it means that the boys father have come to put a stamp on the ~~fix~~ girls door so that no other boy can come to put another stamp on the girls door. Because when the father have put the stamped there already then it means that it is being reserved. But may be this word called the DUGUCI that they use in the higher rank it means that they have come to ask the girl to marry the boy. So then they will have to take the whales teeth to present it to the girls father and ask him if he allow his daughter to marry to his son. So after they have presented the whales teeth then they have to wait. And after that then the girl have agreed to the discussion, at the same time the girls father will have to present another whales tooth and this whales tooth it means the VAKADONU GUSU it means that the girl have agreed to the request. So after that then the girls father will advice the girl and also the boys|relatives will have to prepare|everything about|the marriage. They will have to prepare the food and the woman have to do some weaving mats etc. Both sides from that time they have to prepare everything they should do for the wedding ceremony. So what they will do is this that they will have to plant the food, and may be the woman have to weave the mats, and they have to collect many whales teeth for the wedding ceremony. Also they have to feed their animals that preparation will be done after the ~~girl~~ girl have say yes.

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- So that preparation will be done for a long time. They will have to prepare the food, the whales teeth that means that it can take one year for the preparation they have to do. So in between that time before the wedding day, at every Sunday the boy have to bring the food for her, or may be it is christmas time then the boy have to bring the food also to the girl. So the boy will have to do this thing until the time they get married. May be you see it it is a very big job to do but you have to do it according to your tradition customs. It also shows your respect to other people and so the people will know of your behaviour. When this thing is done it will be very dangerous, becuae the parenst have to make sure that bad happen to their daughter so that nobody will gossip about them. Well if something else happen between that time it can start a great war between the tribe and the people will fight each other, so that it is why the people have to make sure about the people will not have anything to say about their daughter. It is like that because they shoudl know that it is a very big job that they have been prepairing from a long time. So the parents have to make sure that nothing happen to the girl in which they should take a good ~~xxxx~~ care. As you can see today that most married people received problems now and then. So this is why it is important forthe fijian that they have to follow their traditional ways like before. As in the olden days it is very importnat for them to perform this thing. As I can see today it is really bad to see this thing because

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- it is bad for we people in the olden days to see what is happening today to the married people. May be it is the changed of time that the people have forgot what our great fathers always do before during their time. And so that is why they do not follow them according to their ways of living.

I can also say it is really happen to the woman of today, that even the young girl does not care if they did something wrong or they are doing the right thing. As long as they are pleasing themselves in doing many sort of things, then they have to do what ever they like. Because the young girl of todays they do not want to wait that they are trying to go fast and involve in something else which they should not. And also they only do this kind of thing because they are not told for the right thing. So when everything is being prepared then the boys relatives will have to see the their crops have get matured, and they have collect many mats, masi, whales teeth, and animals have gone big, so by that time they will want to do the wedding ceremony. And at this stage it is very difficult also because one side will very tough and the other side will be very careful that nothing happen to the girl. So both sides will have to watch ~~staxfx~~ out for this thing. So by the time they have to lay down the mats for the couple then they have to again watch out for this time until the fourth night. Because in here they will have to see the real reasult of the girl so that they know that she is still a young girl. So on the fourth night then they have to remove the beddings of the new couple, then from

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- there they can tell if the girl is a virgin or not. If they have come and they have seen the good mark of the girl then the boys relatives will be very pleased and happy about the good news. If they seen that the girl have already sleep with another man then the girls relatives will be ashamed of what the girl have done. Well one side will be ashamed and the other side will be very angry about the matter, because they have spend so much time in prepairing all those things then the parents do not look after their daughter in the right manner. So that is why it can cause a fight between the two tribes which is not a good sign. And also for this matter the new couple won't have any good time for example they will fight most of the time. So if they are going to do according to their customs then they have to be careful and be very accurate that nothing bad happen to the girl especially.

Well just to continue that in the olden days of the fourth night if they have seen the good sign, then the woman have to prepare for the bathing of the girl. In here they have to dress her in masi or kumi, and the ladies will have to take their fishing net and they will go together with the girl down to the sea. If they find some fish during that time then they have to put inside the girls basket. But for the boys relatives will have to prepare the fijian pudding called the VAKALOLO. It is the mixture of taro and coconut juice which have been cooked together. So by the time they have came back from the sea then they have to eat this fijian pudding. Well that is what they always do before.

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- Then from there the boys relatives have to prepare another thing because they know that it won't take a long time for girl to get pregnant. So in here they have to do the preparation again for the new born baby, because in the olden days they know already by the time they gonna get married then they do not have to waste anymore time. Because it is believed that as soon as after the marriage the girl will get pregnant. So they will have to prepare their plantation that they have to plant some more taro. So after ~~the~~ nineth month it is near to the time that the girl have to give birth. So by the time when they got married after one month then it is beleived that the girl is pregnant. So the relatives will have to wait until the day she give birth. By the time the gilr give birth to her first baby then the old ladies from both sides will have to come to the place and they have to sit down there and carry the baby in their arms until the tenth night. During this time this ladies will be fed by the relatives, they will just sit down there do nothing in which they will be fed , and they will just sit down and eat. So they will be doing this thing until the fourth night and also until the tenth night. So on the tenth night then they will have to prepare another feast and after that they can go ~~back~~ back to their places. As you want me to tell you the ways which we always do for the wedding ceremony in Cautata in which it can go together with what they always do in Kubuna.
- As you have mentioned that the young boy and young girl would

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- not know anything about the discussion made by the both parents, so could you tell me the time that they will know of what is going on ?
- Thank you by the time the boys father and brothers have prepared to go and ask the girl, at that time then they tell the boy of what they are going to do that they are going to ask that girl that they want him to marry that girl. But the girl would not know anything about it or hear it, no nothing at all. And when they have come and they have to present the whales tooth, then the father will realise the reason they have come. So the father will say or send someone to go and call his daughter to come to him. So the girl is there and then the father will tell her <sup>why</sup> ~~what~~ they have come to their place it is because they want you to marry that boy. Because the two young people would not know anything or they wouldn't love each other. So what is your point you love this man or not. Then the girl will have to say yes, and then the same time the father of the girl will have to present another whales tooth to the boys father because the ~~girl~~ girl have say yes to the motion. Then the boys relatives will be very pleased about it in ~~what~~ which they have to go back with good news.
- When they have ask the girl can you tell me who or which side have to prepare the most thing for the wedding ceremony, the girls <sup>side</sup> ~~side~~ or the boys side ?
- During this time they will have to prepare everything or what they want to do for the wedding ceremony. But the boys

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- relatives will have to prepare most of the things for the wedding. But the boys relatives will try their best to prepare everything for the wedding ceremony, so that the other side can not get over them.
- Could tell me is there any special name for the feast which they have to feed the girl before the wedding , or may be during christmas or ?
- Thank you for the food which the boy have to prepare every Sunday for the girl it is beleived that it is just their ways to feed the girl before the wedding. If they stay there and it is time for ~~the~~ taking the food to the girl then he have to do it. So this is what they always do in the olden days that the boy have to feed the girl before the wedding day.
- On the wedding day could you tell the time the mother of the children have to lay down the mats or the beddings for the couple ?
- Yes in here on the wedding day then they have to lay down the beddings for the couple, because they have prepared it from a long time so there is no excuse. Like some people do the wedding ceremony today then they have to wait another time then they can come and prepare the beddings for the new couple, no not that. In here as soon as the couple get married then the mother from both sides will have to pay down the mats and the baddings for the new couple. Also on the wedding day they have to do everything and they have

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- wait until the fourth night. So it means on the wedding day they have to prepare the beddings and on the next morning then the old ladies will have to come and see the good mark given by the girl.
- As you have said that they have to come and see the good mark, so could tell me who is this person is going to come to see that matter ?
- Well like the olden days it is mostly the boys relatives will have to come and see the sign because they will have to do it in special way that the people from the other side does not feel down straight away. By the time when those people come and they have seen the good mark then they will not wait any longer that they will perform some mekes and also the father of the boy have to prepare a special feast for it. So if they have prepared everything well then there is no problem at all. So if they see that the girl have slept already with the man, then the boys relatives will kill one pig and this time they have to present this pig in the other way round, that the back part of the pig will be presented firstly. The head of the pig will be turned to the back, it means that the girl have slept already with the man. So the girls relatives when they have seen that then they know that their girl is not a virgin. And also the girls relatives will be ashamed of what has happen in which they did not know at all. But if they see that the feast or the pig is presented to them in a right way then they will be very happy about it.

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- As you have said after the fourth night then the ladies have to take the girl down to the sea, then the man have to prepare the fijian pudding so could you tell the reason that they have to prepare that fijian pudding without anything else. Or don't they cooked any other kind of food ?
- Well I can only say that I do not know the meaning of it, but in Cautata we always do this fijian pudding when the ladies have come back from the sea so they have to eat this fijian pudding. They will not prepare any other kind of dish they will only prepare the fijian pudding.
- Well they have come back from the sea is there anything else to be done ?
- So when they have return from fishing, the boys relatives have prepared the fijian pudding for it as I have said, and also the boys relatives will have to prepare their changed that they have to prepare the clothes which this people have to wear when they come back from the sea. So after that then the people can go back to their places.
- What about the baby have been born could you tell me who is going to give the name for that baby ?
- Well in here for the giving the name for the child in here it is slight difference like some people have to present the whales tooth in order to give the name for that child. As this is the second time you have come to see me, the first topic we talk about is the Funeral and now it is the second time I really appreciate your request. As I can say that

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- for this matter the wedding ceremony we hardly seen nowadays that the people is following the right track as before. No you can not see it today, so I can only say that I am really sorry for those children of today that they do not know anything about their culture, so that is why I really like your visit. And you can witness this thing which I am talking about to the young girl of today, that are not keeping themselves like before. So thank you very much.

THE END