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MARRIAGE.

Investigator: Milian. R

Informant: Sai Elliot; ; ; ; ; Noco, Burebasaga, Rewa.

TOPIC: THE WEDDING CEREMONY IN THE OLDEN DAYS.

- I am going to talk about the things I know about this topic. As we did one tradition ones to my son, in which he marries a fijian girl . This girl was the daughter of his aunty, the sister of his own father. When our son was a small boy and his aunties daughter always come home. And our son always go to their place then myself and my husband always discuss that it is just good that our son should marry that girl. The reason is that they have to strengthen the relation between us and the other family. So another day this girl came to our house and I put one tabua around her neck. And I told her when you go back just tell your parents that I put the tabua round your neck. When this girl return to her home then her parents ask her about the tabua which she have. Then she told her parents that it was I who did that. Then the girls' parents know what I meant about it. But the girl would not know anything about it. From then on the girl's parents will have to look after her in a proper manner. When the girl have reach the stage of twenty one years of age then that is the time for the wedding ceremony. From then on the boy's parents will come to present

- ten tabus to the girl's parents for asking the girl to marry their son. After that then the boy's parents including the boy would return to their place. And so from then one parents will have to take care of the children. After the next day the parents of the girl will have to take one tabua and present it to the boy's parents. This shows that they have agreed to the discussion with the boy's parents. So from then on then the boy's parents knew that their request have been very much help by the girl's parents. They have to use the tabua otherwise there will be no respect be seen to others. As in the olden days people always respect other in the community. It is the habit in the community to respect others. The girl in the olden days is like the gold in the family, so that is why the parents of the girl and boy have to present the tabua to each other. So when they do this it shows that they respect others in a way that they want their son to be married to the girl in the other family.

The tabua which the boy's parents present at the first time, is call the Duguci. And the second one is call the Vakadonu ni Gusu. From then on the people of the community are preparing the mats, masi, and all the things that they have to use in the wedding ceremony. They will have to prepare anything at all for the ceremony. Also when the boy's parents have present their tabua to the girl's parents, they do not refuse the tabua it will show their mannerless. But in fact nobody always refuse

- to take the tabua when it is presented to him. When this material is use in any occassion it means the respect of other people. The father will have to plant plenty taro and yams, for the mother she will have to a lot of weaving mats. It is the preparation for the wedding ceremony. After a long time about oneyear then the relatives of the boy will have to come and present one tabua to the gilr's mother and the father to let them know of the wedding day. Everything will be prepare before the wedding day. On the wedding day it is like the happiest day in the community because of this wedding ceremony will take place. Early morning the relatives from both sides will prepare the dress for the bride and bride-groom. They will have to wear masi and gatu the big brown one. Then they oil themselves in a special oil, then they will hold one tabua each in their hand. When the boy comes he will give the tabua to lady who is bringing the girl. The same applies to the girl that she will have to give the tabua to the man who is bringing the boy. It is a sort of gift to each other who is bringing the new bride and the bride-groom. From then one they will go to the place which have been prepare for them to stand. There will twenty mats spread on the floor and the big brown masi on top. Then the father of the boy will then present another tabua to show to the relatives of the girl that from now on the boy have marry the girl. They won't forget that today is the big day for them because of this weddingceremony. Then after that the girl's father will then present another

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- tabua to show the relative of the boy that they are very delighted about the wedding ceremony. In a way that they gave their daughter to marry this boy. After that then the boy will have to go to the girl's side and remove his costumes there, the same applies to the girl that she will go to the boy's side and remove her wedding costumes there. In here it a sort of exchange gift between the bride and bride-groom. The relatives on the opposite side will have to dress them again in another fujian costumes then they will return to their side. At that moment then the girl will be putting on many kinds of costumes and she will be taken to the boy's relatives and remove her dress there, in all this doing they are very special for the girl. The relatives will be preparing the wedding feast for the whole community. On one side it will be the boy's side and the othere side isthe girl's side. So the feast was ready and the bride and bride-gromm come to join the people for the feast. After thefeast the they will given a bowl of oil to wash their hands with. From then on they are not allow to touch the water. Then the girl will go back to her relatives then her relatives will prepare themselves to bring the girl for the last time. In here they have to prepare about thirty mats, nasi, gatu, and all othere domestic materials. When they reach the boy's place then the father of the girl will have to present a very huge tabua to the relatives of the boy and this is wall the fathers request to the boy and his relatives. Because from now on the boy will have to take care about the girl.

- So that is why the father is asking the boy the his relatives to help his daughter when she need something, and count here as one of their reāl family. Although she is new to the family but they have to bear in mind that this girl is another mother in the family. The father will be expressing his warm thoughts about his daughter because he does not like to see that his daughter goin to cry to them in need of something.

After that thent the father of the boy will have to present a bundle of mat to the mother and this gift is mainly for the mother of the girl. It is becaause the lovely care of the mother in which the make the girl a very pretty one and good behave. So the boy is thanking the mother for her good care about her daughter. So from now on the boy is willing to take care of the girl and he will do anything for the girl. And another bundle of gift will be given to the girl's parents. And this one is mainly for their good instructions to their lovely daughter in which she does not come across anything drmatic. Now the girl have been a lovely one to their parents in which she reach this stage at no problems at all. So that shows that she have been follow the instructions by her parents.

After that then the girl will have to stay at her new house then her relatives will have to goback.

- I always hear that something always happen on the fourth night, can you tell me something about it ?
- After the fourth night then the relatives of the boy will then know that the girl which the boy marries is a virgin or something else.

- Early in the morning the boy's grandmother will then come to see the mark on the beddings of the bride and the bride-groom. When she saw the blood stained on the bed then she will give a loud shout to tell the people that the girl is the virgin one, it is the first time for her to sleep with the man. Then the ladies will have to bit the lali and empty tins, and dance in the house. From here then the grandmother will have wrapp the masi which was stained, then they will have to dress the bride in another fijian masi and she will be taken down to the stream to have her bath. In here it looks like that they have to take her down to the sea to catch some fish. And all the fish which they caught then it will be taken to the girl's relatives. But some they kill a big pork without wounding any other part of the animal they just take it like that and they present it to the girl's relatives. When the girl's relatives see this then they will know straight away the their girl is a virgin, even the mother will cry again because she will thing about the past in which she will and always take care of her daughter. Then everybody will be happy about the good news. Then the girl will be taken back by the boy's relatives then she will stay at her new house.
- Can you tell me the reason why the boy's relatives have to present that pork without any wound on the body?
- This kind of feast which always presented like this means that the girl is a virgin one, that it is the sing of the virginity which is on the bed.

- Can we talk about the Tobe or why the girl have to tie a part of her hair ?
- When the girl receive her first monthly period then the grandmother will have to cut her hair and leave another part so the girl have to tie this one. And this is call the Tobe. The girl does not have to cut this Tobe until the time she get married. This Tobe is also improtant to the girl because it shows that she still a virgin nevermine how old is she and she still got the Tobe the people will know that she still a virgin. Also for the cutting of this Tobe the boy's relatives will have to prepare a very special feast for it.
- I always heard about the taboos does goes to the bride and bride-groom also, what kind of taboos do they use ?
- Well in here from the first day they got married then it is not allow for them to touch the water so that is why they have to wash their hands with the fijian oil. This will carry on until the fourth night. After the fourth night then the bride and the bride-groom will then bath themselves in the sea.
- What is the mani purpose of this occassion and what materials do they use most of the time ?
- For this occassion it is to strengthen the relation between the two family, that the blood is there in which can show how close the relation is. In here they use mostly the whale's tooth or the tabua as we may call it in fijian. If there is no tabua then this occassion does not look good at all.

- What will happen if the girl refuse to marry that boy ?
- For this one I have not come across any of its kind. But I can only say that in olden times the girl does not refuse anything the father say. She always follow her parents instruction and obey them.
- Can we talk about the Tevutevu, what is prepare for this purpose ?
- The Tevutevu is the last gift of the both relatives to the bride and the bride-groom for their domestic use. The boy's mother will then spread on the ground her beddings which she make for her son, Then on top the girl's mother will then spread the girl's bedding. They can give twenty mats each and masi and many others. It is up to them what they can give to any amount at all. But we always find that nobody wants to be on the loose side, they are just fair and square.
- Is there something else you want to say about this topic ?
- I think that is all I want to say, and I really appreciate your effort to find me and take my story about this topic. That is all I have to say.

T H E E N D