

ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE LANGUAGES
OF ABESSINIA AND THE NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES.

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A consideration of the Report on the Languages of Africa, made by Dr Latham to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, at the Meeting at Oxford in 1847,* has led me to believe that an acceptable addition to that Report will be afforded by the accompanying map, showing the approximate geographical limits of the several classes of languages spoken in Abessinia and the neighbouring countries, according to that philologist's provisional classification of them.

These languages are made by Dr Latham to consist of the following groups or classes:—

- XIV. The Nubian.
- XV. The Fátsoḳl (Fazoglo).
- XVI. The Bishárye or Bidja (Beja).
- XVII. The Ethiopic.
- XVIII. The Agau (Agow).
- XIX. The Galla.
- XX. The Gongga.
- XXI. The Shánkala.
- XXII. The Dalla.
- XXIII. The Takue (or Bodje,) and Bárea.

Upon each of these classes I propose to make a few brief remarks, in explanation of the map.

XIV *The Nubian Class.* These languages belong to countries which are partially shown, merely for the purpose of defining the limits of those which are subsequently enumerated. They are themselves too remote from Abessinia Proper, to come within the scope of the present observations.

XV. *The Fátsoḳl Languages.* In this class Dr Latham places only the languages of Fátsoḳl and Kamánil. From

* See *Report of the Seventeenth Meeting at Oxford, 1847*, p. 154, *et seq.*

the immediate contiguity of the Gíndjar of Abu-Ramla and El 'Atish,* I would suggest the probability that this language belongs to the same class. In the second volume of the Proceedings of the Philological Society,† I have given forty-two words of the Gíndjar tongue. Of these the greater number are evidently a corrupt Arabic; but the following eleven words may be regarded as *native* expressions:—

earth	<i>wota.</i>	mouth	<i>shamák.</i>
grass	<i>gesh.</i>	nose	<i>náhhera.</i>
mountain	<i>gállah.</i>	bread	<i>kissera.</i>
boy	<i>djénna.</i>	good	<i>sámmi.</i>
leg	<i>kuráh.</i>	bad	<i>fássil.</i>
foot	<i>káfat kurái.</i>		

XVI. *The Bishárye or Bidja (Beja) Language.* The probable affinities of this tongue are stated by Dr Latham, on the authority of Dr Lepsius, to be with the Coptic; but, at the same time, the language of Suákin, which is classed with it, is said to have affinities with the Argóbba of Abessinia. As this latter dialect belongs to the Ethiopic Class (XVII.), it would seem that the Suákin language ought to be ranged under the same head.

XVII. *The Ethiopic Class of Languages.* This class comprehends the Tigrè, Arkíko, Amhára, Argóbba, Hárrargie (Hurrur) or Adhári, Gurágie, and Gáfat. I cannot agree to Dr Latham's proposition, in accordance with the opinion generally entertained, that these languages are the original ones of Abessinia. I can scarcely admit them to be those of the greater part of the country. On the contrary, I look upon the Agau languages (XVIII.) as holding a higher rank in the former respect, and probably in the latter likewise. The Geez, which is the ancient language of Tigrè,—the most north-easterly province next the coast,—is that of the religion and literature of the country; and, when Tigrè was dominant, it was that of the court. The Amharic, which is spoken in the south-east, is that of the present dominant race, and is used by the court, the army, and the merchants. It is that, too, with which alone travellers, who penetrate

* See *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xiv. p. 9.

† P. 95.

into Abessinia beyond Tigrè, have ordinarily occasion to become familiar. But the Agau, in its various dialects, is the language of the *people*; in some provinces almost exclusively, and in others, where it has been superseded by the language of the dominant race, it still exists among the lowest classes; some of which, such as the Zaláns, Kamáunts, Wáitos, &c., may, from their entire separation from the other races, be looked on in the light of *castes*.

From the affinity of the Geez, Amharic, and cognate dialects, to the Arabic, it is reasonable to consider that they were introduced by conquerors or settlers from the opposite shores of the Red Sea. The traditions of the country are decidedly in favour of such an origin.

XVIII. *The Agau Languages.* The remarks made on the preceding class, render any additional ones unnecessary here.

XIX. *The Galla Class of Languages.* These are spoken by other intrusive people from the south, who have surrounded, and in part overrun Abessinia at a comparatively recent period. Their advance, which has been great and is still going on, is not so apparent as it might be, owing to the fact that, in many cases, the Gallas have adopted the language of the people whose place they have usurped. The Galla element is, however, fast becoming the predominant one in Abessinia. At the present day almost every principal ruler throughout the empire is, in the male line, of Galla extraction.

XX. *The Gongga Class of Languages.* To the languages and dialects of this class already furnished by myself,* one or two will probably have to be added from the vocabularies which M. d'Abbadie informs us he has collected. It is, however, expedient to defer the consideration of these additions, till after Dr Latham's list has been gone through.

XXI. *The Shánkala Language.* Dr Latham identifies the language of Dabanja of the Mithridates with my Shánkala of Agaumider. The chief place of the province of Agaumider is *Bándja*,† which name is apparently identical with Dabanja (= Dar-Bándja). The inhabitants of this province say that it was formerly inhabited by the Shánkalas, whom

* *Proceedings of the Philological Society*, vol. ii. pp. 97-107.

† See *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xiv. p. 7.

they subdued and drove westwards into the valleys of the Blue River and its tributary streams.* Dr Latham suggests the restriction of the name of *Shánkåla* to the negroes of the low country bordering on Agaumider, to the exclusion of those of the valley of the *Tåkkåzie*. A recent traveller, M. Russegger, informs us,† that one of the tribes of the valley of the Blue River is called *Shangollo*, and he protests against the general application of the name *Shangollo* or *Shánkåla* to all the black people inhabiting the low lands surrounding Abessinia to the west and north. Whatever may be the derivation of the word, it is certain that among the Abessinians it has become an appellative, signifying “ negro ;” and hence it is applied by them, though as it would seem improperly, to the black people of the north of Abessinia—the “ *Shánkålas* of the *Tåkkåzie*”—who do not at present appear to have any affinity with the true *Shánkålas* of the south-west.

It has yet to be ascertained whether the tongue of these true *Shánkålas* of Agaumider is cognate with the languages of Class XV., with which it is conterminous.

XXII. *The Dalla Language* is that of the “ *Shánkålas* of the *Tåkkåzie*,” above referred to.

XXIII. *The Takue (or Boje) and Bárea*. These languages are stated by Dr Latham to have affinities equally with the *Dalla* (XXII.) and with the *Agau* (XVIII.). This might be inferred from the position of the country in which they are spoken. But this alleged affinity with the *Agau* tongue suggests the probability, that, when we shall have acquired a more intimate knowledge of the languages and dialects of the tribes skirting Abessinia to the north and west,—the *Shánkålas* of Agaumider, the *Dalla*, and the *Takue*,—we shall find these people to be, all of them, offsets from the aboriginal race of Abessinia, the *Agaus*, who have retired from the high tableland into the valleys of the rivers, before the advances of intruders of the Ethiopic class.

In the Amharic language, the word *Bárea* means “ slave ;” that is to say, a “ *Shánkåla*,” *negro*, or black slave—since, in

* *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* vol. xiv. p. 10.

† *Reise in Europa, Asien und Afrika*, vol. ii part 2, p. 231.

the estimation of the Abessinians, the negroes, as the alleged descendants of Ham, are alone doomed to slavery. It seems, therefore, that "Bárea" is only another name for the Dalla negroes or "*Shánkãlas* of the Tãkkãzie."

In terminating his list of the languages of Abessinia, Dr Latham inquires, "Is it exhaustive?" and he refers to a number of vocabularies mentioned by M. d'Abbadie in the *Athenæum* of April 12, 1845,* as having been collected by him during his residence in that country. As even now we possess nothing more of these vocabularies than their *names*, we must be content to investigate them from the names alone. These are, however, quite sufficient to show, that, when the vocabularies themselves are given to the public, they are likely to present but little novelty, whatever value they may, and doubtless do, otherwise possess.

The languages to which M. d'Abbadie's vocabularies relate are stated to be as follows:—

A. AGAU (AGOW) LANGUAGES.

1. The Khamtiña (Khamtinga), "spoken by the *Khamta* or Agaus of Way or *Wag*." This is manifestly my *Waag*-Agau or *Hhámara*,—the Agow of Bruce and Salt. (Latham, XVIII. 1, 2, 3.)

2. The Auña (Awnga), "spoken by the *Awawa*, or Agaws bordering on Little Damot."† This, again, is my *Aghaghá*, or Agau of Agaumider, of which a vocabulary is also given by Bruce. (XVIII. 6, 7.)

3. The Hwarasa, "spoken in Kwara or Hwara, and by the *Falasha* (Falocha) of Gallagar, Kayla, and of the Awawa;" which is the *Falásha* of Bruce and myself. (XVIII. 4, 5.)

M. d'Abbadie adds, that "short vocabularies show that the Agau languages are closely allied to the Gabi, spoken by the Bileu (probably the Blemmyi of the Romans), and to the languages of Atala in Simen [Sámien], of Alafa and of Kwara, or Hwara;" and he alludes also to the "*kindred* dialect of the Gimant [Kãmáunts]." All this is in conformity with

* No. 911, pp. 359, 360.

† By "Little Damot," M. d'Abbadie means the "Damot" of the maps.

my views as to the aboriginal character of the Agau class of languages, and of their great extension throughout Abessinia,* which has already been adverted to under No. XVII.

B. THE GALLA CLASS, which consists of—

1. The Afar Proper, “spoken by the *Adál*, Taltal, Talfen, &c. ;” which is no other than the *Adál*, or Dankáli (*plur.* Danákil) of modern travellers in Abessinia (Latham, XIX. B. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8).

2. The *Saho*, “spoken by the Hazaorta and Toroua,” is, in like manner, the language of the Shihos, or *Shohos*, who dwell between Massówah and the high land of Tigre (XIX. B. 3, 4).

3. The Ilmorma, spoken “by the Orme or Oromo, *better known under the name of Galla.*” Of course, this is the widely-spread *Galla* tongue, with which we have now become so well acquainted, through the labours of Krapf and Tutschek (XIX. A.).

4. “The Szomaliód, spoken by the *Szomal*,” which again is merely the language of the equally well known Somaulis or Somális (XIX. C.), of which name the Arabic plural is *Somál*.

The Tufte (Toufte) is stated by M. d’Abbadie to be “spoken by a small nation near the Tambáro, and issued, according to their own traditions, from the same ancestors as the Orme,” *i. e.* the Gallas. Of this language, the traveller’s collection consists of *ten* words, which, as he himself observes, “is only better than nothing at all.” I would add, that such a number of words is scarcely sufficient to enable us to class this language, which, even in spite of the tradition alluded to, I am inclined to place among those of the *Gonga* class (XX.), by which it is geographically surrounded.

My opinion is the same with respect to the neighbouring language of Tambáro, which M. d’Abbadie considers to be “a member of the Amhára family” (XVII.), but which I would equally place in the *Gonga* class (XX.).

In support of this opinion as to both these languages of Tufte and Tambáro, I may cite the authority of Dr Krapf, as

* These opinions were first expressed by me in *A Statement of Facts relative to the Transactions between the Writer and the late British Political Mission to the Court of Shoa*, p. 13, n.

repeated by Major Harris,* that the language of Kaffa "is common to Gobo, *Tufftee*, and *Dumbaro*." This latter mode of spelling the name, which, correctly pronounced, is *T'am-báro* or *Tsambáro*, arises from the habit so common among the natives of Upper Germany, of confounding the sounds of the hard and soft consonants.†

C. THE GONGA GROUP, styled by M. d'Abbadie "the *Chamitic* languages of Great Damot." These consist of—

1. The Sidama.
2. The Daurua (Dawrooa).
3. The Yamma or Yángara.
4. The Shay.

Dr Latham has already adverted to the fact that the first three of these languages are identical with those of Kaffa, Worátta, and Yángaro, of which vocabularies have been given by me in the Proceedings of the Philological Society. Sidama is the name by which Kaffa is known to the Gallas;‡ Dáwaro (Dawrua) is either the same with, or a part of, the country of Worátta;§ and Yamma is, as M. d'Abbadie himself shows, the same as Yángara, that is to say, my Yángaro or Djándjaro, which is the Gingiro of the maps. As to that traveller's Shay, which he describes as "a language spoken by the Gimira, Gamaru (Gamarou), or Gamru," and which, he says, "a collection of 400 words induces him to place side by side with the Sidama," this tongue seems, from another statement of the same traveller, to be merely a *dialect* of the language of Kaffa, if it be not absolutely identical with it. In speaking of the country of Kaffa, he says, "Kaffa est le nom des Gallas, les Abyssins disent Sidama, *et les indigènes appellent leur pays Gomara*."|| In this statement there is, how-

* *Highlands of Æthiopia*, vol. iii. p. 6.

† A farther proof that the language of Tambáro belongs to the Gongga class is afforded by M. d'Abbadie himself, who gives [*Athenæum*, No. 1042] the word *moon* as being *agane* in the language of Kaffa, *agina* in Dawro, whether of Kullo, Gobo, or Wallaytza, and *agarenta* in Tambáro. My vocabularies have *agino* in Kaffa, and *agena* in Worátta and Wolaitra.—27th September 1849.

‡ *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xiii. p. 261.

§ *Ibid.*, map.

|| *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Paris*, 2d Series, vol. xviii. p. 355.

ever, an error: it is the Abessinians who say Kaffa, and the Gallas who say Sidáma.

M. d'Abbadie further mentions the Nao language as appearing to be "a mere dialect of the Shay," and that of Hadiya-Wanbe as being "in close contact with the Dawrua tongue." I do not possess the means of determining the precise locality in which the former of these dialects is spoken, but it is manifestly in the immediate vicinity of Kaffa, if, indeed, it does not form a portion of that country. Hadiya is the *Hadea* of the maps, and it lies to the south-west of Gurágie,* and to the north-east of the other countries in which the cognate languages of the Gongga class are spoken.

M. d'Abbadie remarks, that "the Gongga language spoken on both sides of the Abai, is closely allied to the Sidáma." This has already been demonstrated by my published lists,† which comprise a copious vocabulary of the Gongga tongue of Shínasha, a district situate in the valley of the Abai, to the south of Damot;‡ and it is on account of the affinity which all the languages comprised in this class have to one another, that I have attributed to them the generic denomination of *Gongga*. The irruption of the Gallas has much contracted the limits within which the languages of this class are spoken. Ludolf informs us,§ that the Gongga tongue was formerly that of Enárea, and he cites one word, *donzo*, as meaning "lord," or "master," which corresponds with the *dondjo* (Gonga of Shínasha) and *dono* (Kaffa) of my vocabularies.

D. THE BIDJA LANGUAGE spoken at Suákin, with respect to which it is sufficient to refer to the remarks already made on Dr Latham's Class, XVI.

E. SEVERAL NEGRO LANGUAGES, of which M. d'Abbadie says he has collected trifling vocabularies, remain "unplaced" by Dr Latham. They are as follows:—

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|-------------------|-----------|
| 1. Gwinza. | 4. Yambo. |
| 2. Suro (Souro). | 5. Gamo. |
| 3. Dokko (Dokko). | 6. Bárea. |

To which has to be added, (7.) The Kónfal.

* See *Journ. Roy. Geogr. Soc.*, vol. xvii. p. 60, n.

† *Proceedings of the Philological Society*, vol. ii. pp. 97-107.

‡ *Journ. Roy. Geogr. Soc.*, vol. xiv. p. 39. § *Hist. Æthiop.*, lib. i. cap. 15.

Respecting the Gwinza and Gamo, I am not able to say anything. But the others may be thus classed:—

The Suro and Doko are two dark-coloured if not absolutely negro people, dwelling in the vicinity of Kaffa.* Of the country of Suro, I have already said, in another place,† that it “is two days’ journey to the west of Bonga, and is subject to Kaffa. The country is both highland and valley, but the people are all *Shánkalas* or negroes. The men go naked, and the women wear only a small apron. The king of the country alone is clothed. They are pagans. They take out two of the lower front teeth, and cut a hole in the lower lip, into which they insert a wooden plug. They also pierce the gristle of the ear for the insertion of grass.”‡ It can scarcely be

* *Journ. Roy. Geogr. Soc.*, vol. xiii. pp. 264, 265.

† *Ibid.*

‡ The country of these Suro negroes was, at the same time, described by ‘Omar ibn Nedjât, the intelligent Abessinian merchant from whom I obtained the above information respecting them, as lying in the valley of the river Gódjeb, at a short distance to the west of Kaffa. (See his map, in *Journ. Roy. Geogr. Soc.*, vol. xvii. part i.).

M. Ferdinand Werne, who accompanied the second Egyptian expedition up the White River, has recently published an account of his voyage (*Expedition zur Entdeckung der Quellen des Weissen Nil*, Berlin, 1848), in various parts of which similar customs are described as prevailing among the black inhabitants of the valley of that river. The traveller states, that, as far south as Bari, a country in the fourth parallel of north latitude, all the natives are in the habit of extracting several of the incisors, both of the upper and of the lower jaw, “in order that they may not resemble beasts of prey” (p. 188); and that they also “pierce the cartilage of the ear all round, and, in the absence of beads or other ornaments, they insert in the orifices small pieces of wood” (p. 428). The natives of Bari alone form an exception, being “distinguished” (says M. Werne) “from all the people we have hitherto seen, by the circumstance, that they do not pierce the ears for the insertion of ornaments; and also, that they are not tattooed” (p. 293); and higher up the river than Bari, which country was the extreme point reached by the expedition, the natives are said to “keep in all their teeth” (p. 325).

From a comparison of these particulars, the conclusion may fairly be drawn, that the Suro negroes are of the same race as the inhabitants of the valley of the White River *below Bari*, but not as those *above* that country; and as they occupy the valley of the Gódjeb, which is now known to be an affluent of the Nile; and as there is no important stream joining the White River from the east *below Bari*, except the Sobát, Téli, or River of Habesh; it results that this latter river is the lower course of the Gódjeb. This conclusion is, of course, quite independent of all other arguments already adduced by me in support of the same position. See *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*,

doubted that they are of cognate origin with the negro inhabitants of the valley of the White River, and that, consequently, their language belongs to the Nubian class (XIV.)

As regards the Dokos, I believe I was the first, in 1841, to make public mention of these people,* from information obtained by Dr Krapf and myself from a slave of the king of Shoa, named Dilbo; but the particulars then furnished were far from going to the extent of those which have since been given by Dr Krapf, and after him by Major Harris. Ethnologists will remember the marvellous stories related respecting these Dokos, who are described as a nation of pigmies, of scarcely human character, “not taller than boys nine or ten years of age, and never exceeding that height, even in the most advanced age,” and who are said to be employed as domestic servants by the people of Kaffa. It is sufficient to refer to Dr Prichard’s *Natural History of Man*,† for Dr Krapf’s Report on this subject, which was originally published in the *Monatsberichte* of the Geographical Society of Berlin.‡

I must here repeat the expression of the doubts which I entertained from the outset,§ on many of the points thus related by Dilbo. When questioned by Dr Krapf and myself, his statements were such as to entitle him to full credit; and I am afraid that he was subsequently induced to enter into these fanciful and exaggerated details, by a feeling not uncommon among uneducated persons, when *pressed* to furnish information, that the more wonderful they make their story, the greater praise they will obtain; and probably, also, the greater reward.

The description given by M. d’Abbadie of the Dokos, is remarkably at variance with that furnished by Dilbo to Dr Krapf. The former traveller says,—“My Sidama interpreter was a Dokko, freed by his master’s death. This man remained nearly two years with me, and was eighteen centimètres

vol. xvii. p. 44, *et seq.*; *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Paris*, 3d Series, vol. viii. p. 356, *et seq.*; *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal*, vol. xlv. p. 238, *et seq.*—22d November 1848.

* See *Friend of Africa* (October 1841), vol. i. p. 187; *Journ. Roy. Geogr. Soc.*, vol. xii. p. 87; vol. xiii. p. 265, *et seq.*

† 2d Edit., p. 553, *et seq.*

‡ Vol. iv. p. 181, *et seq.*

§ See *Literary Gazette* of Dec. 30, 1843, No. 1406.

|| *Athenæum*, of March 8, 1845, No. 906, p. 243.

[seven English inches] shorter than myself. I have seen three other Dokko, all black-like negroes, but with a fine facial angle like the Mozambique natives, and rather small, —what we call *trapu* in France, but nothing like pigmies. .

. . Their forms are the most perfect *mezzo-termine* between Ethiopians and negroes. They use, according to their own account, the *Sorghum vulgare* to make bread, and have a name (elmos), for bread." In another place,* the same traveller describes the Dokos as being " *très gros et bien musclés, absolument comme les Sawahily.*"

It is necessary to explain, that the word *Doko* is not to be regarded as the proper name of any particular people. In the Galla language it is an appellative, signifying " ignorant," " stupid;" and it appears to be used in the same indefinite sense as our expression " savage."

The evident mixing up of *monkeys* in the description given of these Dokos or savages, may be accounted for in the same way, probably, as a statement made in Sir Gardner Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*,† respecting the employment of those animals as domestic servants in Djimma, a country to the south of Abessinia, situated between Enárea and Kaffa. Djimma is also adjoining to Yángaro which latter country, as I have already mentioned, is called Djándjaro by the Gallas. In the wars which are continually taking place between Djimma and Yángaro, many natives of the latter country are made prisoners, some of whom are retained in domestic slavery, while others are sold into captivity. Hence, the number of Yángaro or Djándjaro slaves that are met with in the markets of Abessinia and the Red Sea. But in Abessinia, the name Djándjaro has, partly through ignorance and partly by way of ridicule, been changed into *Zéndjero*, which word in the Amharic language means " Monkey." If, then, in the enunciation of what is unquestionably a fact, it were stated that the people of Djimma and Kaffa are waited on by Djándjaro servants, or, as it would be repeated in Amharic, by *Zéndjero* servants; nothing would be more natural among an ignorant and marvel-loving people, than to imagine these " *Zéndjero*" to be *monkey* servants.

* *Bulletin*, 2d Series, vol. xix. p. 439.

† Vol. ii. p. 151.

I was once gravely informed by an Abessinian slave-merchant of the market of Baso in Godjam, that beyond Kaffa there is a country, the male inhabitants of which are all dogs, and the females are women ; and that the dogs go out to tend the cattle, while the women occupy themselves with domestic affairs. It was of little avail to inquire how it came to pass that the progeny of this strange union should be canine on the male side, and human on the female. *That* my informant did not know : the other he did know ; though he honestly admitted that he had not been so far as to have seen it himself. This story I consider to have originated in the fact, that beyond Kaffa there is truly a “ Dog ” country, just as, adjoining to Djimma there is a “ Monkey ” country ; that is to say, in Woráttá there is a place or district named *Ushá*,* which word in Amharic means “ dog,” in the same way that *Zéndjero* means “ monkey.” As is usual in such cases, the story was afterwards invented to account for the name.†

* See my map in *Journ. Roy. Geogr. Soc.*, vol. xiii.

† According to M. Werne (*Expedition zur Entdeckung der Quellen des Weissen Nil*, p. 325), a fable prevails among the natives of the valley of the White River, respecting a race of cannibals, *having heads like dogs and going on all-fours*, who are said to inhabit the mountains of Logayâ, to the east of Bari. The following reasonable explanation of this monstrous story was, however, given to that traveller by Lákono, the intelligent king of the giant race of Bari. He stated that, “ in reality, these wicked people have heads like those of other human beings ; only *they keep in all their teeth*. [It has been remarked (p. 9, *note*) that the negro inhabitants of the valley of the Nile extract the incisors, in order that they may not resemble wild beasts] ; and when they come to eat up others, *they creep in on all-fours*.” On this M. Werne himself remarks, that “ most likely the simple meaning of this is, that these alleged cannibals do not engage in open war with their neighbours, but sneak in among them like dogs, and carry away individuals, whom *perhaps* they may devour.”

For myself, I question much the existence of cannibalism among these mountaineers, whom the mere fact of their not extracting their teeth proves to be of less barbarous habits than the natives of the low country.

From the earliest times cannibalism has been said to prevail among the inhabitants of Africa. It is only necessary to allude to the *Αΐθίοπες ἀνδρωποράγοι* of Ptolemy, and to the *Nyam-Nyam*, *Lem-Lem*, *Dum-a-Dum*, &c., of the Arabian geographers and of the modern Arabs. But stories of this kind require indisputable evidence to establish their truth ; and there is no doubt that they often originate in ignorance, if not in interested motives, on the part of their promulgators.

Of the language of these Dokos M. d'Abbadie states that he possesses only *twenty-nine* words ; which is rather surprising, when we consider that he says he had one of these people by him as an interpreter for nearly two years. Its affinity with the language of Woráttá is, however, asserted by that traveller.* This will place it in the Gongá class, which is quite in accordance with its geographical position. The only word of the language cited by M. d'Abbadie is *elmos*, signifying “ bread ;” which expression, however, I cannot connect with any word in my vocabularies. Dr Krapf states,† that “ the language of the Dokos is a kind of murmuring, which is understood by no one but themselves and their hunters.” But he also mentions, that

Mr Robertson, in his *Notes on Africa* (London, 1819), pp. 353–354, when treating of the natives of the south bank of the river Congo, says : “ The opinion that these, or any other people on this [the west] coast, are Anthropophagi, is ridiculous. One of the traders at Bonny did, indeed, once tell me so plausible a story concerning the Quas eating those who fell into their power, that I was half inclined to believe him. But subsequent inquiry convinced me that there was no truth whatever in it. . . . The Portuguese having taken so much trouble to impress other nations with the dreadful effects of man-eating, *they, of course, consider this country of some value* ; but from their not having been devoured themselves, it seems other animal food is plentiful ; or, perhaps, the aboriginal inhabitants think the Portuguese rather coarse meat, and like cattle or fish better.”

A similar tale of cannibalism is related in Shoa, and for a somewhat similar reason. The wilderness of Gédém, a province in the north of that kingdom, which I visited in April 1841, is “ the place of refuge for all the fugitives and bad characters of Shoa” (*Journ. Roy. Geogr. Soc.*, vol. xii. p. 92). The Dankáli slave-merchants trading between Shoa and the coast take care to impress on the minds of their slaves that the people of Gédém are cannibals, *who will be sure to eat them up if they run away*. Hence, the poor children are content to remain with their (often cruel) masters, rather than run the chance of being devoured by the wicked man-eaters of Gédém !

To shew the little value, generally, of these stories of the existence of cannibalism among unknown nations, I may cite, further, the following passage from the interesting *Notes sur les Mœurs, Coutumes et Traditions des Amaboua* of M. Eugène de Froberville, published in the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, 3d Ser., vol. viii. p. 324 :—“ Les traditions les plus effrayantes sont répandues par toute l'Afrique orientale touchant le sort des esclaves transportés dans le pays des blancs. Mes informateurs m'ont unanimement déclaré que l'on croyait généralement que les blancs mangeaient les esclaves qu'ils viennent chercher en Afrique.”—Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur !—22d November 1848.

* *Bulletin*, 2d Ser., vol. xix. p. 439.

† Prichard, *Natural History of Man*, p. 556.

they address the Supreme Being by crying, "Yer! Yer!" Now *Yero*, in the Kaffa language, means "God;" so that we have here a further proof that the language of these Dokos belongs to the Gongga class.

In commenting, on a former occasion, on a few words given by Dr Krapf, apparently from the mouth of Dilbo, as specimens of the language of Kaffa, I remarked,* that "they do not altogether agree with *my* Kaffa words, which I obtained from persons who were most assuredly natives of Bonga, the capital of that country. From Dilbo's physical appearance and other circumstances, I have reason to believe that he was a native, not of Kaffa itself, but of some neighbouring country, which will account for the difference of language." I may now add, that the description given by M. d'Abbadie of the physical character of the Dokos corresponds so closely with that of Dilbo, that I am inclined to think he was himself one of those savages. Should this really be the case, the words inserted between brackets in my Kaffa vocabulary will most probably belong to some Doko dialect.

The next of M. d'Abbadie's unplaced languages is that of *Yambo*, which is the name given by that traveller to the negro inhabitants of certain islands formed by the Baħr el Abyaḍ, or the direct stream of the Nile. These islands are placed by him as high up the stream as about 6° N. lat.; but, as has been shown by me in a communication recently made to the Geographical Society of Paris,† their true position is in about 9° N. lat., below the confluence of the Sobāt or River of Habesh. Thus, these Yambos appear to be Denka negroes, and their language will consequently belong to the Nubian class (XIV.).

The *Bárea* is said by M. d'Abbadie to be "spoken by the semi-negroes near the Tākkaḗie;" that is to say, the "Shánkałas" of that river; so that this language is identical with either the Bárea of Salt (XXIII.), or with the Dalla (XXII.)

And lastly, we have the *Kōnfał*, who are stated to "live between Kwara and the Awawa"—that is to say, the Agha-

* *Proceedings of the Philological Society*, vol. ii. p. 94, n.

† *Bulletin*, 3d Ser., vol. viii. p. 356, *et seq.*

ghá or Agaús of Agaumider. Of this language M. d'Abbadie says, that he has "no sample beyond the first ten numbers, which are partly Gíis;" and he adds that "the all-but-unknown Kónfal tribes are the most perfect medium between the straight-nosed Ethiopian and the grovelling negro." But the position thus attributed to the Kónfal corresponds precisely with that of the black inhabitants of Gíndjar already mentioned; and when M. d'Abbadie asserts that their numerals are partly Geez, *i. e.*, Ethiopic, he should rather have said *Arabic*; since the fact is beyond dispute that the language of Gíndjar is, in great part, a corrupt Arabic, and it is not less a fact that the Ethiopic and Arabic numerals are almost identical.

The conclusion to be drawn from this investigation is, that Dr Latham's list, whatever modifications increased information may eventually give occasion to introduce into its arrangement, is, in fact, exhaustive of the languages of Abessinia and the countries immediately adjoining.

The map in which the results thus arrived at have been embodied, makes no pretensions to strict accuracy in the limits that are assigned in it to the several classes of languages. Our materials are still too imperfect to admit of precision in this respect. The only merit that this map can lay claim to, is that of affording a general *coup-d'œil* of the geographical distribution of the various languages spoken in that portion of Africa which has more immediately fallen within my cognizance; and thus of obviating, so far as Abessinia and the neighbouring countries are concerned, the difficulty which, as the author of the Report justly complains, so frequently arises from the absence of any geographical notice respecting the districts within which a particular language is spoken.

LONDON, 31st May 1848.

Note by Dr R. G. Latham, Secretary.—In XVII., Dr Beke wrote, that he "cannot agree with Dr Latham's proposition, in accordance with the opinion generally entertained, that

these languages are the original ones of Abessinia. I scarcely admit them to be those of the greater part of the country. On the contrary, I look upon the Agau languages," &c. My statements were, that the "Ethiopic languages are the languages of the greatest part of the country, and they are the original languages of it." The first was certainly made on imperfect geographical data. The second is only true in opposition to the encroaching Galla dialects. I admit, therefore, the justice of Dr Beke's exception in favour of the comparatively aboriginal character of the Agau.

March 23, 1850.