



UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG.

TELEGRAMS: "UNIVERSITY."
PHONE 44-3781.
P.O. Box 1176

MILNER PARK,
JOHANNESBURG
November 24, 1935.

REF. NO.

Dear Miss Bleck,

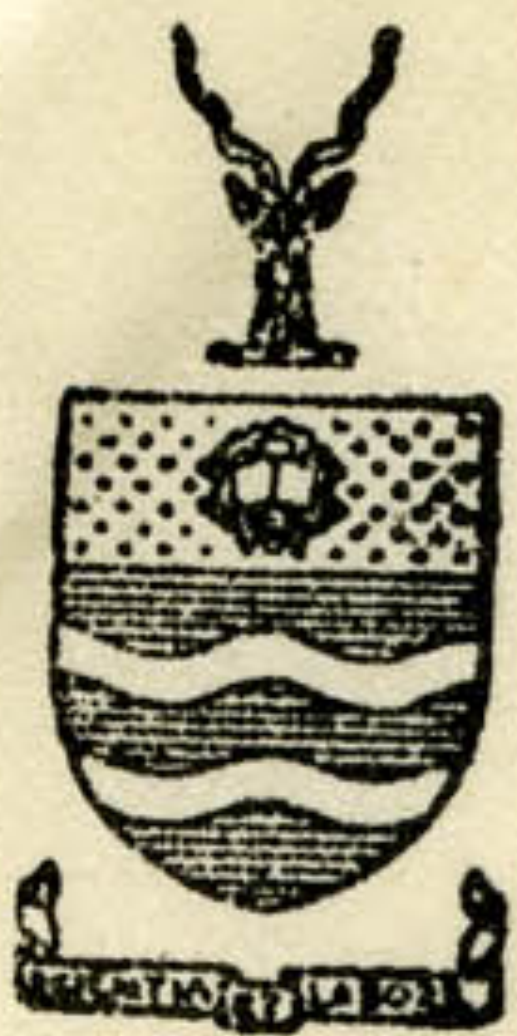
At long last I am able to send you this long overdue answer. But let me give the word of explanation ~~mann~~ you are entitled to, not in extenuation of my very, very long delay, but just to let you know why.

In the first place, I have not been too well this end of term. When your letter and enclosure came, I was in Bloemfontein for a meeting of the Historic Monuments Commission. Then came the preparation of Examination Papers and the many meetings of the various Committees here (they put me as a matter of course on a great number of the Committees of the University) and some of them last a whole morning. I have had often even to cancel some of my lectures to do my Committee work, with the result that I have had to replace them so that my students did not suffer. I have had lately an average of three Committees a day. My Korana work which I have been attempting to write up in the form of a book which I hoped to publish next year has had to go by the board for the present. My Review of the latest number of the Van Riebeeck Society (Vol. 15), will also have to wait until the March number of Bantu Studies, and so also all my other research work.

So, you see, all this has left me very little time to give what I would like to be a very considered and thorough examination to the points you have raised. I would not and could not give you any kind of advice, but I wanted rather to meditate on your own and the many other problems which are involved in a work of such importance. I therefore sincerely hope that you will understand and forgive me and I also trust that the few remarks I am enclosing will not come too late and will be of some slight service to you. I consider the work you are undertaking so important and I am expecting great things of it, especially with the wealth of material you have been able to collect.

A.- Arrangement. I think that you should first determine your own spelling of each word, and then quote, under this entry, the words collected by the other authors in their original form, e.g.

Opwain, Si.-V. "to sleep," Ooen (B); Opucain, (L); Ouen (B), etc. Then should fol-



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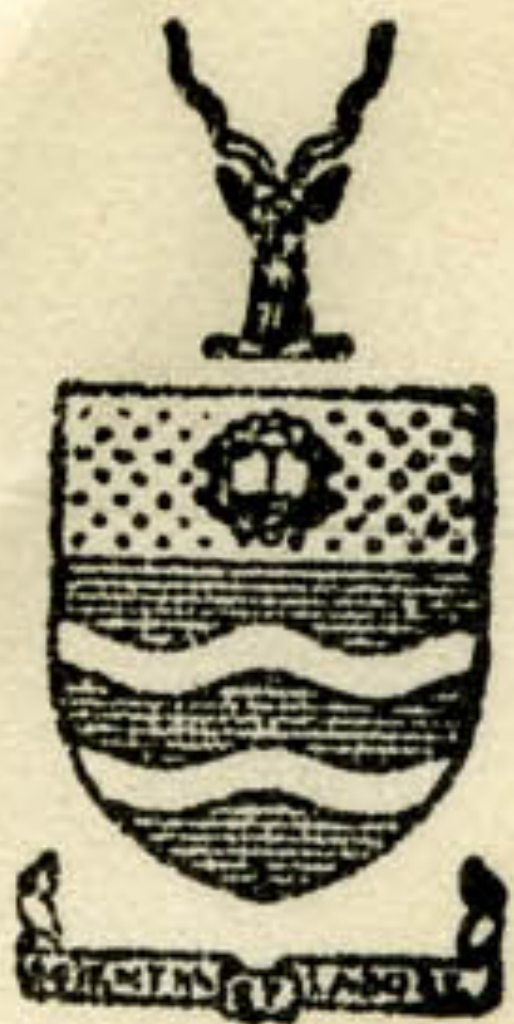
low the examples in the original spellings.

This, to my mind, is the most satisfactory method of presentment. It has several advantages, the first being that it is simple, especially if you include at the head of each letter or symbol a note like the one with which you start the fragment you have sent me, explaining the spellings of the different authors and in what you differ from them. It also obviates the necessity of making several entries and cross-references for the same word, a matter of some importance as it economises space and would be of some consideration to a publisher.

In connection with this question of arrangement, you may find some difficulties of another nature. The fragment you have sent me does not raise the question I have in my mind, as your O click exists only in the southern group of dialects. What will confront you, and you have no doubt already realised it, is what to do with these out-of-the-way symbols such as are used by Doke. For, I take it that your intention is to include all the linguistic material available, so as to make your work a true encyclopaedia. And not only Doke, who recognises more clicks than other authors have heard, but also Meinhof and Vedder who have a /// symbol to denote, a lateral click formed further back than the normal one. I personally think that these are purely individual variations, especially when, as in some instances, only one native speaker was heard. Anyhow, you will have to face these difficulties whatever their origin may be. Perhaps the best way of solving them is to have a set of simplified symbols. But even that may not be satisfactory after all.

You suggest that a possibly better arrangement might be secured by paying more attention to roots. Is it not a fact that in the majority of the Bushman dialects, roots (i.e., the simple form of the words) exist practically alone and are used by themselves? Of course in dialects like !Kung or Sesarwa we have the plural ending, for instance; but these morphological devices are so limited that they are not worth stressing. So that I think you would not gain much by an arrangement in which roots play a prominent part, and I still believe that the "word" is the proper unit of classification.

Another point which concerns arrangement is the order in which you are going to set out the different letters. I mean more explicitly the order of your



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vowels, pure consonants and the clicks. Doke, you know, in his Phonetics of the !Kung Bushman (Bantu Studies, ii, (1925) p. 151 ff), starts with the vowels, a, o, etc; then come the labials, first b-, then m-; then the dentals and so on; and finally the clicks. I, on the other hand, in my vocabulary to the Wuras' Revised Version of the Kerana Catechism, preserve the natural order of the European alphabet, first with the vowels, then with the consonants, then with the clicks, these latter in what I consider their proper order, i.e., dental, alveolar, lateral and cerebral. Perhaps, however, a better order would be: /, //, ‡, !. See also Meinhof's Vocabulary in his Korannadialekt, where he has a very similar order to mine, except that for the clicks he has /, ‡, !, //. The labial click o I would be inclined to place before the other clicks. I shall be very interested to know which of these different systems you will finally choose.

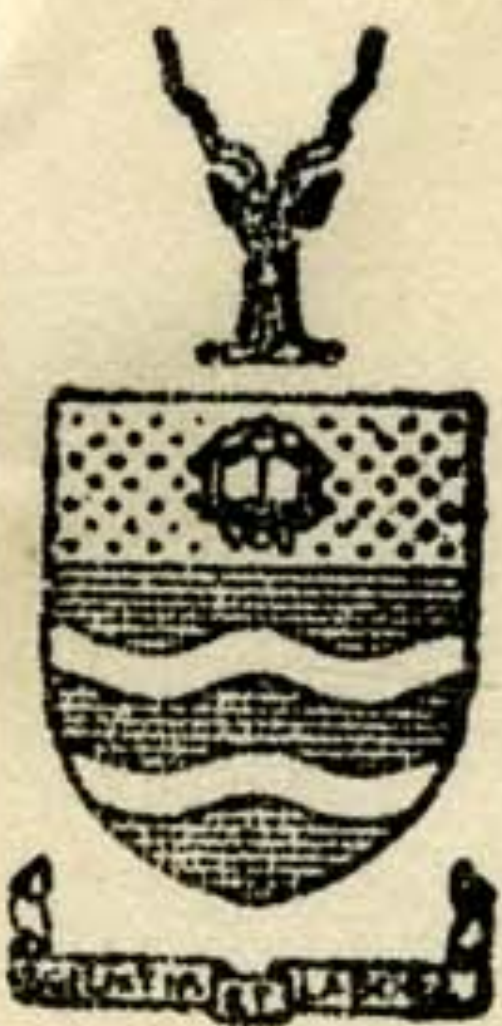
B.- Type used. This is very important in a dictionary. You have a choice between (a) all the Bushman words in italics and their English equivalents in ordinary characters. This is the usual, Cp. Meinhof and myself. On the other hand, Doke in his !Kūng vocabulary and indeed in the whole article, has the Bushman words in heavy black type and the English equivalents in ordinary type. In a work of some length, as yours will be, I think I would prefer the heavy black type for the Bushman words. This is also the usual arrangement in dictionaries.

(b) In connection with references, etc. it is usual to print them in smaller type. But that is definitely a matter of choice. I would, however, definitely print the abbreviated letter for the author quoted, either in slightly heavier type than the ordinary type or else enclose within brackets, thus: (B) for Bleek so as to bring it out, as you know there is quite an art in selecting type for emphasising these things.

C.- In connection with References and Abbreviations, you will, of course, have a full list at the beginning of your book.

I would also quote the References in the fullest details. Thus:

V = Vedder, H. - Grundriss einer Grammatik der Buschmannsprache, &c. in Zeitschrift für Kolonialsprachen, I, pp. 5-24, 106-117. Dialect: !Kūng. Locality: near Tsumeb, South West Protectorate. Date: ?



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W = Wuras, C.F. - Abriss der Buschmanngrammatik, (ed. Bourquin), Zeitschrift für Eingeborenensprachen, X, pp. 81-87; Dialect: a variety of the Southern. Locality: Bethany, Orange Free State. ^{Date} ~~Year~~: 1858(?).

I hope I have touched on all important points, but I feel, however, that I may have omitted others equally important. These will surely crop up as you get on with the work. As I would really like to be useful, please let me know your difficulties and write to me ~~again~~ again if you think I can be of any service. I promise this time that the delay will not be so long.

There are ^{known} one or two points of interest which you might like me to mention. I suppose you the short, but important ~~note~~ "Note on a South-Eastern Bushman dialect" by H. Anders, Zeitschrift für Eingeborenensprachen, XXV, pp. 81-89. In connection with the locality of Wuras' Bushmen, the Berliner Missions-Berichte, 1836, pp. 161 ff; 1840, pp. 90 ff; and 1841, p. 89 will give the necessary information which has been ably summed up in Wangemann, Dr. Geschichte der Berliner Missions-Gesellschaft, Vol. ii, pp. 39 ff. The material therein contained is purely historical, there is no linguistic information.

You may also be interested to know that we have been conducting phonetic experiments here, with Dr. Pienaar, our University man, and the kymograph distinctly shows that the velar element in the click comes most definitely after the actual implosion. I therefore still feel justified in writing my click symbols in the approved fashion, e.g. +k or +g , when there is a velar element accompanying its formation. With respect to the labial click, Doke has consistently denied that it is a click. The other day I had occasion to study very carefully with an old Bushman whose original home was in the Hoopstad district of the Free State, some Bushman sounds and when I reproduced to Pienaar this particular "labial click," he said at once he had no doubt it was a click. These two last items of information I give to you in the strictest confidence, especially the latter which we would like to verify instrumentally.

I am enclosing the fragment you sent me and again I sincerely hope that these few remarks may be of some use to you.

With kindest regards,

Yours very sincerely,

L. H. H. H. H. H.

I must add that you have approached the work with your usual judgment and thoroughness. If you want to consult any of the works, I have mentioned and they are not accessible to you, I could probably get them sent to you.