

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Regulation of Marriage in Epi and Nguna.

77 SIR,—It was stated on the authority of the notes left by the late A. B. Deacon, that marriage in Epi followed the cross-cousin rule.¹ It now appears that

¹ See A. B. Deacon, Notes on some islands of the New Hebrides, edited by Miss C. Wedgwood in *Journ. Roy. Anthropol. Inst.*, LIX, p. 461 pp.

this is not true for the whole island, but only for the western side, from which Deacon gained his information. A letter written by the late Rev. J. Smail in 1893, while he was a missionary on the island, contains some answers to anthropological and linguistic questions put by the late Rev. Dr. Gunn, then on Futuna. It deals with marriage in Nikaura district, which is situated in north east Epi. The language notes, however, are

in the dialect of Tasiko, in the south-east, so that it looks as though information from the one area covers the second also, and that the entire eastern side of the island deviates from Deacon's statement. The map will make clear the divisions in question :—

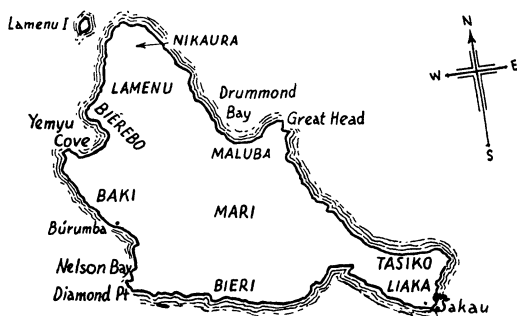


FIG. 1. SKETCH MAP OF EPI ISLAND.

Place names are in small letters; district and dialect names in capitals.

According to the information preserved in Mr. Smail's letter, cross-cousin marriage was forbidden in Tasiko-Nikaura districts, and the standard marriage was with the daughter of the father's sister's daughter or father's sister's son. Mr. Smail expresses it rather clumsily, but his statement is :—"First cousins never marry, " but if there are a brother and a sister, and they have " children, the brother's child being a son and the " sister's a son or daughter, and that child gets married " and has a daughter, she is the wife of her mother's " cousin." Diagrammatically, thus :—

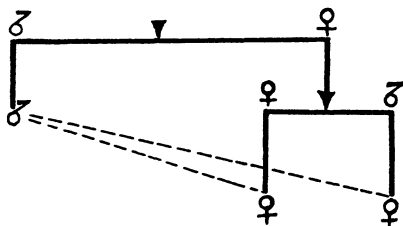


FIG. 2. STANDARD MARRIAGE IN TASIKO-NIKAURA DISTRICTS.

The two possible cases are entered on the one diagram to save space, but the diagram would be rather different if done in full. Moreover there is no information regarding the social structure of Tasiko-Nikaura. The relationship terms, unfortunately are short of some important members, but those given are as follows, and may be compared with Deacon's which, however, differ to some extent from the Baki and are apparently Bierebo dialect :

- apua* : grandfather, grandmother, husband's father, husband's mother.
- arima* : father, father's brother.
- ane* : mother, mother's sister.
- naru* : child, father's brother's child, mother's sister's child, brother's child (m.s.).
- ruelxi* : brother (m.s.), father's brother's son, mother's sister's son.
- vino* : sister (m.s.), father's brother's daughter (m.s.), mother's sister's daughter (m.s.).
- ymano* : brother (w.s.), father's brother's son (w.s.), mother's sister's son (w.s.).

- ina* : sister (w.s.), father's brother's daughter (w.s.), mother's sister's daughter (w.s.).
- miarū* : father's sister's child (m.s.), mother's brother's child (m.s.), sister's child (m.s.).
- apogbwa* : father's sister's child (w.s.), mother's brother's child (w.s.), brother's child (w.s.).
- mwapi* : grandchild, son's wife.
- viyo* : father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law.
- ropi* : mother-in-law (w.s.) (used in gospel translation of *Matthew* 19 : 35).
- o* : spouse.

Possessive suffixes have been omitted and the bare stems given. Unfortunately the term for 'mother's 'brother' is not given. Space does not allow of a linguistic analysis of Epi terms in all dialects; suffice it to say there is a strong Polynesian tinge, especially in Bieri. The only thing that seems at all probable is the existence of the six-class system in this part of Epi. The use of the same term for 'mother's mother,' 'mother's father,' 'husband's mother' and 'husband's 'father,' seems to point in this direction, but the matter needs to be gone into on the spot, if it is still possible to do so. In Baki there is no appearance of the term *miarū* or a cognate of it. In Baki, the 'mother's brother' is *komārua*, a phonetic variant of the common word *matua*, 'elder,' with the normal Baki prefix.

The brother's son marries his father's sister's grand-daughter. She is already grandchild of her husband's father's sister, so that now she becomes by marriage his daughter-in-law as well. Accordingly we find *mwapi-na*, his grandchild, also meaning his son's wife. There is also a proper term for this, *viyo-na*. This term is not exclusively Polynesian, but predominantly so, and seems to suggest the meeting of two different systems.

In Nguna there is a good deal of resemblance in actual terms, and in their usage. It is impossible to print them all here, though a full list is available; but it can safely be said that if the six-class system really held good in Epi, it did not extend further south. In Nguna, as in Efate, there was a totemic clan-system, the totems being stones, fish, food plants and the rat. The only thing that can definitely be said is that the relationship terms point to a matrilineal moiety-system. The question of the marriage to the mother's brother's widow is ruled out, because in Nguna widows were strangled, as farther south. Cross-cousin marriage is stated to have been forbidden.

Sufficient has been stated in a communication that considerations of space make rather patchy, to show there is a clear line of demarcation south of Epi, while in Epi itself the Nguna system held good on the western side, but something very like the Ambrym system on the east. If it is still possible, in view of the excessive depopulation of the island, to ascertain the facts, it will probably be found that Ambrym and Paama have largely influenced this area. A. CAPELL.

'Tingani' in Northern Nigeria.

78 SIR.—In his recent book 'Law and Authority in 'a Nigerian Tribe,' p 24, Dr. C. K. Meek has a footnote, as follows : "Among a number of tribes of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast the Earth-deity is known as Tingani. As this word seems to embody the same name (Ani) as the Ibo Earth-deity, " Dr. Rattray's suggestion that Tingani is derived from " *tī* = 'trees' and *gane* = 'surpass' and refers to the " sacred groves of the Earth-deity seems hardly " probable."

May I venture to correct a statement which is likely to mislead Dr. Meek's readers, in particular as he