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Introduction by J.A. Engelbrecht
to: D.F. Bleek
Bushman Dictionary
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On page facing the title page :

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INTRODUCTION[1)]

This publication marks the culminating point of a 'family' research which extended over almost an entire century, for it was in 1857 or thereabouts that Dr. W.H. Bleek, eminent philologist and father of the late author, began to apply himself to the study of Bushman. At that period so little was yet known about these languages that the importance of this new step did not become manifest until much later; at first, therefore, it implied that Dr. Bleek would, as before, devote himself to Bantu and Hottentot, only interrupting his studies whenever fresh information on Bushman came to hand.

Bleek's philological interests covered a far wider field than would be indicated by the study of any particular language or group of languages. When, therefore, it came to Bushman it was purely through circumstance and not from choice that his initial research had to do with members of the later-named Southern Group, and that very soon this research narrowed down to /xam or the language of the Cape Bushmen.

His earliest sources of information consisted mainly of vocabularies and phrases obtained from the writings of Arbousset and Lichtenstein. As a starting point Arbousset's material held no advantage since it referred to Seroa, a remotely situated dialect; what is more, the author had

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1) I am indebted to Dr. K.M.F. Scott, a niece of the late author, through whom I could draw on Miss Bleek's correspondence and other papers relating to the dictionary. Especially valuable were a few typescript pages dealing with the classification and distribution of the Bushman languages plus an index of references. These have been included here without substantial alterations.

The correspondence also reveals what assistance Miss Bleek received from different quarters for which grateful acknowledgement is hereby made. This applies more especially to Professors Doke and Maingard for their expert advice, to Professor Lestrade and Mr. A.J.H. Goodwin for various helpful suggestions, and to Professor I. Schapera for the part he played in obtaining financial help and a suitable publisher. A word of thanks is also due to Dr. Helen Hause of Chicago, U.S.A. who prepared the typed copy of the dictionary for photostatic reproduction.

made no attempt to represent the clicks, which were to prove one of the first stumbling-blocks, according to any preconceived system. Lichtenstein's work claimed priority on the grounds that it indicated not only basic clicks, but also various click releases; moreover his work was in /xam, which gave Bleek the twofold opportunity of trying it out with Bushman convicts in the Cape Peninsula, and simultaneously of carrying forward his investigations into that language. His comparative vocabulary of Bushman and Hottentot which resulted from these earliest investigations formed a useful preliminary to the Bushman dictionary which soon was to engage his attention.

In distinguishing difficult sounds peculiar to Bushman Bleek was at an early stage assisted by men who were working in the neighbouring field of Nama; those that have been mentioned were Hahn, Tindall and Krönlein. The last-named had in 1861 sent in a short manuscript on the Kalahari dialect of the /nusan[2] which shows a distinct advance on the work of predecessors. Apart from the labial click which is also noted here, the manuscript presents a singularly modern appearance, for Krönlein was of the Lepsius school and the orthography he employs for the clicks is basically the same as that in use today.

As time wore on Dr. Bleek became increasingly conscious of the exigencies of this new field of study, so that Bushman from being a mere diversion from his main occupations became the primary object of research. In 1866 he examined the speech of two other Cape Bushmen one of whom was of mixed parentage, and although a substantial amount of material was collected -- this also included a vocabulary of words without clicks -- Bleek's assiduity

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2) For further material collected on this dialect vide Bleek, A Brief Account of Bushman Folklore and other Texts, p. 20; and Lloyd, A Short Account of further Material collected, p.27.

and painstaking nature had clearly not yet reaped its reward. The matter of adequately distinguishing between the clicks and other difficult sounds still proved a great obstacle.

In the year 1870 Bleek came to a momentous decision. It is today common knowledge how, after piloting the first portion of the second part of his Comparative Grammar through the press, he magnanimously laid aside his main work in order to retrieve for science what he could, before it might be too late.[3] An unusual opportunity came in the above year when the presence of a fairly large number of Bushman convicts at the Breakwater at Cape Town offered improved facilities for studying the language at first-hand. It was at this stage that the assistance of his sister-in-law and helpmate, Miss L.C. Lloyd, was of prime importance, and the part she played has perhaps never received adequate recognition. The progress, at first slow, gradually produced almost stupendous results, and as the text material piled up these two workers must at times have been sorely tried while attempting to keep pace with translations and word-indexing. The rate of progress can be gauged from the reports issued from time to time; thus in 1871 their joint efforts had already produced several hundreds of pages of script, while for 1873 it was put down at "more than four thousand columns (half-pages quarto) ... besides a dozen genealogical tables, and other genealogical, geographical and astrological &c. notices." By February 1875 this had further increased to about "6,600 half-pages or columns (in seventy-seven volumes quarto)", and in May of the same year to 7,200 half-pages, contained in 84 volumes. In the light of improved knowledge two

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3) W.H.I. Bleek,"Scientific Reasons for the Study of the Bushman Language" (Cape Monthly Magazine, Sept. 1873).

earlier vocabularies, a Bushman-English and an English-Bushman one, both based on work done before 1870, were revised. At the same time Bleek set about compiling a Bushman-English dictionary with an English index. He had practically completed sorting the card-entries when death took him away in August 1875.

The loss at this juncture of a leader whose superior knowledge gave soul and motive to the undertaking was a severe one, but the family spirit of loyalty to a cause prevailed, and the research went on. In the course of this unknown fields were opened up, for between 1879 and 1882 Miss Lloyd also carried the research to !kun, where the absence of the labial click and the appearance of another, the retroflex, was observed. In 1889 Miss Lloyd was able to report that since May 1875 a further collection of 4534 half-pages contained in 54 volumes had been made and that !kun accounted for 1233 pages. A small additional amount supplied by other collectors further increased the total. It was also due to Miss Lloyd's untiring efforts and perseverance that eventually a portion of the texts was published under the title Specimens of Bushman Folklore (1911). From the purely lexicographical viewpoint, however, the two important achievements of the period, the outcome of all the research that had gone before, were a large manuscript dictionary of /xam by Dr. Bleek and another of /xam and !kun by Miss Lloyd.

By virtue of an overseas training[4)] and a practical knowledge of Bushman, which she had acquired from her aunt,

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4) This included a Teacher's Diploma obtained at Berlin in Germany. Miss Bleek also took a course at the School of Oriental Studies, and after returning to South Africa she held a teacher's post at Cradock. This post she relinquished in order to be able to assist Miss Lloyd in preparing the book Specimens of Bushman Folklore for the press. Later she declined the degree of Ph.D. honoris causa from the University of Cape Town on the grounds that there could be only one Dr. Bleek.

Dorothea Bleek was well qualified to take over where her predecessors had left off. On her now devolved the self-imposed task of arranging and setting out what material had been handed down to her, and of implementing this material by further field research. She fulfilled the one without neglecting the other. Her actions at first were dictated by the need of field experience and a considerable time passed before she ventured into print. Trips to different parts thus became the order of the day. In 1910 and 1911 Miss Bleek visited the Prieska and Kenhardt districts and this was followed by a sojourn in the Langeberg beyond Postmasburg to study the language of the //n Bushmen. Another journey took her up the Molopo to the Auhoup and Nossop where she collected specimens of the speech of the /auni[5]. She also travelled to Bechuanaland by ox-waggon and delved into the language of the Masarwa; thereafter she visited Lake Chrissie in the eastern Transvaal to sample that of the Batwa. After a considerable break caused by the First World War, a fresh opportunity of conducting investigations with living Bushmen occurred in 1920 so that twice during the following year we find her at Sandfontein on the border of Bechuanaland. This produced an authoritative monograph dealing with the customs, folklore and speech of the Naron (or //aikwe) together with a grammatical sketch of the tongue spoken by the //k"au-//en (Auen). In the interval following she drew on information collected by her father and aunt and published a number of tales under the title The Mantis and his Friends (1923). A trip in 1925

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5) A further opportunity of studying /auni occurred in 1937 (Bantu Studies, Vol. XI, pp. 253-78).

took her to Angola where she concentrated on an area between the Rhodesian border and halfway to the coast. The knowledge so gained inspired her to write two articles on the Bushman inhabitants of that territory. Her investigations were to take her yet farther afield for in 1930 she visited Mkalama in Tanganyika where she obtained first-hand information on the speech of the Hadzapi, described as a semi-Bushman tribe.

In spite of a certain continuity there was one respect in which Miss Bleek's work differed from that of her father. The aims of the latter had been as much philological as linguistic, so that questions relating to language types, or to the evolution and development of language in general, often formed the subject of his discourse. It was in pursuance of these aims that he had been wont to compare Bantu with Hottentot, or again Hottentot with Bushman. In that special sense therefore a knowledge of Bushman to him also was a means to an end. Miss Bleek, on the other hand, directed her efforts exclusively to Bushman itself with the object of determining the linguistic affinity and relationship between the languages or language groups concerned. Lack of opportunity would be the only reason why Dr. Bleek did not include this aspect in his research. In this respect his early observation that the dialects of the Cape Bushmen constituted a single language is significant; this was in fact the first step towards a classification, which he left to his successor to proceed with. Progressively, therefore, remarks on grouping and distribution begin to appear in Miss Bleek's work; generally they are brief, whereas in Festschrift Meinhof (1927) they are given with much more detail. Shortly after, namely in 1929, she published her Comparative

Vocabularies of Bushman Languages. It is a work of limited scope in that the author drew only on her own material and on that of Dr. Bleek, Miss Lloyd and S.S. Dornan, and the equivalents for the English vocabulary are taken from eleven Bushman languages only. A classification into three groups is given once more, namely (a) a Northern Group stretching from north of Gobabis and Oas into Angola, comprising three languages referred to as N I, N II and N III; (b) a Southern Group with members in different parts of southern Africa, referred to as S I, S II, S III, S IV, S V and S VI; finally (c) a Central Group with two languages, C I and C II, lying east of the Northern Group and stretching across the Kalahari into Southern Rhodesia. The method of enumeration followed there has been retained in the present work, but in view of fresh knowledge it has been extended, as the following survey shows.

NORTHERN GROUP

Ref. No.	Name	Area	Authors
N I	//k"au-//en (Auen)	Northern Kalahari, from the Oas-Ngami road in Bechuanaland to 19'E. Long., S.W.A.	Bleek, D.F. Passarge, S. Schinz, H. Shortridge, C.
N I a	nogau	Omurambu-Epikuro and the Naukluft, S.W.A.	Lebzelter, V.
N II	!kũ, !kuŋ (Kung)	North of the Auen, i.e. from Grootfontein to the Okavango, S.W.A.	Doke, C.M. Lloyd, L.C. Passarge, S. Schinz, H. Seiner, F. Shortridge, C. Vedder, H.
N II a	hei//kum (Heikum)	Near Etosha Pan, S.W.A.	Lebzelter, V. Seiner, F.
N II b	a dialect	Near Ukuambi, Ovamboland, S.W.A.	Lebzelter, V.
N II c	a dialect	Near Ukualuthu, S.W.A.	Lebzelter, V.
N III	!o !kuŋ	Eastern half of Central Angola	Bleek, D.F.

SOUTHERN GROUP

Ref. No.	Name	Area	Authors
S I	/xam	Northern part of Cape south of Orange River east and west	Bleek, W.H.I. Lichtenstein, M.H.C. Lloyd, L.C.
S I a	a dialect	Oudtshoorn	Anderson, G.J.
S II	//ŋ	Langebergen in Griqualand West and southern Gordonia	Bleek, D.F.
S II a	ǂkhomani	Northern Gordonia	Doke, C.M. Kirby, P.R. Maingard, L.F.
S II b	//kxau	Near Kimberley	Meinhof, C.
S II c	//ku//e	Near Theunissen	Bleek, D.F.
S II d	seroa	Southern part of Orange Free State, near Bethany	Wuras, C.F. Arbousset, T.
S II e	!gã !ne	Transkei	Anders, H.
S III	batwa	Lake Chrissie, eastern Transvaal	Bleek, D.F.
S IV	/auni (/'auni)	Country between Nossop and Auhoup, S. Kalahari	Bleek, D.F.
S IV a	khatia (xatia)	East of Nossop, S. Kalahari	Bleek, D.F.
S IV b	ki/hazi	West of Auhoup, S. Kalahari	Story, R.
S V	masarwa	Kakia in the south of Bechuanaland Protectorate	Bleek, D.F. Schultze, L.
S VI	/nu //en	Upper Nossop and Auhoup, S.W.A.	Bleek, D.F.
S VI a	/nusan	South of Auhoup, S.W.A.	Krönlein, J.G.

CENTRAL GROUP

Ref. No.	Name	Area	Authors
C I	hie or hietʃware (Masarwa)	Near Tati, Southern Rhodesia	Bryden, H.A. Dornan, S.S. Selous, F.C.
C I a	sehura	South-east of Ngami, Bechuanaland	Passarge, S.
C I b	mohissa	East of Ngami, Bechuanaland	Passarge, S.
C II	naron (//aikwe)	Near Sandfontein, on border of S.W.A. and Bechuanaland; West of Oas	Bleek, D.F. Passarge, S. Schinz, H. Shortridge, C.
C II a	tsaukwe	West of Ngami, Bechuanaland and north-east of Naron	Passarge, S.
C II b	hukwe	Caprivi region; north of the tsaukwe	Balme, F.N. Zukowsky, L.
C III	hadza or hadzapi	At Lake Eyassi north of Mkalama, Tanganyika	Bleek, D.F.

It will thus be seen that the dictionary deals with twenty-nine languages and dialects. Some are represented by a few words only; others by moderate, and a small number by a fairly extensive or even very full vocabularies, the latter being especially true of /xam.

On the relationship existing between the three linguistic groups Miss Bleek expresses herself as follows.[6] There is an underlying similarity, but this has partly become effaced through the circumstance that the development of the Central and Southern groups proceeded at a faster pace than that of the other. In the case of the Southern Group this development followed along specifically Bushman lines, whereas the Central became subjected to influence from either Hottentot or Bantu or from both. In Hadza there is probably also a third influence, but this has not yet been determined. In spite of its greater simplicity of style the Northern Group nevertheless stands closer to the Southern than to the Central; this simplicity is shared by members of the Southern Group living in the Kalahari. She further comments on the characteristic variation of sound which may express itself in the speech of the same individual, and she quotes Maingard who considers this a powerful factor in the shaping of dialects.

Miss Bleek's success as a student and research worker is reflected in the many publications, several of them major ones, which stand to her credit. It is therefore satisfying to know that, although the present work, begun in 1934 at the request of Professor Westermann, is being published posthumously, she lived to see the manuscript entrusted to the publishers. In compiling it she had made it her aim to include every list of Bushman words that had ever been recorded -- a most laborious undertaking, in that it meant scrutinizing whatever sources were known or presumed to have such lists. It further meant that larger vocabularies, representing different languages and dialects, had

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6) D.F. Bleek, "A Short Survey of the Bushman Languages" (Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen, Vol. XXX, pp. 52-72).

to be assembled. The desire to include as much as possible had its advantages even though it implied that unsupported data also had to find a place in what purports to be a comparative dictionary.

In putting to use all this word material Miss Bleek adopted the following general procedure. To the left or in the alphabetical sequence are placed, as would only be proper, the construed forms of the entries, the entries themselves appearing to the right of the vertical alignment and in an unaltered form. This statement has to be qualified by saying that circumstances and the author decide whether an entry is to be transcribed at all, and if so, whether partly or in full. Where a form lies beyond the knowledge and control of the compiler, and is yet changed, the transcription of necessity is mechanical and pro forma. Renderings of known and unknown or presumed values thus occur side by side. This could only have been avoided at the cost of excluding all material about which there is any doubt. Sentences used for illustration are given in the compiler's orthography only. Most data are from Miss Bleek's own researches and from that of her two immediate predecessors; a smaller quantity is provided by contemporaries whose training and status entitle them to an honorary place. The rest is made up of material much of which lacks precision and which strictly speaking has an historical value only.[7)]

The phonetic script used by Miss Bleek is that of the I.P.A., with certain additions. From Professor Doke's studies on ≠khomani and !kuŋ she adopted the symbols for

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7) For a summary of linguistic work done on Bushman languages cf. Bantu Studies, Vol. VII no. 1, and the index of references appended to this introduction.

the flapped retroflex consonant (ɻ), the flapped lateral consonant (ɾ) and, in the typescript copy, the diacritic indicating pressed vowels. The latter was eventually abandoned in favour of ̋ owing to difficulties in the printing which could only have been met at increased cost. Similar difficulties account for the fact that the diacritic for the glottal croak does not stand sufficiently clear from the following vowel. The clicks corresponding to those of Hottentot are indicated in the accepted manner, and most of Miss Bleek's references do the same. Exceptions are a group including Lichtenstein, Passarge and Seiner, which uses numerals only, or else numerals combined with letter-symbols; further there is Anderson, who employs the c, q, x of the Nguni languages. With Wuras open geometrical figures serve a like purpose. Doke devised a special set of symbols, but he uses them only in his phonetic study of !kuŋ.

Where Miss Bleek finds herself at variance with other writers on the form of a word, there would be diverse reasons why this is so. Sometimes the differences could be merely orthographical, or else due to the fact that different languages or dialects are involved. It is, however, equally true that there are differences which are fundamental and based on differing conceptions of the nature of the sound in question. Students of Bushman who are not informed will always regret that the compiler's life had run its course before she could clarify her attitude in regard to uncertainties arising from her transcription. The question may for instance be put why Meinhof's ! [8], which he himself

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8) For the sake of brevity and to simplify comparison, only the palato-alveolar click is used in this discussion. The phenomena described, however, would in a like manner apply to clicks other than the labial and, to some extent, the retroflex.

equates with the voiced form (!g) of other sources, has been transcribed with !k. To ascribe this to a difference of opinion, or to say that here Miss Bleek's transcription is purely formal, does not yet put the matter beyond conjecture. Especially noticeable, because of frequent occurrence, are those instances where her own click does not show glottal release, thus ! for !ʔ, !h for Doke's !ʔh. In writing the voiced and the unvoiced labial click, Miss Bleek does not subscribe to recent usage, preferring to perpetuate the family tradition of using ⊙b and ⊙p respectively. It is in keeping with this same tradition that she employs !! for the retroflex click, although Miss Lloyd, having been the first to use it, did not preserve the distinction between this and the lateral click. On a different level are cases where the compiler attempts to improve on an orthography which quite obviously had become outdated. An example is her use of !k" for Bleek and Lloyd's !y, !ʸk, or even !yk; corresponding to this she uses k", by her named ejective k or a glottal croak[9], for an earlier y and ʸk. Where the same two sources employ double consonants to indicate, as the compiler explains, emphatic pronunciation, these may or may not be reduced to the single symbol. This practice covers a wide range of emitted consonants, being, for example, found with explosives (kk, kkh, tt, pp, dd), nasals (nn), fricatives (ss, zz, ssh) and affricates (dzz, tss, ttss, ttch). From the script Miss Bleek employs, it follows that the diacritics of earlier sources, or as applied

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9) Previously Miss Bleek had distinguished k" and k'. Relative to the question of equating k" with kxʔ, cf. the compiler's remarks under the appropriate heading in the dictionary. In the Theunissen district, where Bushmen and Korana formerly lived side by side, the articulation of two old Kora men induced me to distinguish between x̄ and x̿

by adherents of the Meinhof-Lepsius school, are done away with or are replaced; this would include the diaresis, the breve and the macron. For the inferior diacritic ⊃ used by Bleek, Lloyd and Meinhof with pressed vowels, she substitutes ̱. The superior diacritic ⊂ of her two predecessors, which appears with clicks having affricate or fricative release, further with velar x and in composites with x (sx, tx, tsx), is dropped altogether. The dash used by Passarge with certain sounds is interpreted as implying ejective articulation, hence ts^2 for ts-, ts^2x for ts-ch.

With these few observations, which supplement rather than replace explanations already given in the dictionary, our review has reached its conclusion.

Of man's cultural assets none is in itself more adequate and more complete than his language, for in its vocal or its graphic expression it can also provide the key to others of these assets, and so to man himself. In so far as records of such expression have been preserved for the Bushmen, they mainly take the form of mythology, folklore and art. In this respect this very brief sketch, which is primarily conceived as a tribute to the pioneer work of a distinguished family, is one-sided and therefore incomplete. It is incomplete because it does no more than give a passing thought to the great mass of text material collected by Bleek and Lloyd[10], which is of such value in assessing the mental and spiritual make-up of a primitive folk. As for

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10) That which has been published includes Specimens of Bushman Folklore and The Mantis and his Friends already mentioned; in addition "Customs and Beliefs of the /xam Bushmen" (Bantu Studies, vols. V-VII, IX-X),"!Kuŋ Mythology" (Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen, Vol. XXV).

Miss Bleek, her positive contributions to the subject of rockpaintings in South Africa are in no way even mentioned here[11]. This outline is furthermore incomplete in that it practically omits all reference to other co-workers who since about 1910 have been taking part, in several instances by studying the Bushmen or their language from some particular and sometimes new aspect. All this and more will have to be borne in mind by anyone who at some time in the remote future tells the full story of Bushman research. What this will have to say of the efforts of particular authors we may possibly surmise, but never fully predict. Much can, however, be inferred from what is already known. With his reputation firmly established, nothing could now or afterwards detract from the value of Dr. Bleek's achievements, which assure him of a lasting place in the world of philological science. To Miss Lloyd, his faithful collaborator, who proved her worth in so many ways, will be accorded the honour of having her name mentioned whenever his is remembered. For Dorothea Bleek, finally, will be reserved a special niche for signal service to Bushman linguistics in general, and more particularly for service in establishing the relationship between the Bushman languages of Southern Africa.

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Pretoria.
November, 1952.

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11) D.F. Bleek, Introduction and Notes to Rockpaintings in South Africa (London, 1930); idem, "A Survey of our Present Knowledge of Rockpainting in South Africa" (S.A.J.S., 1936); idem, Introduction and Notes to More Rockpaintings in South Africa (London, 1940).

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