

The Problematics Of Apostasy Behavior Post Marriage From The Perspective Of Islamic Law

Besse Tenri Ulang^{1*}, Nasaruddin² & Gasim Yamani³

¹²³UIN Datokarama (Islamic Family Law, Postgraduate Program, UIN Datokarama, Palu, Indonesia)

*Correspondence Email: tenri024@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Marriage in Islam requires religious sameness between prospective husband and wife as one of the conditions for the validity of the marriage. In practice, the phenomenon of riddah (apostasy) after marriage becomes a legal issue that has implications for the validity of the marriage, the status of the marital relationship, and various other legal consequences. This study aims to analyze the factors influencing the occurrence of post-marriage riddah and its legal implications for marital status from an Islamic law perspective. This research uses a qualitative method with library research through a normative approach to fiqh literature, the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI), and other sources of Islamic law. The results show that post-marriage riddah is influenced by internal factors such as weak understanding of faith, emergence of doubt toward Islamic teachings, and the desire to return to a previous religion, as well as external factors such as family influence, social environment, and lack of religious guidance. From an Islamic law perspective, riddah does not automatically annul the marriage if consummation has occurred; rather, the marital status becomes mauquf (suspended) until the end of the iddah period. If the party who committed riddah returns to Islam before the end of the iddah period, the marriage remains valid without requiring a new marriage contract. Conversely, if they do not return to Islam by the end of the iddah period, the marriage is dissolved, and a new marriage contract is required to resume the marital relationship. Meanwhile, if riddah occurs before consummation (dukhl), the marriage is void immediately. These findings indicate that the protection of marital integrity in Islam is closely related to the preservation of aqidah as one of the primary objectives of sharia (maqasid al-syari'ah).

Keywords: Problems, post-marriage apostasy, Islamic law perspective

ABSTRAK

Pernikahan dalam Islam mensyaratkan kesamaan agama antara calon suami dan istri sebagai salah satu syarat keabsahan perkawinan. Dalam praktiknya, fenomena riddah (murtad) pasca pernikahan menjadi persoalan hukum yang berimplikasi pada keabsahan perkawinan, status hubungan suami istri, serta berbagai akibat hukum lainnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi terjadinya riddah pasca pernikahan dan implikasi hukumnya terhadap status perkawinan menurut perspektif hukum Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian kepustakaan (library research) melalui pendekatan normatif terhadap literatur fikih, Kompilasi Hukum Islam (KHI), dan sumber-sumber

hukum Islam lainnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa riddah pasca pernikahan dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal berupa lemahnya pemahaman keimanan, munculnya keraguan terhadap ajaran Islam, dan keinginan untuk kembali kepada agama sebelumnya, serta faktor eksternal berupa pengaruh keluarga, lingkungan sosial, dan kurangnya pembinaan keagamaan. Dalam perspektif hukum Islam, riddah tidak serta-merta membatalkan perkawinan apabila telah terjadi hubungan suami istri, melainkan status perkawinan menjadi *mauquf* (terhenti) hingga berakhirnya masa *iddah*. Apabila pihak yang melakukan riddah kembali kepada Islam sebelum berakhirnya masa *iddah*, maka perkawinan tetap sah tanpa memerlukan akad nikah baru. Sebaliknya, apabila tidak kembali kepada Islam hingga masa *iddah* berakhir, maka perkawinan putus dan untuk melanjutkan hubungan perkawinan diperlukan akad nikah yang baru. Sementara itu, apabila riddah terjadi sebelum terjadinya hubungan suami istri (*dukhul*), maka perkawinan batal seketika. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa perlindungan terhadap keutuhan perkawinan dalam Islam sangat berkaitan dengan pemeliharaan akidah sebagai salah satu tujuan pokok syariat (*maqasid al-syari'ah*).

Kata Kunci: Problematika, *Riddah* pasca pernikahan, perspektif Hukum Islam

INTRODUCTION

Religion is a spiritual belief held by a person toward a higher power. Religion regulates how humans worship God and how they live their lives on earth. The true and divinely accepted religion is Islam. Islam is not a man-made religion but a divine religion revealed by Allah through His messengers, the prophets.

Belief in Allah without associating Him with any creation and belief in the prophethood of Muhammad is the correct faith in Islam. Faith (iman) is a great blessing and a fundamental requirement for the validity of a person's Islam. The validity of worship depends on Islam, and the validity of Islam depends on correct faith and avoidance of apostasy (riddah). Apostasy refers to actions that damage and nullify a person's Islam. However, many Muslims still do not fully understand the forms of apostasy.

Marriage in Islam requires both spouses to be Muslim. In maqasid sharia, it is explained that preserving lineage must be achieved through lawful marriage. An invalid marriage affects the legal status of a child's lineage. Apostasy often occurs in individuals intending to marry someone of another religion, leading one party to leave Islam for marriage purposes. In other cases, a non-Muslim may convert to Islam to marry a Muslim partner, then later return to their previous religion, resulting in apostasy.

As occurred in a case at the Bengkulu Religious Court between the respondent (wife) and the petitioner (husband), where the husband filed for triple talaq due to the wife's apostasy. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the legal status of marriage when apostasy occurs after marriage.

Research by Budi Budhiman and Latif Ratnawaty (2025) in their journal titled "*Legal Review of Divorce Due to Apostasy in Positive Law*" explains that national law does not regulate apostasy as a ground for divorce. However, in the Compilation of Islamic Law, apostasy is regulated in Article 116 letter H if it causes disharmony in the household.

The problem in this study is the legal implication of apostasy on marital status. Apostasy after marriage clearly affects the validity of the marriage in Islamic law, not only in terms of household harmony but also in terms of religious legal status. Therefore, further analysis is required. The objectives of this study are to identify the factors influencing apostasy and to analyze the legal implications of apostasy after marriage from Islamic law perspective.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research. This method is chosen because the study focuses on Islamic legal theory, making literature review the most suitable approach. The research is descriptive-analytical in nature.

Data sources consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include the Qur'an, Hadith, fiqh books, and Islamic legal literature related to apostasy and marriage. Secondary sources include books, journals, theses, dissertations, and previous studies relevant to the topic.

Data collection is conducted through documentation techniques by collecting, reading, recording, and classifying relevant literature. Data analysis uses content analysis, normative analysis, and conceptual-contextual analysis. Validity is ensured through source triangulation by comparing various references, scholars' opinions, and previous studies to ensure academic reliability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Factors Influencing Apostasy After Marriage

1. Internal Factors

Internal factors are factors that influence the occurrence of *riddah* (apostasy) originating from the individual concerned. Internal factors refer to conditions that affect other aspects of a person's life and are entirely within one's personal control. Therefore, the internal causes of *riddah* are rooted within the individual.

Generally, *riddah* occurs due to a lack of understanding of faith and religious teachings. As a result, individuals do not possess a strong foundation of faith. When confronted with circumstances that weaken their belief, they become more susceptible to apostasy. Muhammad bin Nazih al-Ramthuniyy and Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Tharasy (2019), in their book *Al-Qaul al-Jaliyy*, explain that individuals who have been Muslims since childhood are obliged to study religious knowledge, particularly knowledge concerning the proper understanding of God and the fundamentals of faith. Such understanding serves as a safeguard against wavering belief. Likewise, for converts to Islam (*muallaf*), embracing Islam alone is insufficient without learning the principles of faith. Failure to deepen their understanding may leave them vulnerable to doubts and instability in their commitment to Islam.

According to Fikri Hailal and Khuriyatus Sa'adah (2025), another internal factor contributing to apostasy is a sense of comfort with one's previous religion. This situation often occurs when two individuals of different faiths enter into a relationship,

and one partner converts to the religion of the other for the purpose of marriage. After the marriage is solemnized according to Islamic law and proceeds normally, conflicts may arise within the relationship. In some cases, the spouse who originally converted to Islam may choose to return to their former religion, perceiving it as more comfortable or compatible with their personal beliefs and lifestyle.

The re-emergence of doubt is also a significant factor leading to apostasy. Such doubt concerns the truth of Islam itself. The incompatibility between values previously embraced and the new religious values encountered after conversion may affect an individual's determination to remain Muslim. Without a sound understanding of Islamic theology and the principles of faith, individuals may become susceptible to uncertainty regarding the truth of Islam.

Another contributing factor is the tendency to make religion or Islamic law the subject of jokes and ridicule. In everyday life, some individuals may utter words that insult or demean Islam, believing them to be harmless jokes rather than sinful acts. However, Islam and its teachings are not appropriate subjects for mockery or contempt. Insulting or ridiculing Islam and its religious laws constitutes an act of disbelief that must be avoided.

The desire for unrestricted freedom may also encourage apostasy. The freedom referred to here is the freedom to engage in immoral and sinful acts without considering them sinful, due to a perceived release from Islamic obligations. In Islamic theology, however, a person remains morally accountable (*mukallaf*) even if they abandon Islam. Although classified as a non-believer (*kafir*), such a person remains responsible before Allah, the Lord of all creation. Therefore, disbelief itself constitutes a sin, and engaging in acts of disobedience further increases one's burden of sin.

Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that the primary internal factors contributing to apostasy after marriage include a weak understanding of faith, a lingering sense of comfort with the teachings or lifestyle associated with one's former religion, doubts regarding the truth of Islam, a tendency to treat religion as a subject of mockery, and a desire to attain unrestricted freedom that is mistakenly perceived as free from moral accountability. In reality, Islamic teachings are not intended to restrain human beings but rather to preserve their dignity, morality, and noble status, which distinguish them from other creatures.

2. External Factors

External factors are factors that contribute to the occurrence of *riddah* (apostasy) and originate from outside the individual. These factors may arise from family circumstances or the surrounding social environment. Family members may not support an individual's decision to embrace Islam, causing the convert to feel isolated or alienated within their own family. Furthermore, the lack of encouragement and support from family, friends, and the new Muslim community may intensify feelings of doubt and discomfort, ultimately leading the individual to return to their previous religion.

The social environment also plays a significant role in shaping religious commitment. Associating with people who possess weak spiritual values, who underestimate religious teachings, or who regard religion merely as a social identity can

influence an individual's perception of religion. Such an environment may weaken religious conviction and commitment.

Similarly, a family setting that does not provide Islamic education from an early age, does not emphasize adherence to Islamic principles, and does not encourage participation in Islamic religious activities may contribute to an individual's vulnerability to doubt and uncertainty regarding their faith. In addition, a limited understanding of Islamic teachings, coupled with a lack of determination and willingness to deepen one's knowledge of religion and Islamic law, can further increase the likelihood of apostasy.

B. Legal Implications of Apostasy After Marriage

Apostasy (riddah) is regulated under Islamic law and is regarded as one of the gravest acts of disobedience to Allah, as it represents a serious form of disbelief and rejection of faith. According to Muhammad bin Nazih al-Ramthuniyy and Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Tharasy (2019), a person who commits apostasy is obliged to return to Islam immediately. If the apostate refuses to return to Islam voluntarily, the caliph (*khalifah*) or an authorized representative is required to instruct the individual to embrace Islam again. In classical Islamic jurisprudence, no religion other than Islam is accepted from the apostate. If, after being advised, warned, and given the opportunity to repent, the individual persists in apostasy, classical Islamic law prescribes capital punishment for the offense.

However, such punishment is not imposed immediately upon the occurrence of apostasy. Rather, it is preceded by a process that includes admonition, warning, and an opportunity for repentance. Furthermore, the implementation of such punishment is restricted to a legitimate caliph or an executioner acting under the authority of a recognized Islamic government. This was the legal framework applied during the historical period of the Islamic caliphates.

Accordingly, while these rulings remain part of the classical Islamic legal tradition, their implementation is contingent upon the existence of legitimate Islamic political authority. In contemporary Indonesia, where no universally recognized Islamic caliphate exists, the punishment prescribed in classical jurisprudence cannot be implemented. Therefore, the appropriate response is to provide advice, guidance, and reminders regarding the religious and spiritual consequences of apostasy in this world and the hereafter. Muslims are required to respect and comply with the laws of the state while maintaining respect for the principles of Islamic law.

The process of returning to Islam after apostasy involves pronouncing the two testimonies of faith (*shahadah*). In addition, the individual must sincerely regret the act of apostasy as an act of disobedience to Allah and firmly resolve not to repeat such behavior in the future. When these conditions are fulfilled with genuine sincerity, the individual is considered to have truly repented and returned to Islam.

According to Muhammad bin Nazih al-Ramthuniyy and Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Tharasy (2019), a person who merely pronounces the two testimonies of faith (*shahadah*) without feelings of remorse and without any intention or contemplation of committing apostasy again in the future is nevertheless considered to have returned to

Islam. However, such a person remains sinful and has not fulfilled the requirements of sincere repentance (*tawbah*). Genuine repentance requires remorse for the sin committed, a firm determination not to repeat it, and a sincere aversion to the act itself.

Apart from nullifying a person's Islamic faith and being considered a cause of eternal punishment in Hell according to Islamic theology, apostasy (*riddah*) also has significant implications for acts of worship (*ibadah*) and legal transactions (*mu'amalah*) involving other Muslims.

With regard to acts of worship, apostasy invalidates practices such as *tayammum*, prayer (*salah*), and fasting (*sawm*). These acts of worship are deemed invalid if performed by an apostate, and it is prohibited for an apostate to perform them before returning to Islam. Therefore, if a person falls into apostasy while fasting, the fast becomes invalid, whether it is an obligatory fast or a voluntary one. In such circumstances, the apostate is required to return to Islam immediately and continue refraining from actions that invalidate the fast until the time of breaking the fast, even though the fast itself has already been nullified. In contrast, regarding ablution (*wudu'*), if apostasy occurs after performing ablution and the individual returns to Islam before experiencing any ritual impurity (*hadath*), the ablution remains valid. Such are the legal rulings concerning apostasy in Islamic jurisprudence.

Muhammad bin Nazih al-Ramthuniyy and Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Tharasy (2019) further explain that apostasy may also affect other legal matters. Animals slaughtered by an apostate are considered unlawful for consumption and are classified as carrion. An apostate is likewise prohibited from inheriting from Muslim relatives or passing inheritance to Muslim heirs due to the legal consequences of apostasy. Furthermore, if an apostate dies without returning to Islam, Islamic funeral rites are not performed. The deceased is not washed, shrouded, prayed over, or buried in a Muslim cemetery, as an apostate is no longer regarded as a Muslim under Islamic law.

The following section discusses the implications of apostasy on marital status based on the jurisprudential opinions of the four Sunni schools of law (*madhhabs*) and the provisions of the Indonesian Compilation of Islamic Law (*Kompilasi Hukum Islam* – KHI).

1. Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh)

Apostasy (*riddah*) may have legal implications in matters of *mu'amalah* (social and legal transactions), one of which concerns the law of marriage. As stated by the hadith scholar Shaykh 'Abdullah al-Harari (2018) in his book *Ash-Shirat al-Mustaqim*:

وَمِنْ أَحْكَامِ الرَّدَّةِ أَنْ يَنْفَسَخَ نِكَاحُ زَوْجَتِهِ أَيْ عَقْدُ الزَّوْاجِ الشَّرْعِيِّ فَتَكُونُ الْعَلَاقَةُ بَيْنَ الزَّوْجَيْنِ بَعْدَ كُفْرِهِ عِلَاقَةً غَيْرَ شَرْعِيَّةٍ فَجَمَاعُهُ لَهَا زَنَى، وَلَا فَرْقَ بَيْنَ أَنْ يَكْفُرَ الزَّوْجُ وَيَبَيِّنَ أَنْ تَكْفُرَ الزَّوْجَةُ

Meaning:

Among the rulings regarding a person who commits apostasy (*riddah*) is that their marriage becomes annulled; the valid marriage contract is dissolved. Consequently, the marital relationship between husband and wife after one of them becomes a disbeliever is no longer a lawful relationship, and sexual intercourse (*jima'*) between them is considered *zina* (fornication). There is no difference whether the one who becomes a disbeliever is the husband or the wife.

The statement of Shaykh Abdullah above is based on the jurisprudential opinion of Imam al-Shafi'i. According to this view, apostasy (*riddah*) may have legal implications for the status of a marriage. If the marriage has not yet been consummated through *dukhul*—that is, sexual intercourse (*jima'*) between the husband and wife—the marriage is automatically dissolved, and a new marriage contract (*nikah*) is required if the parties wish to continue their marital relationship.

However, the ruling differs when the marriage has already been consummated through sexual intercourse and one of the spouses subsequently commits apostasy. In such a situation, the legal consequences are divided into two possibilities.

First, the marriage becomes *mauquf* (suspended). During this period, it is unlawful for the husband and wife to engage in sexual relations. This suspension continues until the spouse who has fallen into apostasy, whether the husband or the wife, returns to Islam before the expiration of the *iddah* (waiting period). If the apostate spouse returns to Islam within the *iddah* period, the marriage is restored to its valid status without the need for a new marriage contract.

Second, the marriage is subject to *fasakh* (dissolution). If the spouse who committed apostasy does not return to Islam during the *iddah* period and the waiting period expires, the marriage is considered terminated. Consequently, the marital relationship is dissolved, and the parties must enter into a new marriage contract if they wish to remarry.

According to Muhammad Syauqi and Sahibul Ardi (2023), the Hanafi school generally holds that a marriage is dissolved through *fasakh* when the wife commits apostasy. However, when the husband is the one who commits apostasy, Hanafi jurists differ in their opinions regarding whether the dissolution should be classified as *fasakh* or as *talaq ba'in* (irrevocable divorce). In the Maliki school, the marriage is immediately terminated if apostasy occurs before consummation (*dukhul*), and the dissolution is categorized either as *talaq ba'in* or *fasakh*. Meanwhile, the Hanbali school adopts a position similar to that of the Shafi'i school regarding the effect of apostasy on marital status.

Abu Umamah (2023) explains that *talaq ba'in* is a form of divorce pronounced by the husband in which the wife's *iddah* period has already expired. In such circumstances, the husband may reunite with and remarry his former wife only by conducting a new marriage contract that fulfills all legal requirements, including the payment of a dowry (*mahr*), the presence of a legal guardian (*wali*), and the testimony of two witnesses.

The *iddah* period refers to the waiting period observed by a woman in order to determine whether her womb is free from pregnancy. In addition to this practical purpose, *iddah* also serves as an act of worship (*ta'abbud*), performed solely in obedience to Allah's command. Furthermore, *iddah* may be observed as a period of mourning following the death of a husband, during which the widow fulfills the religious obligations prescribed by Islamic law.

According to Abu Umamah (2023), the duration of the *iddah* (waiting period) differs depending on a woman's circumstances, such as whether she is pregnant, not pregnant, menstruating, or no longer menstruating. The periods of *iddah* are explained as follows:

1. If a woman is pregnant, her *iddah* continues until she gives birth.
2. If a woman is not pregnant and is still experiencing menstruation (that is, she has not yet reached menopause), her *iddah* lasts until she has completed three periods of purity (*tuhr*) following menstruation.
3. If a woman has not engaged in sexual intercourse (*jima'*) with her husband, she is not required to observe any *iddah* period.
4. If a woman has reached menopause and no longer menstruates, her *iddah* lasts for three lunar months according to the Islamic Hijri calendar.

The application of the *iddah* period in cases of apostasy (*riddah*) can be understood from the explanation above. If apostasy occurs before the marriage has been consummated through sexual intercourse, the marriage is immediately dissolved because there is no *iddah* period to be observed. However, if apostasy occurs after sexual intercourse has taken place, the duration of the *iddah* depends upon the woman's condition, namely whether she is pregnant or not, and whether she is still menstruating or has reached menopause, as explained above.

If either the husband or the wife commits apostasy and nevertheless continues the marital relationship, resulting in the birth of a child from that union, Islamic law regards the legal lineage (*nasab*) of the child as being attributed to the mother rather than to the father. This is because the child is considered to have been conceived from a relationship that is not legally valid according to Islamic law. As is widely recognized, Islam prohibits interfaith marriage. Likewise, when apostasy occurs after marriage, it affects the legal validity of the marital relationship, as explained previously.

It is therefore essential for every Muslim to understand these legal rulings, especially couples who intend to marry. Prospective spouses should acquire adequate knowledge of the laws governing marriage in order to safeguard the validity and integrity of their marriage from the perspective of Islamic law. A marriage that does not fulfill the legal requirements of validity may produce continuing legal consequences in other areas of life. For example, if apostasy occurs and the apostate spouse does not return to Islam, yet the couple continues to engage in marital relations and a child is born from that relationship, the child may face legal implications concerning lineage (*nasab*), inheritance rights, and guardianship (*wilayah*) in marriage, particularly if the child is female. These are among the legal consequences that may arise when a child is born from a marriage that is considered invalid according to Islamic law.

2. The Compilation of Islamic Law (Kompilasi Hukum Islam – KHI)

Apostasy (*riddah*) may have implications for divorce as stipulated in the Compilation of Islamic Law (*Kompilasi Hukum Islam* – KHI). In Chapter XVI concerning the “Dissolution of Marriage,” Article 116 states that “divorce may occur due to one or more of the following reasons.” Letter (h) specifies “religious conversion or apostasy (*riddah*) resulting in disharmony within the household.” Based on this provision, a petition for divorce may be submitted to the Religious Court on the grounds of apostasy. Since Islam neither permits nor recognizes interfaith marriages as lawful, the annulment of a person's Islamic faith after a valid marriage has been contracted may also affect the legal status of the marriage thereafter.

This principle is clearly stated in Chapter VI concerning “Marriage Prohibitions.” Article 40 provides that a marriage between a man and a woman is prohibited under certain circumstances. One of these circumstances is mentioned in letter (c), namely, “a woman who is not a Muslim.” Furthermore, Article 44 stipulates that “a Muslim woman is prohibited from marrying a man who is not a Muslim.”

Thus, the Compilation of Islamic Law does not permit interfaith marriages or marriages between a Muslim and an apostate. However, when a valid marriage has already been established and one of the spouses subsequently commits apostasy, the KHI provides that a divorce petition may be filed only when the apostasy causes disharmony within the household.

Zainul Mu’ien Husni and Abdul Latief (2022) state in their journal article that: “The Compilation of Islamic Law should include an additional provision stating that one of the causes for the dissolution of marriage is the apostasy of either the husband or the wife. Such an addition would bring the Compilation into harmony with the principles of Islamic law, in which the majority of Muslim scholars, including the founders of the major schools of jurisprudence, firmly maintain that apostasy results in the dissolution of marriage.”

Zainul therefore proposes the inclusion of an additional provision in the Compilation of Islamic Law regarding the dissolution of marriage due to apostasy, so that it more closely reflects the rulings of classical Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). Zainul Mu’ien Husni and Abdul Latief further state in their article that:

“When a husband commits apostasy but this does not result in disharmony within the household and no complaint is submitted to the Religious Court, the court will not intervene or handle the matter. This is because, in civil matters, judges adopt a passive role; they neither initiate proceedings nor have the authority to resolve such cases without a formal application. Consequently, if a husband commits apostasy and no dispute arises between the spouses, the marital bond cannot be dissolved through judicial proceedings.”

Based on Zainul's explanation, it can be concluded that a marriage cannot be legally dissolved under state law unless a divorce petition is filed by either the husband or the wife, even when apostasy has occurred on the part of one spouse. Without a

formal application being submitted to the Religious Court, the court has no means of knowing that a problem exists within the household of the apostate individual. Moreover, it is neither the function nor the authority of the court to investigate the private affairs of a family on its own initiative. Therefore, public education and legal counseling are essential in order to increase public awareness regarding the importance of preserving family stability and understanding the legal consequences that apostasy may have on the continuity of marriage.

CONCLUSIONS

The occurrence of apostasy (riddah) may be caused by internal factors, namely from the individual themselves due to a lack of knowledge about religion. It may also be caused by external factors such as family problems or an unfavorable social environment. Post-marital apostasy in Islamic law does not automatically annul the marriage. Rather, it depends on whether the person returns to Islam during the iddah period or after the iddah period. If the return to Islam occurs within the iddah period, the marriage remains valid without the need for a new marriage contract. However, if the return occurs after the iddah period has ended, the marriage is considered void and a new marriage contract is required for reconciliation. This applies in cases where the marriage has already been consummated. However, if no marital relations (consummation) have occurred, then the marriage is immediately annulled and a new marriage contract is required.

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