

SCHOOL OF AFRICAN STUDIES



University of Cape Town

(WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE SOUTH AFRICAN COLLEGE.)

POSTAL ADDRESS:

P.O. BOX 594, CAPE TOWN.

Rondebosch

24th November, 1939.

Dear Mr. Matthews,

I have just finished going through your Fort Hare papers and would like to congratulate you once again on the results that you have managed to produce. One has only to compare your papers with those written by the external students at the University to realise what a pity it is that the latter cannot also receive some tuition at firsthand or at least something better than the particular correspondence college courses that they do receive. I think that I have on the whole marked down your papers, but the final results will probably not be affected by this.

I find to my horror that I have not yet replied to your letter of October 13, but it came at a time when, as usual, we happened to be particularly busy with all sorts of other things. I gave your paper on Marriage Customs to Dr. Simons to read and have also gone through it myself. I am sending it back now with some comments pencilled in here and there on points some of which are comparatively insignificant, while others are perhaps rather more important. As a formal statement of the Rolong marriage system your paper seems to be extremely good, although I don't think that you have always succeeded in making quite clear when you are referring to past conditions and when to the present time. I should have liked also to see a few more actual examples brought in to illustrate some of the points that you make and particularly, if you are going to work up this material again more fully, any statistical data that you have, for instance on the frequency of cousin-marriages, on the amounts given as bogadi, and so on, would be extremely useful. There is one point about your paper that rather puzzles me and that is the statement that in no circumstances is bogadi returnable. You state, for instance, that where the wife is barren the remedy of the husband is ...

is to request her parents for a substitute. What happens in case the parents cannot or will not provide a substitute? I ask this merely because, while among the northern tribes it is very seldom indeed that bogadi is returned, I have found that it can be recovered if a barren wife is to blame for the divorce. Apart from this, I like your paper very much and hope it will be in print soon enough to enable me to make use of it for my own work.

In regard to the question of three courses in anthropology for the B.A., I think this is highly desirable, especially as at present we really do demand too much from them for a two years' course. I suppose the best thing for you as a teacher would be to try and get into touch with Krige as soon as he takes up his work at Grahamstown, and see if you cannot arrange something between you. Meanwhile I shall discuss the thing here with Lestrade and see what his views are on the question.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

J. Schaffer