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for



REPORT OF DR. BLEEK CONCERNING HIS RESEARCHES INTO THE BUSHMAN LANGUAGE

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

REPORT OF DR. BLEEK CONCERNING HIS RESEARCHES INTO THE BUSHMAN LANGUAGE, presented to the Honourable the HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY by command of HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

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REPORT CONCERNING BUSHMAN RESEARCHES, BY W. H. I.
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The oldest, and until late years, the only, materials for a knowledge of the Bushman Language, were the short vocabularies and few sentences published by the traveller, Dr. H. Lichtenstein. These were, probably, mainly obtained from those missionaries who at the beginning of this century were working among the Bushmen, some of them in connection with the London Missionary Society, and others sent out by a Dutch Society. In the original edition of Lichtenstein's book of Travels, these vocabularies stand by the side of his Kamara Hottentot vocabularies and phrases, on about eight pages each.

2. In 1837, I tested Lichtenstein's vocabulary, by examining a few Bushmen and Bushwomen from the neighbourhoods of Colesburg and Bangweulu, who were at that time at Robben Island, and in the Cape Town Gaol and House of Correction. The result of this examination was the discovery that the different Bushman dialects spoken within this Colony vary very little from each other, and that one language, quite different from Hottentot, is spoken by all these Bushmen. The words thus ascertained were incorporated in a Manuscript Compendium "Vocabulary of the Dialects of the Hottentots and Bushmen," forming No. 36 of Sir George Grey's Library.

3. In 1838, the Rev. C. F. Wurm, presented to Sir George Grey a short Manuscript Grammar of the Bushman language, on eight pages quarto. Sir George took this manuscript with him to England in 1850, but it did not return with him in 1850, nor did it arrive here with the main bulk of his library in 1853. It is probably now at Kerrow, New Zealand; but Sir George has promised to send us either the manuscript itself, or a copy of it.

4. In 1851, the Rev. G. Artakain sent a few words and sentences of another (Tsongrepiak) dialect of the Bushman language. The MS., of seven pages octavo, is in the Grey Library; and this material has been worked out by me in an extensive Compendium of sixty-five pages folio.

5. About five years since (in 1855), an opportunity was afforded me of examining two Bushman prisoners from the Aeternveldt, who were transferred for this purpose, by the order of His Excellency Sir F. E. Woodhouse, from the Bechuanaland to the Town Prison. The words and sentences then collected (mainly from the lips of the elder of these two men) fill about sixty-six pages quarto; whilst an English index to these phrases occupies forty-eight pages folio, and an alphabetical vocabulary of these Bushman words, which contains no clerk, is on twenty-five further pages folio. Some remarks upon the language, based upon these materials, are to be found in my paper on "The Bushman Language," pp. 213-224 of "The Cape and its People," Cape Town, 1849.

6. In 1873, the presence of twenty-eight Bushmen at the Bechuanaland afforded an unprecedentedly rare opportunity of obtaining good instruction in the language. On the recommendation of the Rev. G. Fisk, the best-beloved Bushman boy was selected, and in August of that year, he was placed with me for this purpose by the Major's Colonial Government. This experiment was found to succeed; but it was taken into consideration that one young Bushman alone, would soon lose a good deal of accuracy in speaking his mother-tongue, and, further, that the boy in question could retain hardly any of the numerous tales and fables which are met with in the traditional literature of this nation. On these grounds His Excellency Sir Henry Barkly was pleased to direct that one of the most intelligent of the old Bushmen should join the other. Both are still with me. Their term of penal servitude expired in the middle of the year 1871; and they have since remained of their own free will. In order to achieve the object of these inquiries (a thorough knowledge of the Bushman language and literature), the presence of these men (or other Bushmen) is necessary for several years; at least four;—two and a half of which have already expired. And soon after the arrival of the elder Bushman, I took steps to ascertain the where-

abouts of their wives, in order to induce them to join their husbands. But although inquiries have been made in many different directions, they have as yet led to no result,—and I therefore fear that no king, one or both of the Bushmen will have us.

7. What has been written down from the lips of the Bushmen, consists of more than four thousand columns (half pages quarto) of text, besides a dozen genealogical tables, and other genealogical, geographical, and meteorological, &c., notices. The following is a general analysis of the texts which have been collected,—with regard to which it is to be remarked that the pages under the letter B refer to texts collected by myself, and those under L to collections made for me.

I. The Masius.

The Masius	L 500—503
His wife and their things	L 473—477
The Herd	L 489—493
Do.	L 504—519
Origin of the Moon	L 482—484
Do.	B 374—389
Do.	B 421—449
Do.	B 461—486
Do.	H 428—489
Do.	B 1497—1575
	(unfinished.)
The Masius and Ichneumon go to the Lion's house	L 519—546
Fighting the Cat	L 547—565
Do.	L 568—578
The Great Tortoise	L 583—624
Do.	L 511—532
Stricken	L 677—737
(<i>get Masius's (a being whose eyes are in his feet: instead of in his head)</i>	L 536—566
Do. do. do. do. do.	B 391—419
Do. do. do. do. do.	B 461—500
Do. do. do. do. do.	B 502—1119
Do. do. do. do. do.	B 1121—1128
	(unfinished.)
Masius (also Paul) and the Ichneumon's Discourse	L 1265—2212
The Masius related by the Ichneumon	L 578—596
Further adventures	L 1097—1051

II. Moon and Sun.

The Heavenly Bodies	L 300 & 301
Moon and Stars	B 291—294
Sun, Moon, and Stars	L 314—317
Do.	B 357—379
Moon and Sun	L 298—327 & 399
Do.	L 478—481
Do.	L 454—468
Moon stabbed by Sun	B 2158—216e
Moon and Little Horse	L 664—670
Do.	B 1469—1478
Prayer to Moon	L 219—222
Do.	B 594
Prayer to Sun	B 315 & 316
Children who throw the sleeping Sun into the Sky	L 437—439

III. *Stanzas.*

The Girl who made the Milky Way	L 2506—2511
The same Girl making Stars	L 2517—2529
Jupiter (Day's Heart) and his Discourses	L 2522 & 2523
Do. do.	L 2522—2545
Do. do.	L 2523—2710
Jupiter	B 645— 749
Do.	B 751— 923
Do.	B 921— 927
Do. (the black Crow calling the Jackal)	B 921— 930 (unfinished.)
The two Lions (Pointers to the Southern Cross)	L 205— 316
The Lion Star	L 237— 240
Do.	B 303
The Lion and the Birds	L 274— 284
The Lion and the Tortoise	L 316— 319
Do. do.	B 1265—1266 (unfinished.)
Another Star (Lyral)	L 254 & 255

IV. *Fables.*

The Antwerp's Laws	L 139— 153
The Antwerp, Springbok, and Lynx	L 223— 248
Do. do. 2nd version	L 283— 283
The Hyena and the Lion	L 255 rev.— 259
Do. 2nd version	L 252— 258
Resurrection of Ostrich	B 1171—1220 (unfinished.)

V. *Legends.*

Stones which kill the Thriver	L 185 & 122
Men excommunicated by a Girl, and changed into trees	L 265— 265
The Bushman who took a Lion's Cub, and brought it up as a Dog	L 2329—2334
Do. do. do. do.	L 2337—2374 (unfinished.)

VI. *Poetry.*

Insultation (Names of Animals)	L 110, 127
Do. do.	L 151, 152
Do. do.	L 160— 195
Do. do.	B 197 & 240
Verses to the Sun	L 251
The Old Woman's Song	L 155
The Broken House	B 216 rev. & 217 rev.
Rhyme	L 475
Verses	L 190, 193— 125
Original Songs	L 165 & 196

VII. *The Lion, the Leopard, the Jackal, and the Hyena.*

The Lion and the Giraffe	L 255— 257
Do.	B 326— 325
The delays of the Lions	L 1352—1370
Bushman killed by a Lion, and search for the missing man	L 850— 923

Lion kills and eats Bushman	B 296— 296
Bushman falls upon Lion	B 325— 325
Bushman and Lion	L 1548—1652
The Jackal and the Lion	B 324 & 325
The Jackal and his denials	L 132 & 133
The Jackal	L 359— 353
Do.	L 365— 368
Leopards and Jackals	B 354 & 355
More denials of Jackals	L 3711—3818
Leopard and Bushman	B 396 & 396
"Owl Yawjee" and Leopard	L 541 & 542
"Jacob Nya" and Leopard	B 399— 318
The Hyena	B 316— 320
Do.	L 552— 555
Do.	L 599— 550
Do.	L 521— 527
Hyena and Lion	B 551— 565
Hyena feeding its Young	L 1024— 1030
The Old Woman and the Hyena	L 151— 158
Do. do. 2nd version	L 389— 392

VIII. Of other Animals.

<i>Canis variegoides</i> (Synon)	L 353
(?) <i>Canis variegata</i> (F.)	L 352
Proteles (M.)	L 363— 365
Quagga	L 563
Wildbeest (Gna)	L 331 & 334
Hartebeest	L 337
Gonabek	L 369 & 331
Korban	L 334 & 335
Ostrich	B 555
Ostrich and Bushman	L 369— 371
Ostriches and Bushman	L 757— 757
Do.	L 800— 810
Hare Catching	L 261— 264
Bushman and Baboon	L 708 & 700
Hawking of Animals	L 217 & 218
The Spider	B 210
Various Animals, and their denials	L 531— 513
Degrees of understanding of various Animals	L 862— 852

IX. Justice Tales (see older *Burmas*).

Justice and the Lion	L 938— 930
How Justice came to the Brookwater	L 912— 950
Captives	B 351
Captives and Journey	B 998— 979
In the Trap	B 855— 358
Visit to the Doctor	L 375— 377
Stories of Fate	L 635— 633
Dream, An.	L 1949— 1984
Asking for Thread	L 1171 & 1172
Scold's Grandmother	L 138

X. Translations (from the Dialect).

Line and Bushness	B 158—169
Woman transformed into Lion	L 314—318
Do.	B 161—167
The Lost Child	B 171—177

XI. Customs and Superstitions.

Cutting off top of little finger	L 303—339
Pressing ears and nose	L 340 & 341
What a Girl must eat and avoid	L 2650—2654
Poisoned Arrows	L 790—792
causing	L 634—633
The Bushman Doctor	L 973—978
The Hail-cake	L 2232—2265
Rein-walking	L 2384—2391
(unpublished.)	
Bushman Proceedings	L 2531—2565
(unpublished.)	
Death, &c.	L 1173—1210
(unpublished.)	

XII. Sentences and Words.

Bushman Tribes	B 349
Genealogies	B 356
Do.	B 366—370
Do.	B 364 & 365
Do.	B 382—378
Do.	B 379
Do.	L 476—503 (III. 1)
Degrees of Relationship	B 332 & 333
Parts of the Body	B 331, 332
Do.	B 333
Do.	L 196—196
Names of Animals	B 354, 353
Do.	B 393—398
Do.	L 158—188
Do.	L 236—231
Names of Birds' Eggs	L 183 & 183
Sentences, &c.	L 230 & 251
Sentences and Words	B 67—157
&c., &c.	
Do.	L 1—94
Do.	L 97—114, 116
Do.	L 120—120
Do.	L 134—137
Do.	L 188—210
Do.	L 476—478, 500
Do.	&c., &c.

8. The above lists are, to a great extent, already accompanied by as literal an English translation as could yet be achieved. The further process of translation will be necessarily facilitated by the dictionaries in course of preparation. An English-Bushman Vocabulary of 142 pages, and a Bushman-English one of 600 pages also contain the results of the earlier studies, which are now being greatly modified and corrected by our better knowledge of the language. Of

the work, more than a dozen stories are as yet unfinished, and in the course of decades, although some of them already extend over more than some hundreds of pages.

3. The main importance of this Bashman literature lies in the mythological character of the stories under I.—III., in which animals and heavenly objects are personified. In this characteristic the Bashman literature shows a marked difference from that of the Elstic nations (Kafir, Betsikan, Duvana, &c.) who have legends, but, strictly speaking, no mythology. The Bashman literature most nearly resembles that of their neighbours the Hottentots, and also that of the most primitive mythological stages of other more northern nations, whose languages either are sex-distinguishing, or may have branched off from the sex-distinguishing languages, losing the sex-distinguishing characteristics. To this latter class of languages the Bashman also seems to belong, and its constancy to the Hottentot, in which the gender of the nouns is everywhere clearly marked by the endings and maintained by the context, it has no genders which have any reference to the distinctions of sex. If it ever were sex-distinguishing, it has now lost those signs of gender which so clearly mark the grammatical gender in Hottentot. Instead of eight different forms for each pronoun, as in Hottentot, (masculine singular, feminine singular, common singular, masculine plural, feminine plural, common plural, masculine dual, and common dual),—the Bashman has only two forms,—one which is only used in the singular (As "he, she, it," & "which, who, that") and another which is mainly used for the plural (As "they," & "which, who, that"). I say purposely "mainly used for the plural," for, curiously enough, the plural form is frequently employed in Bashman, where we should use the singular, and where, in fact, the singular is indicated by the Bashman himself, by the addition of the first numeral, or some other clearly singular form. The fact seems to be that there are in Bashman two classes of nouns in the singular, viz., one which has the forms *ka* and *ka*, &c., for its corresponding pronouns, and the other with the forms *he* and *he*;—while the plural of both classes has only the one form for each pronoun,—this being at the same time one which entirely agrees with the second form of the singular.*

Again, as the formation of the plural of nouns in the HOTTENTOT, great regularity prevails, and the endings of nouns in the singular number (preceding at the same time their gender) are exchanged, in the plural and dual, for other corresponding endings. Thus, Hottentot nouns terminating in *-a* or *-r* (masc. sing.) generally have in the plural the ending *-ara* (masc. plur.) and in the dual the ending *-ana* (masc. dual). Likewise nouns ending in *-e* (fem. sing.) usually exchange this in the plural for the termination *-en* (fem. plur.) and in the dual for *-na* (fem. dual). The common singular termination *o* similarly gives place in the plural to the ending *-o* or *-no* (common plural), and in the dual to the ending *-na* (common dual). There are few exceptions to the regularity of these grammatical changes in Hottentot. In BUSHMAN, on the contrary, the greatest irregularity prevails with regard to the forms of the plural of the nouns, and from fifty to sixty different ways of forming the plural occur, at the least, in this language. It seems as if the most original form here were a reduplication of the noun, and that this reduplication (more or less abbreviated), together with the use of certain other particles or variations of the stem of the noun, has given rise to the great multiplicity of the forms.

With these striking grammatical differences, both languages possess many obvious traits in common. The vocative *ag* is formed in Bashman with the ending *-wa*, and in Hottentot by a terminal *-e* added to the possessive of the second person.

The exclusive form of the profane pronoun of the first person plural ("we," i.e., "I and he, she, it, or they," excluding the person addressed) is identical in Hottentot and Bashman.

* This is the only form as yet found of this class of the nouns in the class which is formed by its second.

The relative form of the verb (corresponding to the *Kaiv* case in -*ak*) is in Hottentot formed by the suffix -*ba*, and in Bushman by the suffix -*va*.

The reduplication of the stem of a verb, in Hottentot, as well as in Bushman, can be used to give the verb a causative or iterative meaning.

There are many other similarities in structure, and there are also a good many words which appear to be of common origin. Of these, however, a number at least appear to be only foreign words in one of these languages, introduced from the other, in consequence of the contiguity of the two nations. Such, for example, are the numerous abstract terms which the Bushman has evidently adopted from the Hottentot, as the verbs "to love," "to seek," "to know," "to write," &c. There remains, however, a large number of other words, which probably have not been taken over from one language to the other, but have developed from a common source. But, as the principles of correspondence between the sounds of the two languages have not yet been ascertained, no safe comparison on a firm scientific basis can at present be established.

On the whole, we may safely conclude that the Bushman language is certainly not more akin to the Hottentot than e.g. the English language is to the Latin; but it may be that the distance between Bushman and Hottentot is indeed far greater than between the two above-mentioned languages.