

# *Current Trends in Linguistics*

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*Linguistics in  
Sub-Saharan Africa*

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# CURRENT TRENDS IN LINGUISTICS

*Edited by*  
THOMAS A. SEBEOK

VOLUME 7

## *Linguistics in Sub-Saharan Africa*

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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Ever since 1964, Charles A. Ferguson has been pointing out that 'there has been general agreement that surveys and state-of-the-art papers are both urgently needed and presently feasible in linguistics' (cf., e.g., *Information in the language sciences: Proceedings of the conference held at Airlie House, Warrenton, Virginia, March 4-6, 1966, under the sponsorship of the Center for Applied Linguistics*, p. 29 [New York: American Elsevier, 1968]). The Weinberg Report, drafted for President Kennedy, had emphasized the challenge and intellectual stimulation presented by the preparation of high-quality contributions of this kind, and nicely compared the relationship of the reviewer to his widely scattered bits of knowledge with that of the theorist to available pieces of experimental data (*Science, government, and information: A report of the President's Science Advisory Committee*, p. 27 [Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963]). In my Introduction to Vol. 6, I cited the 1969 SATCOM Report to the effect that the forming of consolidations of information, as exemplified by many of the chapters of the *Current Trends* series, 'often requires great intellectual creativity' — as should also be self-evident from the eminence of the authorship involved throughout these volumes.

A question that I am frequently asked, however, is whether the contents of articles in *Current Trends* are not soon superseded, or, more precisely, what the rate is at which a given item decays. The authors of the SATCOM report have something to say about this in general: a 'most important characteristic of review literature is that it retains its usefulness over a relatively long period of time. There are many qualitative indications of its slowness of obsolescence, and data from citation studies seem to support this fact' (p. 185). The citation studies referred to are a sample of physics papers; it was found that the probability for a typical research paper to cite a given review item decays at a very slow rate, 'falling by only a factor of two each decade'. While no comparable study has ever been undertaken in linguistics, it seems reasonable to conjecture that the decay rate in our discipline cannot be faster than that in physics, and is probably much slower. I am confident, therefore, that when Vol. 12 of this series, *Linguistics and adjacent arts and sciences*, shall have appeared — just about one decade after Vol. 1, *Soviet and East European linguistics* (1963) — the latter will hardly have obsolesced at all. One can only speculate whether Vol. 3, *Theoretical foundations* (1966) — which, by all accounts, seems to be the volume most frequently

cited in the linguistic literature among the six published so far — will endure as long as or longer than those organized around more data-oriented thematic foci.

A related topic of perennial, if possibly a trifle morbid, fascination for some of my colleagues — foreign and domestic — has to do with the financial aspects of the series. The three questions I am most often asked are: where does the money come from, are the contributors paid, and is the publisher subsidized?

As to the source of the funds, these have been scrupulously identified and acknowledged in my successive Introductions; but, to repeat: the preparation of Vols. 1-12 has been supported wholly by the United States government, with ancillary aid from The Canada Council. The U.S. funds have been funneled from four different federal agencies to two private organizations. Of the former, the Office of Education, which is a major division of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, has assumed responsibility for fully half of the project, as follows:

VOLUME	TITLE	RECIPIENT	AMOUNT
4	<i>Ibero-American and Caribbean Linguistics</i>	Indiana University Foundation	\$ 28,674
5	<i>Linguistics in South Asia</i>	Indiana University Foundation	\$ 35,466
6	<i>Linguistics in South West Asia and North Africa</i>	Center for Applied Linguistics	\$ 35,174
7	<i>Linguistics in Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	Center for Applied Linguistics	\$ 41,000
11	<i>Diachronic, areal, and typological linguistics</i>	Indiana University Foundation	\$ 33,834
12	<i>Linguistics and adjacent arts and sciences</i>	Indiana University Foundation	\$ 91,038
Total USOE			\$ 265,186

(The contract that made it possible to ready the present volume for press bore the identification USOE-OEC-3-7-062820-2076, and is hereby particularly, and most gratefully, acknowledged.)

The financing of the remaining six volumes was shared by three other U.S. agencies, with the cost of Vol. 10 partially defrayed from Canada. The supportive role of our National Science Foundation will be detailed in my next Introduction, and of the rest in the appropriate volumes to follow.

A decision was reached at the outset to offer each contributor a 'token' honorarium — a small payment intended merely to recognize the existence of an obligation incurred in distracting a scholar from his research activities or other normal pursuits. I confess that I have always found it embarrassing to intrude upon a busy colleague's life to impose some irksome labor, and my discomfiture would be intolerable had I been unable to tender at least a modicum of compensation, whether in cash or in kind. That this is not a true measure of my debt to the nearly two hundred language

scientists who have so far responded affirmatively to a letter of invitation to contribute to this series should go without saying.

The publishers of the series, Mouton & Co., undertake the composition, printing, and distribution of each volume entirely at their own risk, without any subsidy on the one hand, but without the liability for royalty payments on the other. The prices of the books are set by Mouton. They are regarded, by most linguists — especially by those innocent of the publishing business — as outrageously high. These colleagues should keep in mind that, in the early 1960's, I couldn't locate a single American commercial publishing house, or even a university press, willing to venture to take the series on without a huge government subsidy. At the same time, I have been trying to find solutions to two acute problems: how to get the books into the hands of students who most need them; and how to make copies available, cheaply and in sufficient quantities, in the regions of the world where most pertinent and wanted — e.g., Vol. 5 in Ceylon, India, and Pakistan; Vol. 7 throughout Sub-Saharan Africa; and so on. One approach toward helping needy students has been to issue selected chapters in separate, inexpensive booklets, as was done with articles by Chomsky, Greenberg, Haas, and Hockett, and will be done with past and future articles by Malkiel, Haugen and Markey, and hopefully many others. Permission to reprint, for inclusion in textbook-type readers, for instance, is routinely granted (provided the author concurs), as is also permission to translate an occasional selection for a regional publication, say, from Vol. 4, into Spanish, for a publication destined to be circulated mainly in Latin America.

The average American or West European graduate student in linguistics is the one I had designated 'needy', a relative attribution. He, at least, may have access to a library with a more or less adequate collection of basic reference works. But what about his confrere in Afghanistan, Burma, Ecuador, or Senegal? How can a copy of *Current Trends*, Vol. 6, or 2, or 4, or 7 be gotten to him? I receive many letters, from every continent, asking for a complimentary copy of this or that volume, pleading personal poverty or national currency restrictions, often cogently. My means are too limited to meet these individual demands, no matter how persuasive, for they are simply too numerous. Whether mass distribution to at least the university libraries of developing countries is feasible with institutional support of some sort is being looked into at the present time.

The state of the series as of six weeks ago was outlined in my Introduction to Vol. 6. To recapitulate briefly: Vol. 8, *Linguistics in Oceania*, will appear very shortly. Vol. 9, *Linguistics in Western Europe*, is in press. Vol. 10, *Linguistics in North America*, will be sent to press in the summer of 1970, with Vol. 11, *Diachronic, areal, and typological linguistics*, to follow in the fall. The three successive tomes of Vol. 12, *Linguistics and adjacent arts and sciences*, will then begin flowing to the printer beginning next winter. No decision has as yet been made as to Vol. 13, *Index to Current Trends in Linguistics, Vols. 1-12*, the complexities of which were partially delineated in the previous Introduction.

I have remarked before that the initial conception of an Editorial Board is seldom wholly realized in the final product. This volume is a conspicuous exception, for practically all the chapters envisaged in the original design are here, this despite the untimely death of Hans Wolff (1920-1967), the lengthy hospitalization of another Africanist invited to contribute, and the incredible difficulties of communication with certain colleagues in the field (particularly in what was formerly Biafra). In this connection, I want to thank especially J. H. Kwabena Nketia (University of Ghana), William J. Samarin (University of Toronto), Robert Terry (Indiana University), and E. O. J. Westphal (University of Cape Town), for completing their respective assignments under extraordinary pressure.

The article of Emmi Kähler-Meyer was translated from the German by John F. Davis (University of California, Los Angeles).

Members of this Editorial Board agreed to divide prime responsibility, in general, as follows: Joseph H. Greenberg (Stanford University), with David W. Crabb (Princeton University), for the first thirteen articles in the book, and Jack Berry (Northwestern University), with Paul Schachter (University of California, Los Angeles), for the remaining fourteen. The Master List of Abbreviations, Index of Languages, and Index of Names were compiled by Alexandra Ramsay (Center for Applied Linguistics); she also prepared all the articles for press and coordinated the processing of both galley and page proofs with the authors, editors, and production department. To the five friends already named in this paragraph, the twenty-two other contributors to this book — including three of the editors, Nketia with two articles, and Welmers with two plus the 'checklist' in the Appendix — and the publisher's staff, my hearty thanks for their cooperation.

San Francisco, December 31, 1969

THOMAS A. SEBEOK

## MASTER LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### JOURNALS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Abbia	Abbia; Revue Culturelle Camerounaise/Cameroon Cultural Review. Yaoundé.
ADAW	Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Klasse für Sprachen, Literatur und Kunst. Berlin.
Aequatoria	Aequatoria. Revue des Sciences Congolaises/Tijdschrift voor Kongolese Wetenschappen. Coquilhatville (Congo Belge).
Africa	Africa. Journal of the International African Institute. London.
African Affairs	African Affairs, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press.
Afrique et l'Asie	Afrique et l'Asie. Revue politique, social et économique. Paris.
AfrLR	African Language Review. The African language journal of Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone. Freetown. (Formerly SLLR.).
AfrLS	African Language Studies. London.
AfrS	African Studies. Johannesburg.
AfrSB	African Studies Bulletin. Brookline, Mass.
AmA	American Anthropologist. Menasha, Wisconsin.
AnL	Anthropological Linguistics. Bloomington, Indiana.
AnnMafrC	Annales, Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale. Série in 8°, Sciences humaines. Tervuren, Belgium.
AnnMRCB-L	Annales du Musée Royal du Congo Belge. Série in 8°, Science de l'homme, Linguistique. Tervuren, Belgium.
Anthropos	Anthropos. Revue internationale d'ethnologie et de linguistique/ Internationale Zeitschrift für Völker- und Sprachenkunde. Fribourg (Switzerland).
AO	Archiv Orientální. Prague.
Arabica	Arabica. Revue d'études arabes. Leiden.
ArchV	Archiv für Völkerkunde. Vienna.
ASCILNA	Actes du Second Colloque International de Linguistique Négro Africaine, ed. by M. Houis and others. Dakar, West African Languages Survey. 1963.
AuÜ	Afrika und Übersee. Sprachen, Kulturen. Folge der ZES. Berlin.
BAfr.	Bibliotheca Africana. Innsbruck.
BCCW	Benue-Congo Comparative Wordlist, ed. by Kay Williamson and Shimizu Kiyoshi. Ibadan, West African Linguistic Society, 1968.
BEASC	Bulletin of the East African Swahili Committee. Kampala.
BIFAN	Bulletin d'Institut Français de l'Afrique Noir. Série B. Dakar.
BS	Bantu Studies. Johannesburg. (Now AfrS.)
BSEC	Bulletin de la Société d'Études Camerounaises. Douala. (Now Études camerounaises.)
BSL	Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris. Paris.
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. London.
BT	The Bible Translator. Periodical for the assistance of Bible translators. London.
CAnthr.	Current Anthropology. A world journal for the sciences of man. Chicago.
CEAfr.	Cahiers d'Études Africaines. Paris.
CNLNA	La classification nominale dans les langues négro africaines, ed. by G. Manessy. Paris, Colloques internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. 1967.



CSSH	Comparative Studies in Society and History. An international quarterly. The Hague.
Études camerounaises	Études camerounaises. Douala. (Continuation of BSEC).
Études dahoméennes	Études dahoméennes. Porto-Novo (Dahomey).
FAE	Fundamental and Adult Education. United Nations educational, scientific and cultural organisation (UNESCO). Paris.
Genève-Afrique	Genève-Afrique/Acta Africana. Institut Africain de Genève. Geneva.
GL	General Linguistics. Lexington, Ky.
GLECS	Comptes Rendus du Groupe Linguistique d'Études Chamito-Sémitiques. Paris.
Globus	Globus. Hildburghausen. Brunswick. (= Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen).
GRM	Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift. Neue Folge. Heidelberg.
Hesp.	Hespéris. Archives berbères. Paris.
Homme	L'Homme. Revue française d'anthropologie. Paris and The Hague.
IJAL	International Journal of American Linguistics. Baltimore.
JAF	Journal of American Folklore. Philadelphia.
JAfrH	The Journal of African History. London.
JAfrL	Journal of African Languages. London.
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society. New Haven, Conn.
JanL	Janua Linguarum. Series maior, minor, and practica. The Hague, Mouton.
JAS	Journal of the [Royal] African Society. London. (Now African Affairs).
JBRAS	Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. Bombay.
JEthS	Journal of Ethiopian Studies. Addis Ababa.
JL	Journal of Linguistics. London.
JMAS	Journal of Modern African Studies. A quarterly survey of politics, economics and related topics in contemporary Africa. London and New York.
JRAI	Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. London.
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. London.
JSAfr.	Journal de la Société des Africanistes. Paris.
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies. Manchester.
JWAfrL	The Journal of West African Languages. London.
Kongo-Overzee	Kongo-Overzee. Ghent/Antwerp.
Kush	Kush. Journal of the Sudan Antiquities Service. Khartoum.
Lg.	Language. Journal of the Linguistic Society of America. Baltimore.
Lingua	Lingua. International review of general linguistics/Revue internationale de linguistique générale. Amsterdam.
Linguistics	Linguistics. An international review. The Hague.
Man	Man. A record of anthropological science. London.
MDS	Mitteilungen aus den Deutschen Schutzgebieten. Berlin.
MIFAN	Memoires de l'Institut Français d'Afrique Noire. Dakar.
MIO	Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung, Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Berlin.
MPhon.	Le Maître phonétique. Organe de l'Association Phonétique Internationale. London.
MSL	Memoires de la Société de Linguistique de Paris. Paris.
MSLL	Monograph Series on Languages and Linguistics, Georgetown University. Washington, D.C.
MSOS	Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen. Berlin.
NAfr.	Notes Africaines. Bulletin d'information et de correspondance de l'Institut Français d'Afrique Noire. Dakar.
Nph.	Neophilologus. Groningen.
Orbis	Orbis. Bulletin international de documentation linguistique. Louvain.
PA	Oversea Education, Great Britain Colonial Office.
	Présence Africaine. Revue culturelle du monde noir. Paris.

Philologica	Philologica. London.
Phonetica	Phonetica. Internationale Zeitschrift für Phonetik/International journal of phonetics. Basel and New York.
PM	[Dr. A.] Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen. Gotha. (See Globus).
RA	Revue Africaine. Journal des travaux de la Société Historique Algérienne. Algiers.
REIsl	Revue des Études Islamiques. Paris.
RENLO	Revue de l'École Nationale des Langues Orientales. Structure des langues et civilisations du monde contemporain. Paris.
RLR	Revue de Linguistique Romane. Lyon and Paris.
Romania	Romania. Paris.
RomPh.	Romance Philology. Berkeley and Los Angeles.
RP	Revista de Portugal. Série A: Língua portuguesa. Lisbon.
RSoc	Rural Sociology. Devoted to scientific study of rural life. Madison, Wisc.
RSEt.	Rassegna di Studi Ethiopici. Rome.
RSO	Revista degli Studi Orientali. Rome.
SA	Scientific American. New York.
Sierra Leone	Studies Sierra Leone Society, Institute of African Studies, Fourah Bay College. Freetown.
SIL	Studies in Linguistics. Buffalo, New York.
SKAW	Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien: Philologisch-Historische Klasse. Vienna.
SLLR	Sierra Leone Language Review. Freetown. (Now AfrLR.).
SJA	Southwestern Journal of Anthropology. Albuquerque, New Mexico.
Sociologus	Sociologus. Zeitschrift für empirische Soziologie, Sozialpsychologische und Ethnologische Forschung. Berlin.
SR	School Review. A journal of philosophical and theoretical policies and practices in education. Chicago.
Standpunte	Standpunte. Cape Town.
Sudan Notes & Records	Sudan Notes & Records. Khartoum.
Swahili	Swahili. Journal of the Institute of Swahili Research, University College. Dar es Salaam.
Taalfasette	Taalfasette. Pretoria.
TG	Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe. Pretoria.
THSG	Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana. Legon.
TIL	Travaux de l'Institut de Linguistique. Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Paris. Paris.
TPhS	Transactions of the Philological Society. Oxford.
TSLL	Texas Studies in Literature and Language. Austin, Texas.
TVV	Tydskrif vir Volkskunde en Volkstaal. Johannesburg.
TWK	Tydskrif vir Wetenskap en Kuns. Bloemfontein.
West African Language Monographs	Edited by Joseph H. Greenberg and John Spencer. Cambridge University Press in association with the West African Languages Survey and Institute of African Studies, Ibadan. London and New York.
Word	Word. Journal of the Linguistic Circle of New York. New York.
World Politics	World Politics. A quarterly journal of international relations. Princeton University Center for International Studies. Princeton, N.J.
WZKM	Weiner Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes. Vienna.
Zaire	Zaire. Revue congolaise/Congoleesch tijdschrift. Brussels.
ZAS	Zeitschrift für Afrikanische Sprachen. Berlin.
ZAOS	Zeitschrift für Afrikanische und Ozeanische Sprachen. Berlin.
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft. Wiesbaden.
ZES	Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen. Berlin.

ZEthn.	Zeitschrift für Ethnologie. Berlin.
ZFSL	Zeitschrift für Französische Sprache und Literatur. Wiesbaden.
ZK	Zeitschrift für Kolonialsprachen. Berlin.
ZPhon.	Zeitschrift für Phonetik, Sprachwissenschaft und Kommunikationsforschung. Berlin.
ZRPh.	Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie. Tübingen.

## OTHER ABBREVIATIONS

BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society/Société Biblique Britannique et Étrangère. London.
CAL	Center for Applied Linguistics. Washington, D.C.
C.A.R.	Central African Republic.
CCTA/CSA	Commission for Technical Cooperation in Africa/Scientific Council for Africa. London.
CLAD	Centre de Linguistique Appliquée, Dakar.
CMS	Church Missionary Society, London.
E.A.I.S.C.A.	East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs.
H.M.S.O.	Her (His) Majesty's Stationery Office. London.
IAI	International African Institute.
IFAN	Institut Français/Fondamental d'Afrique Noire. Dakar.
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet.
OUP	Oxford University Press. London, New York, and Cape Town.
S.I.L.	Summer Institute of Linguistics. Santa Ana, California.
S.P.C.K.	Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge.

## CONTENTS

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION . . . . .	v
MASTER LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS . . . . .	xi
 The History of African Linguistics to 1945, by Desmond T. Cole . . . . .	1
The Present State of African Linguistics, by Paul Schachter . . . . .	30
West Atlantic: An Inventory of the Languages, their Noun Class Systems, and Consonant Alternation, by J. David Sapir . . . . .	45
Niger-Congo, Mande, by Wm. E. Welmers . . . . .	113
Niger-Congo, Gur, by John T. Bendor-Samuel . . . . .	141
Niger-Congo, Kwa, by John M. Stewart . . . . .	179
Adamawa-Eastern, by William J. Samarin . . . . .	213
The Benue-Congo Languages and Ijò, by Kay Williamson . . . . .	245
Niger-Congo, Eastern Bantu, by Emmi Kähler-Meyer . . . . .	307
The Western Bantu Languages, by Malcolm Guthrie . . . . .	357
The Click Languages of Southern and Eastern Africa, by E. O. J. Westphal . .	367
Nilo-Saharan and Meroitic, by Joseph H. Greenberg . . . . .	421
Chadic, by Robert R. Terry . . . . .	443
Descriptive Bibliography of the Linguistics of Afrikaans: A Survey of Major Works and Authors, by Marius F. Valkhoff . . . . .	455
Arabic, by Haim Blanc . . . . .	501
Pidgins and Creoles in Africa, by Jack Berry . . . . .	510
Colonial Language Policies and their Legacies, by John Spencer . . . . .	537
Language Policies of Independent African States, by W. H. Whiteley . . .	548
Christian Missions and Language Policies, by Wm. E. Welmers . . . . .	559
Language Teaching, by Elizabeth Dunstan . . . . .	570
Problems of Literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Philip J. Foster . . . . .	587
Orthographic Systems and Conventions in Sub-Saharan Africa, by A. N. Tucker	618
Multilingualism, by Pierre Alexandre . . . . .	654
Languages in Contact, by Morris Goodman . . . . .	664
Language Standardisation in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Gilbert Ansre . . . . .	680
Surrogate Languages of Africa, by J. H. Kwabena Nketia . . . . .	699
The Linguistic Aspect of Style in African Languages, by J. H. Kwabena Nketia	733

*Appendix:*

Checklist of African Language and Dialect Names, by Wm. E. Welmers . . . 759

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES . . . . . 901

INDEX OF NAMES . . . . . 958

INDEX OF LANGUAGES . . . . . 909



# THE HISTORY OF AFRICAN LINGUISTICS TO 1945\*

DESMOND T. COLE

## 1. THE EARLIEST RECORDS AND ESSAYS

1.1 The earliest written records of Sub-Saharan African languages occur in Arabic documents dating back as far as the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. A few words cited in these documents have been plausibly attributed to Bantu sources, a few others to a language very much like modern Bambara. A good deal less plausible is the suggestion that the Ancient Egyptian hieroglyph of *Punt*, referring to the 'land of the blacks' far to the south of Egypt, represents *buntu* 'the land of the people, the Bantu', and thus the first Bantu word ever recorded. In the light of more recent hypotheses about the date and place of origin of the Bantu languages, it is unlikely that a Bantu people inhabited any area in northeast Africa during Ancient Egyptian times.

1.2 The first Europeans to record African languages were the Portuguese, who reached the equator in 1471, and rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1488, in their search for a sea route to India. The earliest known Portuguese record is dated 1506 and is attributable to a southeastern Bantu language, Karanga. From then onwards, an increasing number of eastern Bantu words, phrases, and sentences appeared in

\* I am much indebted to Miss Marianne Walther, B.A. Hons., for assistance in the preparation of this paper, which draws heavily, in respect of the Bantu area, on the first four articles by C.M. Doke in Doke and Cole, *Contributions to the history of Bantu linguistics*, 1961. An unpublished paper by W.E. Welmers, "African language classification prior to 1948", has also proved most useful. Other references are cited in the text or in footnotes, and detailed in the bibliography. As far as we are aware, no work similar to Doke's historical survey of Bantu linguistic studies has been produced on any other linguistic area in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the northern regions are not nearly so well represented in our libraries as the Southern African area. The lopsidedness of this paper is further attributable to the fact that its author professes Bantu linguistics, with no pretensions to knowledge of other areas, nor to being a historian. But in any event, Africa, although steatopygic, is a bottom-heavy continent, heavily weighted at the narrow end, as evidenced by the way it is suspended in its oceans! Needless to say, in this brief survey of the history of African linguistic studies to 1945, scores of important publications are passed over without comment, and dozens of significant personalities and major contributors to our field of study go unmentioned. An entertaining note might have been introduced into an otherwise stodgy historical survey by presenting some of the numerous hypotheses which have been advanced at one time or another, concerning the derivation of all African languages from Ancient Egyptian or Coptic, or of individual languages or groups from the non-African Sumerian, Dravidian, Chinese, Hittite, Basque, Latin, Malayo-Polynesian, etc. But Africa needs, more than any other commodity, Time (rather than *Time*), and this is precisely what a generous aid-granting world will not allow it!

Portuguese records, but although some vocabulary was recorded in 1523 from a language resembling Fante or Twi of modern Ghana, western Bantu languages were not represented until 1591. In that year an Italian mathematician, Filippo Pigafetta, wrote in Italian *A Report of the Kingdom of Congo*, based on information provided by the Portuguese Oduardo Lopez who had sailed to Loanda in 1578, and who had recorded a considerable number of Kongo words and phrases.

1.3 In 1624, a little more than thirty years after Pigafetta's *Report*, there appeared in Lisbon the first book in an African language. The *Doutrina Christãa* is a little volume of 134 pages, prepared by three Jesuit priests, and contains a catechism composed in Portuguese by Marcos Jorge and Ignacio Martinz, with an interlinear translation into Kongo produced by or under the supervision of Mattheus Cardoso, to whom goes the main credit for this historic work. What appears to be a second edition of Cardoso's work was published in 1850 by Hyacinthus a Vetralla, better known by his Italian name Giacinto Brusciotto; in this the catechism is presented in four languages, Kongo, Portuguese, Latin and Italian, in separate columns.

1.4 The second known Bantu book, *Gentio de Angola*, was produced by the Portuguese Jesuit Fathers Francisco Pacconio and Antonio do Couto, and published in Lisbon in 1642 or 1643. Some uncertainty attaches to the date, the last digit of which is illegible in the copy in the British Museum. The *Gentio de Angola* is a 90-page book of Christian doctrine in Ndongo (kiMbundu), with the Portuguese version on the facing page, and contains a few introductory hints, in Portuguese, on pronunciation and grammar. These brief notes apparently represent the earliest published attempt at linguistic description of a Bantu language. A second edition, containing a Latin version in a third column and other additions and corrections by the Capuchin Fr. Antonio Maria de Monteprandone Amici, was published in Rome in 1661. It has additional notes on grammar and pronunciation, including an emphatic paragraph on the importance of correctly pronouncing the 'accent' which frequently distinguishes words having different meanings. The differences in 'accent' are illustrated by minimal pairs which clearly indicate that by 1661 Fr. Antonio Maria had recognized the semantic function of tone without realizing the true nature of the phenomenon!

1.5 There is evidence that during the years 1643–60 several other pioneering linguistic studies were produced in Sub-Saharan Africa, but most of these were not published and can no longer be traced. Among these were a quadrilingual Kongo dictionary produced by Brusciotto in 1650, and three manuscripts attributed to Fr. Antoine de Tervelli, comprising a Kongo-Spanish dictionary, c. 1652; a grammar of Kongo in Spanish, c. 1652; and a quadrilingual dictionary, Italian, Latin, Spanish and Kongo, c. 1657. A Latin-Spanish-Kongo dictionary was produced about 1652 by Fr. Georges de Gheel or Joris van Gheel, a Belgian Capuchin, but this was probably a copy of earlier work done by a Spaniard, Roboredo. The Kongo material was abstracted from de Gheel's manuscript by J. van Wing and C. Penders, and published in 1928, with French and Dutch glosses, under the title *Le plus ancien dictionnaire Bantu — Het oudste Bantu-woordenboek*.

1.6 The year 1659 saw publication in Rome of the first known grammar of an African language, a 98-page study of Kongo by Giacinto Brusciotto, an Italian Capuchin, known also by the Latin and Portuguese renderings of his name as Hyacinthus Brusciottus a Vetralla and Jacinto Brusciato de Vetralha. Its title is *Regulae quaedam pro difficillimi Congensium idiomatis faciliiori captu ad grammaticae normam redactae*. An English translation of this epochal work was published by H. Grattan Guinness in 1882, and a Portuguese translation by T. da Silva Leitão e Castro in 1886. Brusciotto recognized and described the system of noun classes, which he termed 'principiations', and of concordial agreements. It is significant that his division into 'principiations' was determined by the concordial agreements and not by the form of the noun prefix, thus revealing deeper linguistic insight than some of his successors up to the present day! Other structural features described by Brusciotto include the verb perfect stem, applied and reflexive verbs, conjugation of verbs, and derivation of nouns from verbs.

1.7 Several other publications followed Brusciotto's grammar during the latter half of the seventeenth century. In 1673 W. Müller published in German a vocabulary of the Fetu dialect of Ashanti,<sup>1</sup> apparently the first work of its type to emerge from West Africa. In 1697 a 48-page grammatical sketch of Ndongo, *Arte da lingua de Angola*, was published in Lisbon by Fr. Pedro Dias, S.J. Across the continent, in Ethiopia, Amharic was described for the first time in Hiob Ludolf's *Grammatica linguae amharicae*, published in 1698 in Frankfurt. Ludolf was also the author of an earlier grammar and dictionary of Ethiopic (Ge'ez), *Grammatica aethiopica* and *Lexicon aethiopico-latinum*, both first published in 1661.<sup>2</sup> The pioneer work in this area was that of Wemmers, whose Ethiopic-Latin lexicon with prefaced grammatical notes had been published in Rome in 1638,<sup>3</sup> and probably represents the earliest linguistic publication outside of the Bantu area, and the earliest in Sub-Saharan Africa.

1.8 Other works produced during the latter half of the seventeenth century, but not published until much later, include Arcangelo Carradori di Pistoia's Italian-Nubian dictionary of 1650 which remained in manuscript until 1877,<sup>4</sup> and a 42-page grammatical sketch of Sena, *Arte da lingua de Cafre*, which was discovered among documents of the year 1680, but itself bears neither date nor name of author. This was not published until 1919-20. No doubt there were a number of other such manuscripts which have been lost or destroyed, or lie unrecorded in archives. Shorter word-lists, vocabularies and remarks on various African languages continued to appear in the writings of missionaries, travellers, and others, but it is a remarkable fact that after the substantial pioneer work of the seventeenth century, as summarized above, relatively little was produced in the African linguistic field during the next hundred

<sup>1</sup> Cust 1883, pp. 24 (where the date of publication is given as 1675), 197, 482; Werner 1915, p.11.

<sup>2</sup> Cust 1883, pp. 24, 88, 468; Jones 1959, pp. 32, 34.

<sup>3</sup> Cust 1883, pp. 25, 88, 468.

<sup>4</sup> Cust 1883, pp. 25, 146, 474; Werner 1915, p.11.

years. Only during the last thirty years of the eighteenth century did a few more items appear, most of them from the Congolese and Angolan areas.

1.9 Two manuscript works, *Essay d'une grammaire Congo* (48 pages) and a substantial *Dictionnaire Congo-français*, are reported to be in the Museum of the Congregation de la Propagande in Rome. These were probably written about 1770, by one or other or both of the missionaries Descourvières and Joli. In the British Museum is the manuscript of a large and very creditable Kongo-French dictionary which was written in 1772 by an unknown author. Four years later, in 1776, the Abbé Proyart published in Paris his *Histoire de Loango, Kakongo et autres royaumes d'Afrique*, which includes a very perceptive chapter on the Kongo language, the more remarkable for the fact that, as far as is known, Proyart never visited Africa but obtained his information from two missionary colleagues. In the same year, 1776, Andrew Sparrman published in the record of his travels in South Africa a "Specimen of the language of the Caffres", including a vocabulary of 63 Xhosa words, the first record of this type from the southern Bantu area. Charles Mylius is credited with the production in 1790 of a *Vocabulaire français et Maquoua* (Makua) of some 600 words. In 1804 Fr. Bernardo Maria de Cannecatim, an Italian Capuchin, published in Lisbon his *Diccionario da lingua Bunda*, and in 1805 his *Observações grammaticaes sobre a lingua Bunda*, both of which are considered to be linguistically inferior to the works produced by his seventeenth century predecessors. And with this we come to the end of the relatively meagre contributions of the eighteenth century, and also to the end of an era in Bantu linguistic studies which C. M. Doke has named 'The age of Brusciotto'.

## 2. FOCUS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

2.1 Most of the African linguistic work of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was done by Roman Catholic missionaries, particularly of the Jesuit and Capuchin Orders, and was characterized by what has been termed a 'mediaeval Latin approach' to the analysis and description of the languages. While the Roman Catholic missionaries have continued their activities in this field, and have made many more invaluable contributions, the nineteenth century saw the advent of less procrustean linguistic methods, and of the new Protestant missionary era which stimulated production of most of the work done since 1830. Except for a sharp increase in the number of reports from and vocabularies collected by travellers, virtually no linguistic studies were produced during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. But then commenced a period of intensive study and production which continued for a hundred years, and during which nearly two thousand items were added to the inventory of African linguistic publications. Up to this stage in our survey we have been able to list almost all of the known contributions, and this seemed desirable in order to give an adequate picture of the nature and distribution of the earliest explorations in this vast field. Henceforth however, it will be necessary to restrict our discussion to the more significant publications, developments and trends in various areas.