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ROMAN STOPA

BUSHMAN TEXTS

I. Introductory

All the texts that are given below have been written down in Africa during my stay there in the year 1935. As to the question why they are published only now after a lapse of more than twenty years, I may point to the lack of interest on the side of the editors as to the main reason of such a delay. No wonder, editors were deterred from printing a deficit thing referring to some far, almost extinct languages, the text itself being full of technical difficulties, odd symbols etc. In course of publishing other more attractive studies of my African materials, this attitude, I guess, have been changed, and thus, a part of my Bushman texts may be presented now to all who want to get a glimpse into a very primitive structure of language — as to the phonetic system (clicks and ejective sounds) it is perhaps the most primitive of all now accessible kinds of human speech — into an almost infantile type of thought, and a very low stage of culture development.

As to the texts themselves I should like to stress, at the very beginning, the difficulties and the unavoidable inconsistencies of writing down dialects of an unwritten language, the speakers of which vary in using different sounds — especially the various velar components of click blocks belonging to the same cluster of sounds¹, vowels and emitted consonants are

¹ I use this term for a group of related sounds which are substituted for each other in the same word according to the situation and disposition of the speaker himself; cp. C. Doke, *Phonetics of the ≠ Khomani*; for further details see also my *From Clicks to Expiratory Consonants*, part II. For „Explanation of symbols and abbreviations“ see op. cit. part I that has been printed in *Lingua Posnaniensis*, VI, Poznań, 1957.

to be mentioned here — in the same form of the same word. „The indefiniteness and variability of sounds“ in Bushman has been notified by many authors. For C. M. Doke this constitutes an „important feature of Bushman phonetics“. With the vowels¹, says he, it is most noticeable how wide the phoneme range is, for instance the phoneme represented by *a*, varies from *a* to *ə*, and similar variations occur with other vowel phonemes. In the case of the emitted consonants, it will be seen that *b*, *p* and *v* are varieties, as are *k* and *c*. In the case of the clicks there is also confusing variety, voiced forms and ejective forms each at times being substituted for the plain velar releases. These are the above mentioned clusters of click blocks, e. g. /*g* : /'(/*k*') : /*k*.

But even in using clicks themselves, viz. the front components of click blocks there is some variability, if not with the same speaker and the same tribe, so at least with different tribes, although it should be mentioned here that the clicking part of the word seems to show the most of stability and constancy. However, as I treat the matter more exhaustively on another place², so here I restrain myself to a few words by D. F. Bleek, the daughter of the famous W. H. I. Bleek. She writes³: „The clicks seem to vary from one tribe to another, possibly among individuals in the same tribe. I think this is sometimes really the case, but some differences may be due to faulty hearing. The clicks are very difficult to distinguish at first, and in the languages of which I have so few examples, mistakes are very likely to have occurred“. I may add another reason due to the conditions of Bushman life of nowadays. Their old rigidly observed culture (and language) of their ancestors had begun to dissolve already before the arrival of the Europeans on account of some migration of Bantu and Hamitic tribes. So there is not anything strange in the fact that in their language sounds and words appear which were not familiar to the

¹ See C. M. Doke, op. cit.

² See *From Clicks to Expiratory Consonants*, part II.

³ *Comparative Vocabularies of Bushman Languages*, Cambridge, 1929, p. 4.

Bushman of the olden times. They did not suit the type of phonetic system of Bushman neither that of its grammatical structure and the result was some confusion and destruction of the regularity and the internal logic of language processes. The Bushman of nowadays are not aware of how and why to use this or that click. They begin to drop them or to use them „promiscue“, especially when they met and mingled with tribes having another repartition of clicks and another logic of using them.

The question arises now how many languages there are. Are all the 11 kinds of Bushman speech distinguished by D. F. Bleek as different mainly on account of some divergences in the vocabulary to be called separate languages or not. As to my opinion there are good reasons to distinguish between three main groups of dialects each of them forming a language by itself, viz. the Southern one containing 6 dialects, (with D. F. Bleek the languages from *S*₁ to *S*₆), the Northern containing 3 (Bleek's languages *N*₁₋₃), and the Central which comprises 2 dialects (Bleek's languages *C*₁ and *C*₂). The first one is discerned by having beside the four clicks of Hottentot the labial one, the second has not the labial click¹, but it uses another additional (fifth) click, viz. the retroflex one², and the third one (Central) shares some grammatical features (shape and sex-denoting endings) with Hottentot. I think D. F. Bleek was led to call languages the dialects of her 3 groups by the sta-

¹ It will be seen below that in the dialect of ≠Ao-//ein (Bleek's //Au-//ein or *N*₁) there are traces of this click being used formerly in Northern Bushman too.

² This click is peculiar to the main dialect of the Northern language, viz. the !Kū, as it has been stated by C. M. Doke, *An Outline of the Phonetics of the Language of the !Kū Bushmen of North-West Kalahari*, in *Bantu Studies*, 1925. I found it with my !Kū speakers too, but not with ≠Ao-//ein (*N*₁), in which it, probably had been transformed into the phonetically nearest one, i. e. into the palatal and partly into the lateral click. D. F. Bleek does not discern the special quality of this click being misled, I presume, by its acoustic similarity to the lateral and by the articulatory one to the palatal click.

tements of her native speakers who, though belonging to the same, e. g. Southern group, asserted they did not understand each other. In pretending so, they seem to have had interest of their own in the matter. It is a bit of a particular pride on the side of the native to despise the other native if he exhibits some different manners of behaviour or speech, „We are quite different, we do it otherwise“ says he. „The speech of ours this is a speech, the true speech; his is corrupted, he speaks another language“, says the native; and even where there are small divergences especially in the vocabulary, he does not say that he does not understand this or that word; he generalizes the case and affirms proudly „I do not understand him“. I experienced such a situation several times. However, I was not discouraged, e. g. in the case of my !Kū Bushwomen who knew only their own language (N₂), but after a while I saw them conversing with Askuk who did not know !Kū, but who knew ≠Ao-/ein (N₁), i. e. the dialect of the same Northern language as !Kū.

There is no space enough to go into details as to the characteristic of Bushman as a whole. „All Bushman tongues are similar“ says D. F. Bleek who introduced me to the study of Southern Bushman and to whom I owe many a good hint as to that of Northern Bushman too. I only want to add here that in course of my further studies I came to the opinion that the 3 Bushman languages¹ had been much more uniform in their past. They built a unity and formed the substratum for all the other African native language families, i. e. Sudan (Kwa), Bantu and Hamitic². One example will do for the present: As I have said above there is a great variability in Bushman speech (e. g. I noted *te*, *tte*, *tle* and *tl'he* with Jankie for the same form of (the *Se-Suto* verb.) *ila*, resp. *tle* „to come“). I should like to

¹ The old, now forgotten language of Pygmies belonged to the same stock as I have demonstrated in the study *Problem języka pigmejskiego* [The Problem of Pygmy Language], in *Lud*, XLII, 1956.

² For details see my *Bushman & Hottentot among the Isolating Languages of Africa* in *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, XVII, 1953, and *From Clicks to Expiratory Consonants* (in printing).

quote D. F. Bleek once more and to point out that her examples are to be explained according to the rules of comparative and historic method of linguistic analysis. She says (op. cit. p. 4): „In the Northern Group the diminutive is *ma*, „child“ is *dama* or *daba*, while the Central Group has the root */gwa* for both“. Here we have to do with the same base-root, which is **/gam-a* or **/kam-a*, cp. N₂ */gám* (Vedder had recorded it and I found the same in my notes) „to suck“, N₂ has also */kum* (Bleek) and N₁ *k'a:a*, C₁ */kaa*, C₂ */kum*, S₁ */om-i* and *kwa-kən*, S₂ *ka-ke*, S₃ *wa:* and N. has */gom*. Or, according to the variability and indifiniteness of Bushman sounds the other extreme of the former base-root was **/gum-a*, thus forming a cluster with the back vowel *a* or *o*, or *u* and with the click block beginning the word */k'*, or */k*, or */g*. The most primitive seems to have been */k'am-a*, cp. Bantu-root *k'ama* „to press out, to milk“ (Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 225). The forms *k'a:a* (N₁) and *kaa* (C₁) are derived from the same base-root by the weakening of intervocalic element *m*, alternating with *b*, and by dropping the click. The forms *dama* or *daba* are quite regular continuations of the root-variant **/gam-a* (or **/kam-a*) which by itself is a weakened and less expressive form of */k'am-a*. An outline of comparative and historic phonetics of clicking languages and thus, the rules of transforming the dental click into the dental expiratory (or injective) consonant are to be found in *From Clicks to Expiratory Consonants* II. The form */gwa* of Masarwa Bushmen (C₁—Southern Rhodesia) is the continuation of the base-root variant **/gum-a* > **/guva* > **/gua* > */gwa* (*/gwa*). The same variant gave rise by dropping the click to the forms *kwa-kən* (S₁), by losing the labial element, to the form *ka-ke* (S₂), and by weakening the velar closure of the previous click block */k*, to the form *wa:* (S₃). In C₂ (Naron) the form corresponding to */gwa* is */kwa*. In N. (Hottentot) the root */gom* „to suck“ or rather */góm-a* „id.“ is to be found in */gōa-i* „child“, the plural of which is */gōana*. Or, its weakened form */kwana*, similar to Naron */kwa* Sg. is continued in Bantu Zezuru *tkwana* „children“, Suaheli

m-twana (suffix *-ana*), and, I dare say, this is also the verbal suffix for the reciprocal form of the verb, e. g. *piga* „to strike“, *pig-ana* „to strike one another“ (the reciprocal actions, immediately following one another, are one of the characteristics of children's activity).

And now let us return to D. F. Bleek. She continues: „Tree' becomes *!kan*, *!gan*, *!gǎũ* in the Northern Group, and *ji*, *hi*, *hei* in the Central Group“. Or, taking the last root variant *hei*, it corresponds to N. *hai-b* (according to my own notes, Kroenlein has *hei-b*). Here again, two base-root variants are to be assumed *○ha-i* and *○ho-i*, the second one being attested in N. */hom-as* „bush“, and as it has its corresponding word in */hoo*, (C₁) „wood“, we are justified to assume that *-m(a)* enlarged the primitive root, which was *○ha* or *○ho*. And really, such forms exist in Southern Bushman, where *○hc* (S₁, S₃) means „wood, tree, bush“. In N₃ „bush“ is *! 'o* and it is the regular substitute for *○bo* (S₂), *○pwo-i* (S₆) „bush, tree“. Both root variants, i. e. *○hai* > *hei* > *hi*, *ji* and *○ho* > *ho* are to be found in the Ful suffixes for the respective classes of nouns, *-hi* for trees and the things made of wood, and *-ho* for herbs, grasses and bushes*.

These remarks try to show how special and otherwise how large studies Bushman languages require and how important any additional note or text is not only for understanding the peculiarities of Bushman itself but at the same time for explaining some processes of the other African language groups too.

II. Some isolated words and sentences in Naron and !Kū

This is a small part of the material written down with three Bushwomen on the farm Tigerpoort of Willy Versfeld, district Gobabis. Askuk whose story I am giving below was a good

* I tried to look after some traces of clicks in the Semi-Bantu language of the *Ful-'be* and found that all the 35 suffixes denoting classes of nouns (with the respective pronouns) are derived from Bushman or Hottentot. The manuscript awaits to be printed.

help for me, for he knew Nama, and Nama was the language in which I spoke to Hottentots, Dama and even to some of my Bushman informants. These young women, one Naron and two !Kū were not working on the farm, they were staying in the pontoks on a visit and after two or three days ran away to the veld, following their inborn call for freedom and a life that is not restrained by any bonds of civilisation. Especially the !Kū were very savage and shy, did not want to speak to me without their Naron friend and could not be kept working with me any longer with no presents of mine. Every few minutes they were getting tired, although I tried to interest them in conversation by all means and in all possible ways.

In answering my questions they displayed the straightness and simplicity of their mind, this being a bit of their tribal characteristic, e. g. when asked about word like „to work“ they answered frankly „I do not want to work“, about a word for „to rest“ they answered „I want to rest“, about the word „nose“, „a stick“ or „stone“, they always touched the respective object saying, „my nose“, „your stick“ or „thing stone“ etc.

Out of the many linguistic peculiarities I noted there, there is one worth emphasizing here. It is the use of labiodental click. Vedder mentions the fact of !Kū Bushmen using combinations of two clicks joined together, e. g. /, //, but does not give any example for them. Or, I found a combination of the labial *○* and dental click / (noted by *○/*) in a few words spoken by these two !Kū (but not with Paul¹) and by Askuk in his ≠Ao-//ein². The same words have the labial click in Southern Bushman. So we can see here the process of how the labial click was dropped in Northern and Central Bushman: Some words with more explosive variant of this click we transformed

¹ Paul was my !Kū informant in Grootfontein. His specimens of !Kū could not be given here.

² There is one instance of the use of this click combination in Nama. Thus, children, when they refuse to do something what they are asked to, express their dislike or discontent in the way of an interjectional /*○* directed outwards (spitting out).

into the palatal one, owing to the acoustic similarity of them both, e. g. $\odot bo$ (S_2) or $\odot pwo-i$ (S_6) „bush“ becoming $!o$ in N_3 . The others with more fricative variant of this click were transformed into the dental one through the intermediate stage of the labiodental click $\odot/$. This instance is to be supposed in $\odot pwa$: „child“ ($S_{5,6}$) becoming $/gwa$ in S_2 — the root $*/gám$ ($/góm$, $/gúm$) „to suck“ was preceded in its development by the older $\odot gwa-m$, later $\odot/gam$ ($\odot/kam$), and then $/gám$ ($/góm-N_1$, $/om-S_1$, $/kom-N_2$, and $/num-N_1$). Another example is $\odot ho$: „tree“ (S_1) being transformed into $/hoo$ (C_1) through the stage of $\odot/hó$.

And now to the texts themselves. I give them, beginning with Nama, then the same phrase comes in Naron and $!Kū$, closing every item with the mostly literary translation into English.

Nama	Naron	$!Kū$
<i>dáob</i>	<i>daom</i>	<i>tao-u</i> „path, trace“
<i>dáxab</i>	$[/nab]$ <i>n/ũa</i>	<i>dáxáú</i> „a certain plant“
<i>dádáb</i>	<i>abom</i>	<i>n'a *</i> „father“
<i>dánib</i>	<i>daniba</i>	<i>/kóu</i> „honey“
<i>//gami ra dǎu **</i>	<i>tsasa gu ≠na¹</i>	<i>!kha i se //na¹</i> „the water is flowing“
<i>/gavása¹ ta go davá²</i>	<i>/gabasa¹ ra go daba²</i>	<i>n se daba² ti //ga¹</i> „I turned the cap (hat)“
<i>xùē¹ ta ra dǐ²</i>	<i>xuša¹ ra go dǐ² (guru)</i>	<i>'n sa kǎsi¹ ta²</i> „I am doing something“
<i>anǐs¹ ge ra dóē²</i>	<i>tsarasa¹ go !khoe²</i>	<i>si/gu¹ nse //gaba²</i> „the bird flies away“

* The underlined letter means a stifled pronunciation of this sound (emphatic?).

** Numbers point to the words corresponding with each other by their meaning in the three dialects.

Nama	Naron	$!Kū$
<i>khoib¹ ge go dunǐ²</i>	<i>donim² go khoiba¹</i>	<i>ta¹ nse ts'a²</i> „the man ran away“
<i>durúb¹ ge go dóē²</i>	<i>//gauba¹ go !khue²</i>	<i>si ≠noe¹ se ts'a²</i> „the mouse ran away“
<i>axaro-b</i>	<i>/goa'm</i>	$\odot/ga si //khaba$ „child thing male“ = boy
<i>axaro-s</i>	<i>//gai /goa ka si</i>	$\odot/gai si /ga de$ „child thing little female“ = girl
<i>gar haib ge neba</i>	<i>gai'm hǐ'm</i>	$(m)\odot/ai in !am$ „tree this large“

III. $!Kū$ texts written down in the prison of Windhoek

Owing to the unusual kindness of Mr. Stein, the head of the prison in Windhoek (the capital of South-West Africa) I was enabled to converse for several days with Bushmen who, at that time, were staying there. A certain Dama, whose name was Saul, was given me as an interpreter. Dama (or Damara) is a dialect of Hottentot, so my work there was facilitated in many respects, the more so as the four Bushmen prisoners belonged to the same tribe and spoke the same dialect $!Kū$.

1. Franz Amseb

1. *M'tsu /géi guri hoasa m /géi **
2. *≠oa ta ga guri ei ta ge ti ðarona*
3. I suffer, children, the whole year, my children,
1. *≠hoa ta ga guri hoai ei*
2. */hami — (n)/hao,*
3. when I go out, after a whole year, I gather them
1. *ta ge mǔ u //gei-//gei dabi !goa*
2. *n/hoa, (ota nǐ //aru)*
3. I shall see them (children), (if) I return home?

* The first line contains $!Kū$, the second one Nama version of the $!Kū$ text, and in the third one there is the translation into English.

1. *Ge si 'm ũitsaba barte-si¹, ti ũitsaba*
2. *Ti ũitsaba xun*
3. My livelihood and my property, my livelihood
1. *barten tsina /nei (n)/hami*
2. *tsina nĩ /hao (n)/hao*
3. and my property I gather them.
1. *Mihe /nei a tronkhoē² //aga mi*
2. *Ne ta tronkues !a hã ≠nõa*
3. I am sitting now in the prison, my
1. *tsisi ≠goa ≠na um toa mi tsisi*
2. *ob ge /gireba ti xuna go habu*
3. things, the jackal devoured my things,
1. *Gama zo a guse na tsisi gora.*
2. *//nabaĩ khoeē a/khai ti xuna nĩ goba te.*
3. There is nobody there to tell me about my things.
1. *M' kx'ai guri tsa*
2. */gam gurina ta ≠noa xuiiao.*
3. (Because) I am to sit (here) two years.
1. *Te /goa !ha /ai a mu /gi.*
2. */u ta a mã //aib !na ta nĩ ≠oa !kheĩ.*
3. I do not know the time, when I shall go out.
1. *'M de di ≠gei.*
2. *geixu //aiba ta u-hã xuiiao.*
3. I have to sit for a long time.
1. */goa ≠gom tsa mu, a o xoa zu 'm.*
2. *≠gom tama ta hã khoeē ta /nĩsi ho !kheĩ.*
3. I do not believe, I shall find any relative (there).
1. *Te /nĩsi mu !gái.*
2. *//o ta /nĩsi xuiiao*
3. Or (perhaps) I shall die (in the meanwhile).
1. *'M dam si 'm /goa ≠gom tsa mu /khoa.*
2. *Sorob !na ta ≠gom tama ũi ta nĩ !kheisa.*
3. (As to) my body I do not believe, I shall live.

¹ Cfr. N. *beri-te* 'goats', S₁ *bəri*, *peri*, N₂ *byri*, C₁ *pidi*, *pudi*.

² It is a loan-word taken from Afrikaans *tronk* „prison, jail“.

1. *Gama mi /nubi gu /goa /khoa.*
2. */nubisa khoi-ta ao ta ũi tite.*
3. An ill person I am and not to live.

2. Naisib

1. *Eiē si ra go o tsin //kho in //a gama*
2. *Ota ge ge eiē hãna //gãus ei ge //na-xu*
3. Formerly I was staying in a village, and I left
1. *khau a Gobisa.*
2. *tsisa ge ge Gobabis ei ge //gõa hã.*
3. and came to Gobabis (to stay there).
1. *//na ga m tsi ≠ge //khara m ea*
2. *Ota ge ge //naba he //kharake Gobabis ei*
3. And there I was punished in Gobabis
1. *Gobabisa — //aga 'm ga //kama na //a gore khau a ge ge.*
2. *tsi-ta ge //naba xu neba ge //gõa hã.*
3. And there-from here I came down.
1. */ga 'm ga !gái 'm a se u*
2. *Ota ge //o tama ta ga i ota //naba xu nĩ*
3. And (I want) I may not die, and I may leave this place,
1. *gause eiē si ga si si de.*
2. *//aru tsĩ eiē hana si nĩ go //o tama-n ga'io.*
3. and return to where I stayed long ago (it) I do not die.

3. Kakau (called also Koko)

1. *M' re tsa //gama m a //gam a khau a*
2. *Ma //gama xu ta ge go //gõaxa*
3. I had left the farm and came
1. *Gobabisa. Tsi ge re ga //khara 'm 'm de*
2. *Gobabis ei. Ota ge ge //kharake tsita ge ha*
3. to Gobabis. I was punished and I came (here),
1. *xave si tsi /ge 'm /gaon xa tsa de a*
2. *xave ta ge a n/u, mamas ũi tsabase ha !kheĩ.*
3. however, I do not know, (if) my mother is alive being so ill.

1. *χave /gan !ha tša m ○o /gyi a gama m geiši !gũ !gāu.*
2. *ota ge a n/u ≠oa ta nĩ !kheiē, geise ta ra tsũ χuiao.*
3. And I do not know, (if) I shall go out, (because) much suffering I am.

1. *χave si tši ga ma tša a /gyi ne*
2. *χave ta ga /nĩsi a n≠oa o tsi ga ra si o*
3. However, perhaps I shall leave, and perhaps I shall go there

1. *se ú tsi mu use tsa eiē si o de a.*
2. *o /gui ta ge nĩ mũ mamas ũi tsabase hã !kheie.*
3. to see once more, (if) my mother is alive, being so ill.

4. Khakkau

1. *Kχ'ao tša si ga //khara*
2. *Tsita ge somer¹ //kara i hã /habiē ta*
3. And I am sitting harmlessly, I having
1. *mi //kara /hōa mi.*
2. *u-hã tama tsita n/u mǎ //aib !na ta nĩ ≠oa !kheiē.*
3. no fault at all and I do not know, at what time I shall leave.
1. *Eiä u sen dai ta khoešn /gei,*
2. *Ota ge eie-sa si nĩ go χave ge /aisen hã i,*
3. And I shall go to see my mother, but I am ill,
1. *da go χu gu /gai*
2. *tsita ≠gom tama ũisi !keiē tsĩ ne tsase n//o.*
3. so I do not believe that I shall live, but perhaps, I shall die.
1. *Daba omi ma mi gu kχ'oa*
2. *Ota ge ti ōaroē ne go hã i a !keiē,*
3. And my little child, perhaps, I shall see (it),
1. *de /goa !ha //aia omi ú ga a n/u.*
2. *tsi χave ta ≠gom tama tsita n/u //aiba ta a n/u.*
3. however, I do not believe, I do not know the (future) time, I do not know.

¹ Cp. Afrikaans: *somaar* „being in order, harmless“.

IV. Askuk¹

In order to save the space I have omitted here all the preliminaries of my voyage and stay in Africa. They had been taken into account in the Introduction to the *Hottentot Texts* and in the *Studies on the Population and Culture of South-West Africa*.

As to Askuk himself I met this young good-hearted fellow on the farm Tigerpoort. With his rather thin stature, with his face as gray as ashes, his half-foolish bullying air and his small hat adorned by a feather, he, at the first look, gave an impression of a not sufficiently developed herdsman who in some Polish god-forsaken village could provoke laughter and pity. Nevertheless, he appeared to be a good informant and his help while working with the Bushmen could not be appreciated enough. His father was Naron and his mother ≠Ao-//ein, so he knew both dialects of the two Bushman languages (Central and Northern). Besides he mastered Nama-Hottentot pretty well and knew a bit of Afrikaans too. His pronunciation, however, was not quite correct, *š* being generalized in Naron, *š* and *ts* taking place of *s* and *ts* in Nama and ≠Ao-//ein. I even had some hesitations as to his grammar and vocabulary of the respective dialects whether they were distinguished clearly enough or not. These doubts, however, disappeared in course of our further working in common, in which he displayed a great interest and understanding of my task. His partly mispronunciation was due either to some physical deficiency (high palate) or to some super-correctness in speaking (as some children display it when they first have caught how to pronounce / and then not without some pride of theirs are speaking „mummysh shonnie ish sheepy“ instead of *mummy's sonnie is sleepy*). In their own opinion, by doing so, they seem to be more dignified, more important towards their playmates; it is

¹ The Bushman was called so by his „baas“, Mr. Peter Prinsloo, or some former master of his. It had been taken from Afrikaans, where *as-koek* means „good for nothing“ and corresponds etymologically to English *ash-cake*.

quite possible that a similar unconscious conviction lay at the ground of Askuk's speaking *geiše* instead of *geise* (N.). The case of Ful who are convinced of the superiority of themselves pronouncing ejective consonants (there is a glottal stop which is significant in this respect) which, of course, requires more articulating energy, but gives them an appearance of a commanding nation „ein herrisches Gepräge“ as Westermann says in his *Handbook of Ful*, p. 195.

As it was difficult to get any coherent story of Bushwomen, so I asked Askuk to tell me something like this. His story is significant not only for himself but for Bushmen in general. It may be summed up by two tragical moments of his life, the second one being rather his own personal misfortune: hunger and a bad wife, if there are wives in a community without any economic basis, with a destructed culture and social bonds broken off.

The story of Askuk

1. 'N /keši //gan e ša /unt-n 'n xave ga //hoa¹
2. Ti //gei khoēši ša go !gōa xu te (/gabaša) — xabe xara ≠ēi tama
3. Ti taraš ge go !gū-xu te — xave ta ge ≠gao tama hā !gū-
4. My wife did leave me — but I did not want her to leave me,
1. !noni ge ša /unt-n — xave etn ša /unt-n
2. !gōaš ga xu-te-ša — xabe xa da ≠ēi tama !gōaš ga xu-te-ša.
3. xu teš nī !khaiša — xaveš ge go !gū-xu te.
4. such was the matter — however, she did leave me and went away.
1. 'n xave ga ti !garu — //ai xave ga
2. xabe xai //gabaša i — ga kx'ūi kx'ūi !khaiš
3. !aša ta a xave — ne !keiš ūiē u hā
4. Hunger I have yet — this place has not
1. //aga kx'ūiša — 'n xave !khan ti !garu
2. i xabe xa — /nei ta goše i ra //gabaša re i xabe

¹ The first line contains the text in ≠Ao-//ein (Auen-N.), the second in Naron, the third in Nama, and the fourth an English translation. All the three native versions come from Askuk.

3. tama xave — netiše ta n!aša xave
4. any things for living — now I have hunger yet,
1. xave ta e !kan an — 'n ≠go tši-ta ge
2. xa — xabe xa re ≠ēi tama !gōa-ra ga xue !khaiša — da geiše ≠go
3. xaveš ge go neti go di — tši ta ge geiše go ≠go tši go
4. However she did it so — and I became very thin and
1. go /'nara — 'n /keši //gan e ša /unt-n
2. a //khoa (a geiše tšxu tso) — ti //gei khoeša !gōa-xu te
3. /ara (n≠go te) — ti taraš ge go !gū-xu te.
4. I am meagre — (because) my wife left me.
1. 'n ka ≠go te — //ai !khai ti i xave
2. da geiše ≠go ši — /nei !khaiš tšūše
3. tši ta ge go geiše ≠go(/au) — de(ne) !khaiš go netigoše
4. And I have got very meagre — this place is so much
1. ga ti !kharu — 'n tan ša — ti ša gani ti
2. //gaba xabe xa-da ga !gū-da ga !gūn-a e
3. a n!a o — !gū-xu ta nī !keiš ge neša-tši-ta nī !gū
4. dominated by hunger — I shall leave this place — and I shall go
1. /ei ti /guri ti tiša a ša — ti a — tiša
2. !khaiša gani a n≠un-xu o — ti i — da ga
3. tši ōa !kheie ūiša-nhā-e — tši-ta nī ūi — tši-ta
4. and I shall look for a place having life — and I shall live — and I
1. kx'ūi //nai-ten /aga — !goni-a ≠gabab.
2. !gōa xu /nei !khaiša ša-tšaiš go ra go n//oša
3. nī !gū-xu ne !khaiša — ≠gaba ta ra !kheiša.
4. (I) shall leave this place — (because) I emaciated, the matter is.

Jankie¹

Jankie is, beside Askuk, another unforgettable person of the vanishing Bushman world. I met him on Pieter Prinsloo's farm called Skoolplaas, not very far from Lake Chrissie. He

¹ To be read: Yankee.

spoke Batwa, the dialect of Southern Bushman (S₃). The loan-words from Se-Suto beside an express tendency towards dropping the clicks or substituting them by the corresponding ejective and expiratory sounds were characteristic for his speech.

As Afrikaans was the main means of my intercourse with Jankie, I shall give also Jankie's translation of his Bushman into Afrikaans. It is another matter that also some words of Afrikaans occur in his speech. Nevertheless his specimens may constitute a good example of the primitive, vivid and substantial dialect of Batwa.

1. Isolated words

Batwa	Afrikaans	English
<i>a /na</i> ¹	kop	head
<i>a ts'axən</i>	ogie	eye
<i>a !kx'ōō</i>	voorkop	forehead
<i>!kxo'ō</i>	byl	axe
<i>a /nū</i>	neus	nose
<i>a tú</i>	mond	mouth
<i>a deñ</i>	ore	ears
<i>ti kx'oa de</i>	een oor	one ear
<i>te ≠'u(t'u)</i>	twee ore	two ears
<i>a /na ko ≠ku</i>	hare	hair on the head
<i>//xesin</i>	tande	teeth
<i>a //xen ti kx'oa</i>	een tand	one tooth
<i>a //eneñ</i>	tong	tongue
<i>a tšu</i>	nek	neck
<i>a kx'oies</i>	gorrel	throat
<i>a tha</i>	arm	arm
<i>a kx'an</i>	hand	hand
<i>a thē</i>	boud	thigh
<i>a /nub-en-tu</i>	knie	knee
<i>a !gola-xu</i>	been	leg

¹ The *a* before words denoting parts of body is the pronoun for the 2. pers. sg.; it means „your“, e. g. *a /na* „your head“.

Batwa	Afrikaans	English
<i>a (!)do-ā</i>	voet	foot
<i>a ki /kelen</i>	toon	toe
<i>a ku tšen</i>	vingers	fingers
<i>a ku tšolon</i>	naels	nails
<i>!khuru</i>	koggelmander	a small lizard
<i>t'e</i>	jakkals	jackal
<i>toa</i>	springbok	springbok (antelope)
<i>ko ma</i>	moeder	other's mother
<i>'m ma</i>	my moeder	my mother
<i>a ma</i>	jou moeder	your mother
<i>toe-ti</i>	skottel	dish
<i>!khäi</i>	klere	clothes
<i>thoba ni</i>	kirrie	kirri (a stick to throw with)
<i>tχ'o-si (C₂ kχ'o:</i> „to eat meat“	brood	bred (associated with meat)
<i>šoa</i>	water	water
<i>m○ho-si</i>	hout	tree
<i>/y (/i)</i>	vuur	fire
<i>/khwi (/khy)</i>	vurig	hot
<i>tú</i>	mens	man
<i>ho ti</i>	vat hom	catch him (it, thing)
<i>dyin</i>	gooi	throw
<i>○ho</i>	bosse	wood, shrub, bush
<i>dzi o ○ho-sn</i>	bome	trees
<i>tà</i>	vlakte	the plain
<i>pholo-si (Cp. Pedi)</i>	os	ox
<i>fan-gen (Cp. Pedi)</i>	koeie	cows
<i>ha-si</i>	perd	horse
<i>tl'oan (Cp. Pedi)</i>	kaptein	the chief
<i>kun</i>	skoen	boot
<i>'n ≠k'a xun</i>	hand (binnekant)	my hand's face
<i>'n ≠heñ</i>	hand (buitekant)	hand (outside)
<i>thru</i>	heuning	honey
<i>tlhan (/lan)</i>	die melk	milk

Batwa	Afrikaans	English
<i>thu</i>	by	bee
<i>tšoe-si</i>	pad	path
<i>than</i>	die hut van bosse	hut

2. Phrases and sentences¹

1. *t-soa*² *u* /*khy-gen*

2. *ek is dorsting*

3. I am thirsty

1. *hoa* (m) *○ho-si a tšoa* (n)/*y*

2. *maak vuur*

3. take wood here make fire

1. *nje* *○ken ta* or *○ken te-nja*

2. *ek le en slaap*

3. I sleep-lie, I am sleeping

1. *nje* (m) *○ken ta u* /*kxo*

2. *ek het geslaap mooi*

3. I have slept enough

1. *'n the 'e* (m) *○ken tin*

2. *ek sal (wil) slaap*

3. I want to sleep (lie down)

1. *'n xe the 'e* *○ken tin*

2. *ek slaap nie*

1. *a te in?*

2. *waar is jy?*

3. you are lying where?

1. *se* *○hosi 'n tšoa* /*i*

2. *vuurmaak*

3. lit. give wood, I make fire

1. *se šoa 'n k'oa*

2. *gee water, ek drink*

3. lit. give water, I drink

1. *nje ē oa:si*

2. *ek eet vleis*

3. I eat meat

1. *nje tl'hoe huisi*³

2. *ek maak huis*

¹ The first line contains Bushman, the second-Afrikaans, the third — English translation.

² One would expect *'n šoa*; evidently *'n š- > t š-*; the literary translation would be: „I water take, (I am) hot-so“. There is not anything strange in the fact that Jankie catches the situation in such a concrete way; It is peculiar to Bushman thought to refer to it, being a dynamic phenomenon and requiring his own activity as a function or an answer to its stimuli prevailing on him in an inevitable way.

³ A loan-word from Afrikaans.

3. I do not want to sleep (lie down)

1. *ti kl'ha ti* /*k'oa e*

2. *die ding, hy is bitter*

3. this thing, this bitter is

1. *nje gibi nja*

2. *ek goosi*

3. I am throwing

1. *nje gibi nja en ša*

2. *ek gooi met kerie*

3. I throw a stick (club)

1. *nje tši a*

2. *ek byt*

3. I bite you

1. *nje t'oe a*

2. *ek trap*

3. I run away from you

1. *ti kl'ha ti xe thà*

2. *die ding is nie lekker nie*

3. the thing is not sweet

1. *nje a n ≠kei a ti*

2. *ek word geslaan*

3. I here me-strike here it

(I was struck)

3. I build a (European) house

1. *ni kx'e kx'uru*

2. *ek is nie siek nie*

3. I am not ill

1. *tì tši ja*

2. *die ding is rooi*

3. this thing is red

1. *khoe kx'ē so khoe (n)t'o*

2. *mens sit in die grond*

3. he sits on the ground

1. *nje k'ēi so khoe t'o*

2. *ek sit in die grond*

3. I sit on the ground

1. *nje ts'o e fan*

2. *ek melk die koeie*

3. I milk cows.

1. *thora e nje ts'oe fan*

2. *gister ek melk die koeie*

3. yesterday I milked cows

1. *'n sa tan ts'oe (n)/gebe*

2. *ek sal melk moro*

3. I come I (shall) milk cows

tomorrow

3. The story of Jankie

1. /*na a e, 'n duni nja, an /khu si ja,*

2. *jy sien, ek loop, ek nog jong,*

3. You see, when I ran all about as a young fellow

1. *nja n kon k'ole, nje khui (n)/a*

2. *ek het gaan vry, my jong meid*

3. I went to court a young girl

1. *nja han do¹ than tχ'e nje 'ñ ko,*
2. ek het, vir hom ook liefde gehad,
3. I had also love for her,
1. *'n heñ do(g)¹ the nje ko² /'n³, han dun*
2. ek will hom hé — beast, hy loop
3. I wanted to have her. — Suddenly — a beast, it rushes (stops)
1. *kχ'ui, 'n //a ko, 'n ke ke /ky o,*
2. krap, ek loop die plek-toe, ek het (voel) vuur (is vurig),
3. scrapes (earth), I run there (quickly), at all my speed (I have fire)
1. *hasi ha ma tha pisi 'n-ru — ta kχ'ui*
2. jong perd stop so as kwagga (ek vat hom)⁴, beast rasper krap,
3. a young horse stops, like a zebra, (I catch it), the beast scrapes grates,
1. *ha ma en tĩ ja, ha gon ≠koē 'e*
2. hy was kwaai hy spring
3. (it does not obey), he was restless he sprang up
1. *ti go ≠koe 'e kχ'ui, ha ma en ti ja*
2. hy spring, perd kwaai
3. he sprang up, the restless horse,

¹ Cp. Afr. *dog* „however, yet“.

² Jankie does not mention here that his girl had been already working on Pieter Prinsloo's farm, neither that she was his wife later on, with whom he had 7 children („vier jongkies en drie meisies“ as he told me). He points to it by saying, some lines below, *si, sisi, si-ten* or *si-χen*, what in his Afrikaans translation means „ons“; the form *si* is the Batwa pronoun for the 1. pers. pl. exclusivum, i. e. „we without you“. The dual form „we both“ does not exist in Bushman; it appears only in Hottentot.

³ In Jankie's remembrances there arises suddenly — without any connection with all that has preceded, in a typical Bushman way — a horse, the first horse he rode on the farm; cp. a similar symptom in the psychic of children.

⁴ This sentence is only Afrikaans; in Bushman it is not necessary to be uttered at all; the situation points to it clearly enough.

1. *ti ha /khe an thu sa ti*
2. dat het hom niks gehelp nie
3. however it did not help him
1. *in ti kχ'o tĩ ja, 'n han /kei a ti*
2. al was hy kwaai, ek het hom geslaan
3. any time he was restless, I beat him
1. *ti han u tsaba.*
2. hy het mak geword.
3. he became tame.
1. *'n hen dun tin dzoa(≠ga) tsola kyeñ*
2. ek het in die aand gery
3. I rode on him till the evening-
1. *tl'a me e 'n sen taba nje oba-se¹*
2. oordag ou baas-ene
3. All day long, I worked (from that time) at the farmer's:
1. *taba:ñ: debi, a sen (toša) /kosa*
2. werk: in die moro rooi dag
3. In the morning, as the sun was still red,
1. *'n hen kya e thu, χun han kχ'oa'e,*
2. ek gaan huis toe, as die hoenders kraai,
3. I went to the house, when the cocks were still crowing,
1. *si (n)/kχ'e si /kχ'a /kχō //kχũ,*
2. ons gaan pere voer gee,
3. we went to give fodder to the horses,
1. *sisin heri sa, si hei kχ'e tl'ōsi²,*
2. as ons klar is, ons gaan kraal toe,
3. After we had finished, we went to the enclosure for cattle,
1. *si kχ'a ts'o, si sa ts'o, si(sa) heri sa,*
2. ons gaan melk, ons het gemelk, ons was klaar,
3. we went to milk, we came to milk, we finished,

¹ The word has been taken from Afrikaans *ou baas* „old master, farmer“.

² Cp. Se-Sutho: *n-tlu* „house“.

1. *si ha ho tl'huan¹, si-han tañ si kya e kyan tl'en² a kyan,*
2. vat ons, die melk, ons bring die melk huis toe,
3. we took milk, we went, we brought all milk to the house,
1. *sin heri sa tl'en a tl'huan,*
2. ons het klaargemaak, die melk weggebring huis-toe,
3. After we had finished bringing milk to the house,
1. *si (n) ≠ hen se, si hala-si³ kχ'a*
2. ons het teruggekom, ons het kraal-toe gegaan
3. we returned, we went to the enclosure
1. *tlō-si, si kχ'a tlō-la au fan-gen⁴ tl'e*
2. kalwerkies uitgekeer,
3. for cattle, we drove calves from the cows,
1. *o i-hañ o fan-gen kl'e,*
2. as ons het weggejag die koeie, dat
3. then we drove the cows, that
1. *so o te sin lela ka (te) te tañ. Tsola kyeñ, tsola ha fu'u,*
2. hulle loop. Son gaan drai (laat), son is middag
3. they may run (and graze). The sun turned, the sun is midday
1. *tu e hañ tañ hai tl'a hose te fan-gen (tl'he) kl'he.*
2. mens gaan die koeie haal
3. men go to find the cows to bring them back.
1. *fan-gen te, si-han o te khoe ten tlō-si,*
2. die koei word engejag in die kraal,
3. The cows, we had driven (them) into the enclosure,
1. *se-hen ts'o heri sa, se hala-se i(u) //e.*
2. ons het die melk klargemaak, huis-toe gebring,
3. (then) we finished milking (them), we brought milk to the house,

¹ Cp. S₂ //k'e : n „milk“.

² S₁ //en „to dwell“.

³ Cp. Afr. kraal „pen, enclosure for cattle“.

⁴ Cp. S₆ (gume si) !χa-di and Se-sutha kyan-wa „milk cow“; fan is derived quite regularly (!χ > f) from *!χan, of which another derivative is kyan; tl'e (kl'he, tl'e) comes from S₃ //χai-n „many“; tlō-la is Se-Sutho tl'ola „to jump“ and means „calves“ here.

1. *si tχ'ola fan-gen tl'e se hala sen*
2. ons (het) kalwerkies uitgekeer van die koeie, ons het weer teruggegaan
3. we (drove) calves from the cows, we loaded (carried)
1. *o tl'hañ, sin k'o tl'añ, sin ko kya e,*
2. die melk gevat, ons huis-toe gegaan,
3. milk, we took milk, we went to the house¹,
1. *e sin /hē se se hala-se, sin tl'hola*
2. ons het teruggekom, ons het kalwerkies uitgekeer,
3. we came back, we drove calves
1. *fan-gen te, sin han heri sa, sin hon o te-*
2. van die koeie, ons het klaargemaak, ons het
3. from the cows, we finished driving calves,
1. *-ma², han te-ma, sin lele³ /ka-ta-ma*
2. die kalwerkies weggejag, hulle moet
3. them, the calves, we, a long time, (drove) calves
1. *fan-gen te, 'n tañ ni je, /uri te, 'n tañ ≠ he'ēse.*
2. loop, ek jag weg, loop, kom terug.
3. from the cows, (then) I go away, I run, I come back.

¹ Evidently they could not take all the milk at once, so the story about going with milk is repeated.

² Te-ma means „small flock“, i. e. the flock of little ones; /ka-te „calves“.

³ Se-Sutho lele „long“.