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# Terms of Relationship in Timucua

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JOHN R. SWANTON

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# Terms of Relationship in Timucua

By John R. Swanton

HE Timucua Indians occupied the northern part of peninsular Florida and a small section of what is now the state of Georgia. On the Atlantic coast they extended from St Andrews sound to a point somewhat northward from Cape Cañaveral and on the coast of the Gulf

of Mexico from Ocilla river to Tampa bay. While their language, as preserved to us by the Franciscan missionaries Pareja and Mouilla, shows a number of striking resemblances, in both structure and vocabulary, to the languages of the Muskhogean stock, the greater part of the vocabulary is so divergent that it will be best for the present to continue to classify it as entirely independent. These people were divided into seven or more distinct tribes, each ruled by a head chief with subordinate chiefs in the different towns under him. The chiefs and their families were highly regarded and, as nearly as can be determined, formed a kind of superior caste. In fact, if we are to take Pareja literally, there were several different orders of privileged classes.

For our information regarding the social organization of the Timucua we are almost entirely dependent on the material contained in the *Cathecismo* of Father Pareja (pp. 107-130). A slight study and a partial translation of this were made by the late Dr A. S. Gatschet, of the Bureau of American Ethnology, who published his results in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia* (vols. XVI-XVIII), but his work is marred by some unfortunate mistranslations, particularly the rendering of *sobrino* as "cousin".

In conjunction with the aristocratic system to which allusion has already been made, there was a system of totemic clans gathered into several phratries. At least such is the most probable construction to be placed on Pareja's attempted description. Descent was matrilineal. In this particular, therefore, the Timucua resembled the Creeks rather than the western Muskhogeans such as the Choctaw and Chickasaw.

Terms of relationship may be simple stem words or they may be descriptive expressions compounded of such words, and one of the pitfalls into which the investigator among primitive peoples is in danger of tumbling is the obtaining of a descriptive expression where

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a simpler term actually existed. Inasmuch as the relationship categories of peoples differ, the terms are bound to differ also, and a relation for which one people uses a root word will be covered by another by means of a descriptive term. In attempting to find equivalents for the terms used by his own people an investigator may therefore obtain and transmit a false impression of the ideas regarding relationship of the people under consideration. For this reason we cannot in the present instance be perfectly sure of the correctness of the data on which we have to depend, yet it must be remembered that Pareja lived among the Florida Indians for many years and made a close study of their language; and it must also be kept in mind that for use in the confessional accurate information regarding relationship was of exceptional importance, so that on the whole I think we may feel that we have a fairly accurate record of the terminology employed.

Following is a list of the terms arranged under stem words:

Isa. This is the root word for "mother", isona, my mother; isaya, your mother. Mother's sister is isale (isalena, my maternal aunt), the derivation of which from isa is obvious. It is probable, from analogy with other languages, that -le is a diminutive ending, but of that I am not certain. If the maternal aunt was older than the mother she was called isamiso; if younger, isa quianima.

Iquine. This name with the appropriate pronominal suffixes (iquinena, she who gave me milk; iquineye, she who gave thee milk) was

applied to the mother after her death.

Iti; the root word for "father", itina, my father; itaye, thy father. The name for the paternal uncle was compounded from this by suffixing -le (itele) as in the case of the maternal aunt. And in an analogous manner itemiso was used to designate the paternal uncle older than the father, and itequiani the paternal uncle younger than the father.

Siqinona or sisiqisama, "the one who begot me", is the name by

which the father was called after his death.

Naribuana, "my old man"; a name given to the paternal uncle after his death.

Neba; the stem word for the maternal uncle; nebena, my maternal uncle. Nebua nebemima signifies my uncle's uncle, and nebapatani,

my uncle's wife.

Nibe; the equivalent for the paternal aunt; nibina, my paternal aunt. The resemblance between this word and the preceding is striking, and there may have been a genetic connection between them, but in Pareja's time, at least, there was an actual distinction.

Hue sipire, hue asire; a name given to the second stepfather.

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Nibira. This was applied to the grandmother on either side, and also, it is said, to the stepmother and godmother, though the last was, of course, a Christian usage. The connection of this term with that for father's sister is apparent, and it becomes still more evident when we consider the analogous case presented by the word for grandfather. The same resemblance exists down to the present day in Creek. Other terms founded on nibira were: nibira yache (also isa yache), great-grandmother; nibira-yachemulu, great-grandmother. The term nibira was also given to the mother, the maternal aunt, and the paternal aunt after the father's death.

Yachemulecoco; a term for the great-grandmother on both the father's and the mother's side.

Itora. This was the term for grandfather, corresponding to nibira, and it was used in an analogous manner for father-in-law and godfather. There is little doubt, especially when we consider the term for grandmother, that this word was based on that for father, iti. Itora naribua, or coesa itora, was great-grandfather, and itora mulu, great-great-grandfather. Itora was also applied by a woman to the husband of her aunt. In a manner analogous to the use of nibira it was given by children to their father, his brothers, and their mother's brothers, after the death of their mother.

Hiosa; one of the terms used by a man for his elder brother, and for the elder son of his father's brother and his mother's sister; the women of the Timucua tribe (Utina) also used this for their elder brother. Children called each other by this term after the death of either parent. Two chiefs who were brothers or of equal rank were also so called.

Niha; another term for elder brother, used by men and by Timucua women in the same manner as hiosa, also for the son of the father's brother older than self.

Ano ecoyana; the name which a man gave to his elder brother after the latter's death.

Yacha. This seems to have been applied originally by a man to his sisters, but in Pareja's time it had come to be used somewhat irregularly, or rather its use had been extended. Yacha miso was the term applied by a man to his elder sister and the elder daughter of the father's brother and the mother's sister. Yacha quianima was the term which a man gave to his younger brother and his younger sister, also to the corresponding cousins; the younger sister was also called amitina. In one place it is said that a woman so called her elder sister, but there seems to be an error in the original text at this point. Yachimale was used for the male and female children of brothers when spoken of collectively; yachimalema, sister and brother.

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Nihona. This was applied to the elder sister of a woman and is evidently related to niha (see above).

Poi; the usual term applied by a woman to her brother; poyna misoma, my elder brother, poyna quianima, my younger brother.

Amita; the name which a man gave to his younger brother and sister, also to the younger child of his father's brother and his mother's sister; amitina, my younger brother or sister. A woman called her younger sister amita oroco; in the Potano and Icafi dialects the forms were amita chitima and amita chirico.

Anta. In the Timucua dialect a man used this term for his brother and a woman used it for her sister; antina, my brother (or sister).

Yubuaribana; the name which a man gave to his younger brother after the latter's death.

Ama; a male or female child of the father's sister.

Eqeta, equeta; a male or female child of the father's sister.

Aruqui; a male or female child of the father's sister.

Qui; stem of the word used for "child", whether male or female, by men and by men only; quiena, my child; qiena miso, my older child; quyanima, my younger child; quiani cocoma, or yubuacoli, my last or latest child. A man also gave this name to the child of his mother's brother.

Pacanoqua; the intermediate child, child born between others.

Yubuacoli; the last child (man or woman speaking).

Isicora, isinahoma; the very last child (of man or woman).

Ule; the name given by a woman to her male or female child; ulena, my child; ulena miso, my elder child; ulena pacanoquana, my second child; ulena quianima, my younger child; ulena quianicocoma, my fourth child; ulena yubacoli, ulena usicora, my very last child. This name was also given by a woman to her sister's child and by a stepmother to her stepchild.

Ano nihanibama; the name given by a woman to her sister's son after his death; ano nihanema, the name given by her to the child of

the preceding after his death.

Aymantanica. This term was also applied to the sister's son after his death; aymantana was a name given to the deceased son of the preceding, and also by both sexes to a deceased near relative dearly beloved; aymanino neletema was applied to a dearly beloved deceased chief by both men and women.

Chirico. Chirico viro and chirico nia were terms used by either

parent in speaking of the son and daughter respectively.

Ahono. Ahono viro and ahono nia were used like the terms just given, but it is said that they were "more used in the interior" by

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men. We find the following additional examples: ahono viro misoma, my elder son; ahono nia misoma, my elder daughter; ahono viro pacanoqua, my intermediate son; ahono nia pacanoqua, my intermediate daughter; ahono viro quianima, my younger son; ahono viro iubuacoli, ahono viro quianicocoma, my youngest or last son; ahono nia iubuacoli, ahono nia quianicocoma, my youngest or last daughter; ahono viro isicora, ahono chirico, ahono isinahoma, my very last son.

Coni; nephew, niece, the term used by a man for his sister's child;

conina, my nephew or niece.

Ebo, ewo; nephew, niece, the term used by a woman for her brother's child, and also for her mother's brother's child; ebona or ewona, my nephew or niece.

Anetana ano etana was applied by a woman to her brother's son

after his death (-na = my).

Quisito. Quisitomale signifies "the grandson and the grand-father", therefore quisito was probably the stem of the word for grandchild. It is perhaps related to the term quisotimi or quisotina given sometimes to the father's sister's child, and to a stepchild of either sex, and to "third cousins". The term for brother's wife and sister's husband very much resembles it, but we can hardly suppose the resemblance anything more than accidental.

Inihi; the term usually employed for wife. Husband and wife

were known as inihimale.

Inifa; the term usually employed for husband.

Taca. This was used for husband and wife. Probably this term and the above were not those applied by the married pair themselves.

Tafi. This simple term seems to have been applied by a man to his brother's wife; tafimitana was applied by a woman to her husband's brother. The ending -na is probably the pronominal suffix of the first person. -mita appears to be some sort of reciprocal, used particularly with "in-law" terms of relationship.

Iquilnona; a term give by a man to his wife's sister's husband.

Yame. This was given by a man to his sister's husband, and probably by a woman to her sister's husband also; perhaps also by a man to his wife's brother. In the Timucua dialect it assumed the form yamancha or yamanchu. Yamemitana was the reciprocal term given by a man to his wife's sister.

Quisa. Niquisa, "my (w.s.) brother's wife", niquisimitana, "my

husband's sister".

Nasi; the term applied by a man or a woman to his or her sonin-law; also the name given to the husband of a niece, a brother's daughter in the case of a man and a sister's daughter in the case of

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a woman; nasina, my son-in-law; nasimitana, my father-in-law or mother-in-law; nasimitamima, his or her father-in-law or mother-in-law; this was also used by a man or woman.

Nubo, nubuo; the term given by a man or woman to his or her daughter-in-law, also to the wife of the nephew, the brother's son in the case of a man and the sister's son in the case of a woman; nubona, or nubuona, my daughter-in-law. Nubuomitana, nynubemitama, ninubuomitama, my father-in-law or my mother-in-law, a reciprocal term employed by women.

Yache pacano; the name given to a mother without children or

kindred (cf. yacha).

Yachema; the mother of a girl who had just reached maturity (?).

Piliqua. This term was applied by a parent and by the mother's sister and the father's brother to his or her children after the death of the other parent; the children also called each other by this term under such circumstances. It was also used in general for any child without father or mother or without a relative.

Pareja adds the following more general terms:

Ano virona, elapachana; names by which relatives and brothers and sisters called each other.

Anoniamale, elapachamale; brothers and sisters, and male and female kinsmen so addressed each other.

Elepacha, anomalema, ano oquomi, ano oquo malema; all these indicate common relationship.

Ubua; the name given to a widow or widower by all the relatives of the deceased.

Ocorotasiqino; a name given to all of those descended from two lineages, i.e., from two clans.

Sigita pahana, all of those descended from one lineage or parent-

age, if it was in the male line.

Ano quela. This appears to have been the term applied to a fellow clansman or clanswoman, or perhaps to anyone who belonged to the same phratry. Pareja has ano quelana, or anona, "my relative", which he says "covers those of the same house, lineage, or parent by the female side"; ano quela niyahobale, we are of one lineage, caste, or generation; ano quela chichaquene? Of what lineage are you?

*Ucucanimi*; indicates distant relationship.

Paha nocoromale, those who are of one house; paha niocorolebale, we are all of one house.

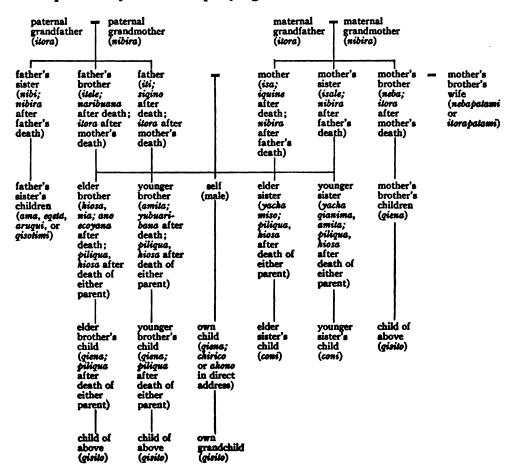
Hica nocoromale, those who are of one town; hica niahobale, hica nicorobale, we are all of one town.

Uti nocoromale, those who are natives of, or of, one country.

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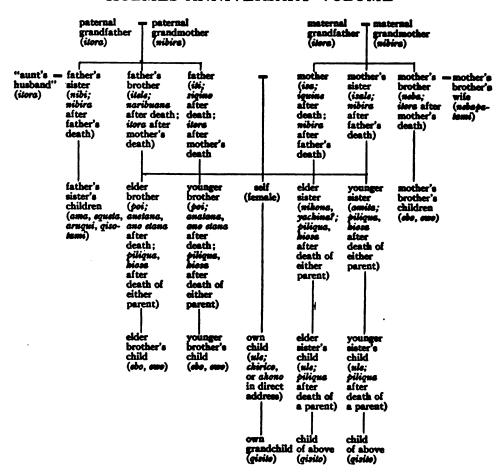


Leaving out of consideration certain very general and certain very special terms which need not concern us, the Timucua system may be expressed by the accompanying tables.



On analyzing these terms with reference to the factors which they express, we find that sex is distinguished in the first three generations only except in relations brought about by marriage. Thus the grandfather and grandmother are distinguished, the father's sister is distinguished from the father and the father's brother, and the mother's brother from the mother and the mother's sister; the brother and male cousins associated with the brother are distinguished from the sister and the female cousins associated with her, the sons-in-law have a distinct name from the daughters-in-law, and the sisters-in-law and

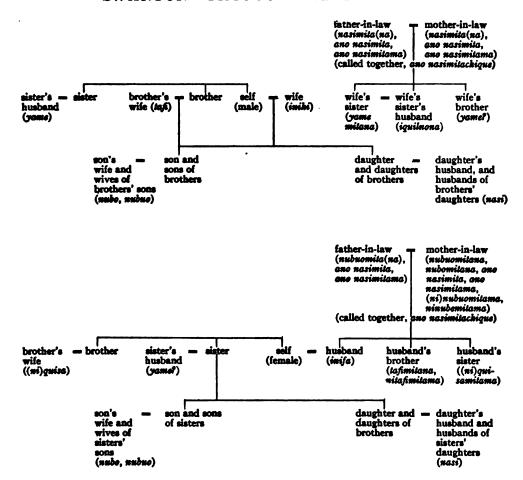
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brothers-in-law are also discriminated. Sex is not distinguished between the father's sister's children, the mother's brother's children, the children, the brother's children, the sister's children, and the grandchildren, nor does it come out clearly as between father-in-law and mother-in-law.

Relative age is distinguished between brothers and sisters, and many other terms seem to mark differences in age also, but the attempt has been to indicate succession rather than age and all kinds of reversals of the expected could easily take place. Thus the term which usually applied to the grandfather was given by a woman to her aunt's husband, and, with a modification, to the mother's brother's wife by persons of both sexes. Some of these might very well have been younger than the speaker. The same might have held true of

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the father's brother and mother's brother who—after the mother's death—were known by the same name as the grandfather. The word for grandmother was also given to the mother, the father's sister, and the mother's sister after the father's death, and among the aunts some might well have been younger than self. Similarly some of the children of brothers and sisters who belonged theoretically to the generation succeeding self might very well have been younger than self, and this was still more likely to be the case with the mother's brother's children and grandchildren who were called by names belonging properly to the two generations succeeding self and yet were actually of two distinct generations. There were also possibilities of reversion in the cases of relationships through marriage.

A word should now be said regarding the post-mortem relationship

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terms which seem to have taken on a particularly vigorous development in Timucua. These are of two kinds-names given to deceased relatives directly, and names given to persons related to self through the deceased person. Of the former we find names for the father, mother, father's brother, and elder and younger brother. It is probable that the list is incomplete and that there were similar names for the mother's sister and own sister. Of the second kind of post-mortem nomenclature we have the following: a name for the father, father's brother, and mother's brother after the mother's death; a name for the mother, father's sister, and mother's sister after the father's death: names for the brother and sister after the death of either parent; a name for a man's brother's children after the death of either parent, and a name for a woman's sister's children after the death of either parent. The first set of names seems to be purely descriptive. *Piliqua*, the principal term employed by brothers and sisters to each other and to their children, is probably a Timucua equivalent for "orphan". The term applied to the father and uncles after the mother's death is identical with that for grandfather, and the term applied to the mother and aunts after the death of the father is identical with that for grandmother. It would seem as if the breaking of this link were thought to have forced the other relatives of the same generation one generation back.

While there were very few terms of relationship that were absolutely reciprocal, it is evident that yame and yamemitana, tafi and tafimitana, nubo and nubomitana, nasi and nasimitana, which indicated relationships through marriage, were really such. Unfortunately, while the usage of the two last sets is apparent, that of the others is by no means clear.

The evident connection between the terms used for the father and grandfather and those employed for father's sister and grandmother deserves notice. In Creek the second of these associations is carried further, the names for grandmother and for father's sister being identical. The striking resemblance between the terms for father's sister and mother's brother is also worthy of attention and can scarcely have been due to chance. Possibly some connection exists between the stem *qisito*, signifying grandchild, and *qisotimi*, one of the terms for father's sister's child. *Qiena*, the male term for "child", may have some connection with *qianima*, "younger", which appears in such a compound as *yacha qianima*, younger sister.

From definite statements of Pareja we know that the Timucua were divided into totemic clans with matrilineal descent, and hence we may feel sure that many of the terms of relationship above given

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were so extended as to include sets of persons related by clan but not necessarily by blood. Had we complete information we should find without doubt that the term for father's brother extended to all the older men of the father's clan. that the term for father's sister extended to all the older women of the father's clan, the term for mother's sister to all the older women of the speaker's clan, and the term for mother's brother to all the older men of the same clan. Similar wide extensions would also be found probably in other terms, such as those for brother and sister, child, brother's (or sister's) child, and in some of the terms due to marriage, like brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law. Certain extensions are indeed indicated by Pareja and have been incorporated into the tables, and we may confidently assume them in many other cases. Yet, if Pareja is to be relied upon, so many terms extended across clan lines that only seven at the most connoted groups confined strictly within clan boundaries. These were the terms for father's brother, father's sister, father's sister's child, mother's sister, mother's brother, wife's (or husband's) brother, and wife's (or husband's) sister. This would be true of the last two, however, only in case the men and women so designated were the men and women of the wife's or husband's clan. If they were the men and women whom the wife or husband called brother and sister, they might include members of every clan in the tribe. The various terms for brother and sister were applied to all those whose fathers the speaker called father or father's brother and to all those whose mothers the speaker called mother or mother's sister. Of course, those related through their mothers were actually members of the same clan, but those related through their fathers would be such only if their fathers had married women belonging to that clan. Pareja seems to record six phratries, and there appears to be no good reason why four or five brothers might not have married into all of these except their own and perhaps that of their father, so that their children would belong to four or more. Nevertheless, in accordance with the Timucua terminology those children would be brothers and sisters to one another. But if anything were lacking in the way of distribution of blood among the clans in this generation, it would be supplied in the next. There a man called "my child" his own child and anyone whose father he called elder brother or younger brother, and as well anyone whose father he called maternal uncle. So far as we know the maternal uncles could marry into any phratry outside of their own, except perhaps that of their father, and the same was true of the other males in this group, whose mothers, as we have seen, might themselves belong to nearly all of the different phratries. The number of persons

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known by this term must sometimes have been enormous and often very widely scattered through the tribe. The extension of the term given to the children of one whom the speaker called "sister" was likely to be smaller because all the children of the own sisters and the clan sisters would be members of the same clan, but a man also called "sister" those women whose fathers he called father's brothers, and through their mothers they might have belonged, as we have seen, to nearly all the phratries in the nation. In the case of a woman the term "my child" would have less extension and the term "my brother's child" greater extension. The remaining terms, those for grandfather, grandmother, grandchild, and those used between persons connected by marriage, were not confined within clan limits.

If these terms were used in the collective sense, which, from what we know of the terminology of other tribes having clans and from the hints dropped by Pareja, we suspect, it is easy to see that it would often be a question where to draw the line in the application of terms between certain persons nearly of an age. But since a distinct connotation goes with every term *irrespective* of considerations of age, is it not possible that different terms may on occasion have been applied to one and the same individual when it was desired to bring out a particular status with reference to the speaker? Thus the term mother's sister at once identifies the individual as a woman of one's own clan. the term mother's brother identifies him as a man of one's own clan, the term father's brother as a man of the father's clan, the term father's sister as a woman of the father's clan, the term father's sister's child as an individual of indeterminate sex of the father's clan, the terms elder brother, younger brother, and sister, as males or females whose fathers were those whom the speaker calls father or father's brothers or those whose mothers the speaker calls mother or mother's sisters, the term child as one's own child or the child of a man whom the speaker calls elder brother, younger brother, or mother's brother, the term for sister's child as one whose mother the speaker calls sister. If a woman is speaking, her term for child will be that given to her own child and to the children of the women she calls sisters, elder and younger, while her term for brother's child will be given to the children of those she calls brother, and those she calls mother's brother. Grandfather will indicate a very old man, grandmother a very old woman, and grandson one whose father or mother the speaker calls "my child", and probably a very young person of either sex. The connotation of the terms brought about by marriage will be readily understood. It thus appears that the terms of relationship when used in their broader applications might have

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been employed to localize an individual roughly and that several terms might have been used for the same person on different occasions or for different purposes.

Certain important facts also come to light regarding the institution of exogamy. We know from what Pareja tells us that a man could not marry into his own clan, in some cases, indeed, not into an entire group of clans. We know also that in tribes having several exogamous groups there was usually a strong repugnance, if not an absolute prohibition, against marriage into the clan of the father. Such a repugnance existed among the Creeks, and may very well have been present with the Timucua, although of this we have no definite statement. Finally, I know of no case where a man was permitted to marry a woman he called "sister", and with the Timucua, as we have seen, this term was applied to a woman of any clan whose father happened to belong to the clan of the speaker's father. It would seem from the information given us by Pareja that there were six exogamous divisions among the Timucua. Now, if we suppose that there were a hundred marriageable women in each division, six hundred in all, any man old enough to marry would not be permitted to marry a hundred of these because they belonged to his own clan, a hundred more because they belonged to his father's clan, and an indefinite number besides varying from a possible zero to ninety-nine whose fathers were of the same clan as his father. Thus almost half of the marriageable women in the tribe would be taboo to him. From this it appears that the assumed disadvantage under which tribes with but two exogamous divisions are sometimes supposed to labor in having their choice of a wife restricted to half of the women, may be no greater than that existing in tribes with several such exogamous divisions.

Bureau of American Ethnology Washington, D.C.



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