

IM001 Musa Daggash

Aug 1989, his home Gombari ward, interviewers me, Alaminu in his sitting room L = Allamin, M = Daggash

1.1 Brief account of how Musa Daggash interprets Nigerian Arabic history, 0- 8:11

1.2 Arabs and intermarriage, marriage in former times, 11:23-13:44 and 39:40 – 40:38

1.3 How Musa Daggash became a high-ranking Nigerian civil servant, 25:03-32:45

1.4 Circumcision, 41:51-43:53

1.1 Brief account of how Musa Daggash interprets Nigerian Arabic history¹ (0- 8.11)

<M> humma al ʔarab doola, yo, abbaahaatna juduudna kan qanno kan alkallamo kalaam hana, hana t tariix, kunni yoom buguulu, tuunis al xadəra, bilkallamo kalaam hana tuunis al xadəra, kan bəqanno fi qineehəm kula, kan fi dalaalhum kulla, buguulu tuunis al xadəra, al kalaam da misil, ayit wágət kulla baguulu bukuřbu úsum hana tuunis al xadəra.’ (0.44)

‘Those Arabs, so, our fathers, our ancestors², when they would sing they would speak about history, and they’d always talk about “green Tunis”, about “green Tunis”, when they sang their songs, and in their dances, they’d say ‘green Tunis’. They’d always talk about the name “green Tunis”.’

<I> maʔaanaaha šunu

‘What did that mean?’ (0.44)

<M> tunis, xadəra, **wel the ingliš word griin, veld**, yowwá, tuunis al xadəra, yo abbaahaatəna buguulu haw, aniina kalaam al gaaló leena da, humma jo bikinne ʔalaata, al awwalaaniyye, jo?, misil, arəbamiya sana ke, (1.14) doola buguulu loəm, bugo, jo hineen fi təraab bórnó, allammo be, siyaad ad daar, al gadiimín, búgo koyám, kalaam al arəb nusó?, amma kan al yoom kulla, šiifu al koyam, da, raakib foog jawaada, tuguul šaba yaal al arəb, ləbaasa, ləbaasa hana jawaada, kulla, šaba yaal al arəb, amma, kalaamhum kula al kalaam hana l arəb kulu nusó, dool al awwalaniin, (1.43)

‘Tunis, green, well, the English word “green, veld”, okay, “Green Tunis”. So our fathers would say, and us, what they would tell us is that they came from three places. The first one, came, like four hundred years ago or so. (1.14) That’s what they say about them. They came here to Borno and they joined up with the local indigenes, the old ones, and they became the Koyam. Arabic they forgot. However, up to today, look at the Koyam,³ riding on his horse, and you’d say he’s like an Arab guy, his clothes, the way his horse is bedecked, everything just like an Arab. However, they forgot their original Arabic. These were the first wave.’ (1.43)

<I> al koyaam buguulu juduudhum arab

‘Do the Koyam claim their ancestors were Arabs?’

¹ For an informative biography of Musa Daggash see Mukhtar, Yakubu, 2002. *Musa Daggash : the story of a Shuwa Arab Boy*. Ibadan: Heinemann.

² *Juduud-na* lit. ‘our grandfathers’ = ‘our ancestors’.

³ Today a Kanuri-speaking peoples, nomads, especially sheep and goat nomads.

<M> buguulu ke, haw kan šunú lehum ʔaadittum kula kan šiftuhum da, ille bi l aṛab waahid ya lyoom, doola alawwalaan, misil arbamiya sana ke, at taaniin, misil jo taḷaat miyaat, miteen haw xamsiin sana, (2.09) waahidiin búgo badawi, a doola, goolt al badawi da, fi l ʔaṛab, fi makka kulla aṛab bádu fi, a yamta jo hine le bórnú, borno gaal, la badawi, ye l yoom kulaa, usúmhum badawi gaait, haw šiifutum naas húmur, naas, índuhum šáʔar katiir, amma, núso kalaam al ʔaṛab, fišan búgo šaba borno humma kula, (2.40)

‘That’s what they say. And everything about them, their customs, if you see them, it’s the same as the Arabs up to today. These were the first, like 400 years ago. The second wave, was like 300 years ago or 250 years. (2.09) Some of them became “bedouins” (badawi), and each bedouin, is from the Arabs⁴ – even in Mecca you find Bedouins, and when they came to Borno, the Kanuri called them Bedouins, and up to today the name “Bedouin” has stayed. And you see reddish-skinned, with a lot of hair, but they’ve forgotten Arabic, because they’ve become like the Kanuri as well.’ (2.40)

<I> gaadiin ween

‘Where do you find them?’

<M> bəkaanhum da, gobió, haw min gubió da, ámiš weela le damasak, doola humma binaaduuhum badawi, dugut kulluhum humma kula dugut, haw an naas induhum ʔilim hana quraan bilheen fi, rijaalhum banaatəm nuswaan catta búguro l quraan, (3.02) ha doola binaaduuhum badawi, doola kula ʔaṛab dugóoni bígo borno humma kulla, yo ha taan aj jeyya t taalte di, hine abaahaatna aniina, jo misil miya haw xamsiin sana ke, be šeex al lamiimu doola jó jami, yamta joo, humma fallaata jo ákalo bərní gázárgumó, yawaaha, borno, mášo le le šeex al lamiin (3.30), fattašo maʔaawana minna, haw hu šeex allamiin kumaani, al ʔaṛab bas naasa, máša qaadi le l árab, šaalhum jaabhum, d’arado fallata, bórnó, lúgo magattum, hu šeex allamiin ja gáʔad fi kíkáwa, haw al ʔaṛab kan dahada baššo fi, gaado fook qašim ac caad, min qašim ac caad da be bagarhum towa kula jo, haw dahada hu allamiin gaal ad daar di catt taad’á lehum, (3.56) aataahim, ha doola ʔaṛab aniina, aniina abaahaatna aniina, ha doola kula mugaasama tineen, al ʔaṛab al gáado maʔ bórnó, humma misil bašiir, teeraab, laaminu doola búgo borno humma kula, al árab al ma gaado borno gaado barra, baggaariin, be bagarhum gaado kulla ašaba hana abaahaatna aniina, búgo kula arab,

‘Their area is Gubio, and from Gubio continue on to Damasak. These they call Bedouins, now all of them. And these people are very learned in the *Quran*. Their men, daughters, wives all of them study the *Quran* (3.02) and these are called Bedouins. These were all Arabs, then they as well became Kanuri. Then the third wave, was that of our own ancestors, something like 150 years ago, with Sheikh Al-Lamin’s⁵ people. When they came, the Fulani had conquered Birni Ngazargamo, so then the Kanuri, they went to Sheikh Al-Lamin (3.30) looking for aid from him, and this Sheikh Al-Lamin in turn - Arabs were his people – went there to the Arabs and he

⁴ Referring to the origin of each individual who identifies himself as a Badu in Borno.

⁵ Sheikh Al-Lamin Al-Kanemi. In the aftermath of the Fulani-led jihad in the first half of the nineteenth century the Kanem-Bornu empire of the Mai’s was overrun. Sheikh Al-Lamin Al-Kanemi, a Kanembu from (as the name suggests) Kanem in Chad, whose mother was an Arab came to the rescue of the empire. Though he defeated the Fulani, he eventually deposed the long-ruling Borno dynasty of the Mai’s, establishing his own family as rulers (Shehus) of Borno, a traditional headship which they maintain until today. Through his maternal affiliation he commanded the support of the “Shuwa” Arabs. See Brenner, Louis, 1973. *The Shehus of Kukawa; a history of the al-Kanemi dynasty of Bornu*. Oxford: OUP.

co-opted them and brought them with him and they drove out the Fulani. So the Kanuri got their land back, and Sheikh Al-Lamin came and stayed in Kukawa, and the Arabs spread out⁶ and stayed around Lake Chad and they are there until today with their cattle and so Sheikh Al-Lamin said that all of this region was theirs and he gave it to them. (3.56) And these are our own ancestors and they are divided into two parts. The Arabs who stayed with the Kanuri, they are like Bashir, Tirab, Laminu,⁷ they became Kanuri. Then the Arabs who didn't stay with the Kanuri, away from them, cattle nomads, they stayed with their cattle, like our own ancestors, and they remained Arabs.'

<I> ween (4.26)

'Where are they?' (4.26)

<M> fook qašim ac caad, yowa fook qášim ac caad, yooha gadé kulla an naas waahadiin binaaduuhum, humma kulla ʔarab bas bəguulu kan našattum, buguulu humma arab, amma, salaamaat, doola kumaane, fi l anum, (4.40) maa fallaata, bilkallamo kalaam fallaata, d'abiiye hiil fallaata, haw kullu, amma kula yaa, alyoom kula bilkallamo kalaam wa al árab, wa amma kalaam al arab misil, luquttum gaasiye ma tinsámi kula, ille kan ille kan beenaattum humma ke, yowá ha dool al ʔarab hineen hineen al maxiib, təraab damáturú, təraab bani šEEK, doola bənaaduuhum as səraajiiye, humma kulla d'awwalo ma borno, (5.06) haw lisaanhum luquttun catt bígat, nušša catta borno, yowa amma humma l árab humma, misil, minšaggiin tineen ke, dool al zúrug bənaaduuhum salaamaat, al humma bənaaduuhum qawaalme, haw kunni, al qawaalme kumaane tumfaar jamaaʔa, (5.24) haw as salaamaat kulla tumfaar jamaaʔa, amma ille kabiir misil, humma as salamaat kulla naas húmur fí, amma jamaaʔattum ke buguulu naas zuruk bas, haw al qawaalme kula naas zuruk kula fi amma katiir minhum kula húmur, dugut wilaat himeed, humma mungassamiin tineen, wilaat himeed al hamra, binaaduuhum wilaad al himeed al hamra, haw doola kan binaaduuhum, wilaad himeed az zerga, haw az zerga binaaduuhum bułwa, be ísimhum, šik, ha al bulwa di dugut fi fi təraab mafá (5.58), təraab bama, doola wilaat himeed az zerga, binaaduuhum bułwa, wilaad himeed al hamra da, doola fu ngumaati hineen min jaay, bakaan maasu haw, dongo dool binaaduuhum, binaadu raašsum, (6.13) humma wilaad himeed al hamra, yawa da wa da xabur, aš šuyul maktuub mafi, doola abahaatna bəxallu hu bixabbəru dool doola bəxabbəru dool ke yamta wašalna aniina, amma al yoom keda, kalaam al árab catt tilif, nušša catta kalaam borno, aw ana be, simiit waahid, fi yunaytod nešən, yamta mandétəd teritoris (6.40), aa təraab hana díkwa, be hana múubí, be hana, gembú, yamta kuure joman, humma bumulku yamta wára al hařb al awwalaaniyye, fəransa be ingliš gassamó, haw wáqət, budowwru busowwu indipendens, yawa yunaytit nešn arsaló naas waadiin, caman hana al komiti daaka da, binaadú, muhammad ar rašdi, min irak (7.14), min irak ja hineen haw gaal leí, aniina benilkallam kalaam al ʔarab šaba da bas, kalaam al irak al arabi, ahawán min le, le đaaní ana ahawán min as sawdiyya, kalaam al buguulu bilkallamo leyí catt basəmáaʔ, (7.29) mi wal mi catt, amma, mi d'awaali ke, amma jamaa kula binikallam jamii misil ana be axaayaaní ke bas, amma soodiyya

⁶ *Bašša* 'spread out, settled around = *šatta*

⁷ Arabs who enjoyed important offices with Al-Kanemi.

The construction, *humma misil bašir, teeraab, laaminu doola búgo borno* uses a generic use of the MPL demonstrative *doola* not as a deictic but rather to indicate that what appears on the list are cited as individuals but are representatives of a type, namely, those Arabs who were integrated administratively and, eventually, ethnically, into the Borno government and Kanuri people. The construction corresponds in Kanuri to the noun suffix –so, a similar type marker.

ma bagdar balkallam misil ?iraak, basma? al iraaak maalá, ha hu da xabbərni gaal, fi, jibna kalaam úsum hana šuwa fi, ha gaal leyí, fi l yemin, aa tumfaar wahadiin binaaduuha šuwa fih, katiiriin jamaa?a, šaaggiin fi fi iθiopia fi, šuwá fi, fi yaman, šuwá fi, yamta maašiin fi ?iraak šuwá fi (8.11)

‘Near Lake Chad. Right, near Lake Chad. Then there are other peoples they call them – they’re Arab as well if you ask them, they’ll say they are Arab, but they’re Salamat. Those as well are in south.⁸ (4.40) With the Fulani. They speak Fulfulde and Arabic. And their Arabic like, their language is difficult and can’t be understood, except only amongst themselves. Then there are these others here, here to the west, around Damaturu, around Bani Sheikh. These they call Sirajjiyye. They as well spent a long time with the Kanuri (5.06) and their language, their language has become half Kanuri. So these Arabs, they are divided into two. The ones are dark (slaves) and are called Salamat and the others they call them Qawalme, and each of them, the Qawalme in turn have many sub-clans,⁹ (5.24) and the Salamat as well have many different clans. But the greater part, while those Salamat have reddish complexioned¹⁰ ones amongst them, the greater part of them they just say are dark complexioned. The Qawalme as well have dark ones amongst them but the majority are reddish. So for example there’re the Wulad Himeed who are divided into two sub-groups, the Red Wulad Himeed, they call them the Red Wulad Himeed and these others the black Wulad Himeed who are called Bulwa, by their name. The two are different, and these Bulwa can now be found around Mafa (5.58),¹¹ the area of Bama, these are the black Wulad Himeed. They’re called “Bulwa”. As for the Red Wulad Himeed, these are found here¹² in Ngummati, in this direction, like the area of Masu and Dongo, these ones call themselves, (6.13) they are the Red Wulad Himeed. So all this is oral tradition. There’s nothing written. These ancestors initiate and pass on the history, and inform the next set of ancestors, then those inform others and so on until it reaches to our generation (lit. reaches us). But today, Arabic is getting ruined. Half of it is Kanuri ... so I heard one, at the United Nations, during the time of the Mandated Territories (6.40), which is the area of Dikwa and Mubi and Gembu,¹³ in the past during the time of German (occupation of Cameroon) – they were ruling until after the first world

⁸ *Anum* ‘south’. Probably he is referring to the SE extension of the Arabs in Borno, around Banki, though the designation is not clear. In any case, implicitly he is speaking about an area south of his own, which is the area around Lake Chad.

⁹ *al qawaalme kumaane tumfaar jamaa?a*; *tumfaar* ‘types’ (sg. *nafar*), in this context, ‘clans’; *jamaa?a* = *katiiriin* ‘many’, in reference to people.

¹⁰ Traditionally *humur* ‘red.PL, fair complexioned’ is associated with a free-born ancestry, *zuruk* ‘black, dark complexioned’ with a slave.

¹¹ See e.g. TV36 and TV45 for examples of Arabic from near Mafa.

¹² Hineen ‘here’. The interview is actually taking place in Maiduguri. He perhaps uses ‘here’ because Musa Daggash himself is from the Ngummati area.

¹³ Dikwa today in Borno, Mubi in Adamawa and Gembu in Taraba State on the Mambila plateau. Until WWI these towns were part of German Cameroon. In the wake of WWI, Cameroon was mandated by the League of Nations to France and Britain. The British part was the strip of land bordering on Nigeria, and included the eponymous Dikwa, Mubi and Gembu areas, as well as a larger SW area with Buea as its center. After Cameroonian independence in 1961 a UN-sponsored plebiscite was held in which the inhabitants of British Cameroons were given the choice of incorporating into Nigeria or Cameroon. This is the event which Musa Daggash speaks about here. The plebiscite resulted in the northern regions, including Dikwa, Mubi and Gembu joining Nigeria and the southern area joining Cameroon, the situation which obtains today.

war when France and England divided it, and when the time for independence came, the United Nations sent some people – the chairman of that committee was called Muhammed Ar Rashdi, from Iraq (7.14). He was from Iraq and came here and he said to ... us he would speak in Arabic just like this (i.e. like we are talking now), Iraqi Arabic, which is easier to my ears than that of Saudi Arabia. Everything that they said and spoke to me I could understand, (7.29) or almost everything, with a little difficulty. But generally we'd speak together just like I'd be speaking to my brothers. But Saudi (Arabic) I can't speak like Iraqi. I understand Iraqi better. And so he informed me saying, we (Iraqis) originated the name "Shuwa". And he said to me, in Yemen, there are groups called Shuwa, many altogether, separated into Ethiopia where there are Shuwa, in Yemen Shuwa, who went to Iraq.' (8.11)

1.2 Arabs and intermarriage, marriage in former times, 11.23-13.21 and 39.40 – 40.38)

<I> al arab bijawwuzu al arab
'Do Arabs marry other Arabs?'

<M> zamaan kuure, mi dugut zamaan kure da, (11.41) al ʔarab ille l ʔarabi, balá da kula mi dugat ille l ʔarabi da kula fi áhala, haw fi ahala kula misil, axta bitt emmaʔ, walla xaalta, aw bittə xaalta, ma bijawwizu barra minhum, amma zamaan, taʔaal zamaan da, šunu kula tallaf, haa dahada yamta dinya bəga waahid kan al yoom banaat al árab biyaaxdu al margí biyaaxud, bura, kula hu da waahid, amma, (11.56)

'In former times, not now but in former times. (11.41) Arabs only an Arab, though not now, and even an Arab among his own relatives, like his sister the daughter of his father's brother, or of his mother's sister or the daughter of his maternal aunt. They didn't marry from outside of these. But that was before. Everything has gone for the worse, and then when the barriers came down, the daughter of an Arab will marry a Margi, Burwa, it's all the same.' (11.56)

<I> mafiiš ayy muškila fi da (12.12)
'And there's no problem here.' (12.12)

<M> mafi šay, buguulu ke bas buguulu, ha zamaan, barnu, induhum induhum kalaam fi, gaal buguulu, binalkallam leek be kalaam bərnü, amma nufassira, **yike fərowa jiwí kəndawa da na dunəwa dumaró ma**, gaal bittak, (12.37) be busxahin dihin, xud'd'uhum, fattiš leehin bəkaan kweyyis, ya yibga yikassəro, hadahada da bas az zamaan ja, kan árab, humma baggaara, bagarhum maatan, jo hineeni, ma dasso awlaattum fi l madrasa, ma induhum ši, (12.59) banaattum mu samaahaat, al humma an naas az zúruk dool min margi walla búra walla ke walla indum maal bərnó, al yoom, fi l hille di, beet kabiir ke dugut bitt ʔarab fiya mafi do kaal mafi, catt da axiide bas, mafiš šay kan nilkallam az zamaan jaaba, (13.21)

'Nothing to worry about. They say, they just say ... and before, Kanuri, they have a saying, they say – I'm going to talk to you in Kanuri now and then explain it - **yike fərowa jiwí kəndawa da na dunəwa dumaró ma**. It says, "your daughter (12.37) and their gourds of oil, preserve them, get them a good place so they don't break." And then the world changed. As for Arabs, they are cattle nomads. Their cattle died. They came here (to city) but didn't enroll their children in school so they have nothing. (12.59) But aren't their daughters beautiful? So those dark-skinned peoples like the Margi or Bura or whatever have money. And so today in this city there isn't a big

household where you don't find an Arab girl, none at all. All of this through marriage. It's not an issue; times have changed.'

<I> aj jiize kuure (39.40)

'How were marriages formerly?' (39.40)

<M> kan zamaan kula, kula waahid maafi, kalaam al axiide, ayid ween mine kula biyaaxud min ayid bakaan kula, amma katiir kula al menzal, manzalku waahid, aa dahada bilaaxado ambeenaatum, naadum ma bugumm min jaay binši fi arəba xamsa (39.57)

'As for long ago, as far as marriage goes, anyone from anywhere could marry from any place, but in fact it was usually the local area, your only place, they would marry amongst themselves. A person didn't leave from here and go four or five ...¹⁴

<I> al manzal?'

'The local area?'¹⁵

<M> al hille, hillittum waahide, bilaaxado ambeenaattum, an naadum ma buguul, min zamaan kuure, naadum ma buguum ma bugumm min jaay inši xamsa, (40.05) yoom walla arəba mitər, miya ijowwiz mara, tijowwiz ma?a, jamaa?itku al gaadiin inta aarif haalhūm, humma ?aarfiin haalak, išuulu bittəm yad'uuk leha, amma inta deef, ma bušuulu bittum biyad'd'uuk lea, fišaana da zamaan kure, al jooza catta bakaan millammiin, millammiin bakaana wahade, mil?arfiin al haal, wal fəlaan, walad fəlaan, jitt fəlaan, yawwa bišiilu bittum biyaatuuk laha, amma kan jiit deef ma biyaad'uuk bittum (40.38)

'The village. The same village. They marry amongst themselves. A person didn't say then, a person didn't get up from here and go five (40.05) days or four meters¹⁶ to marry a woman. You'd marry from your group who are there whose condition and status you know, and they know you. They take their daughter and give you her. But if you are an outsider¹⁷, they don't take their daughter and give you her. Because in those days, marriage was local, where everyone was gathered together. Everyone knew the identity of each other, son of so and so, son of so and so, so and so's ancestor,¹⁸ okay they can marry their daughter, they'd give you her. But if you just showed up from somewhere else they wouldn't.' (40.38)

1.3 How Musa Daggash became a high-ranking Nigerian civil servant (25.03-32.45)

<L> amta badeet an nasaara

'(25.03) 'When did you begin English?'

<M> ana badeet nayntin fi alf tisi miyyaat wa arba?iin arəba?in

¹⁴ The interruption makes the discourse a bit disjointed. He probably wants to complete it with 'kilometers'.

¹⁵ Asking about the use of *manzal* (SA *manzil*) 'camp, place' which is not a NA term. *Hille* or *daar* would be more typical.

¹⁶ Probably does not find the right term.

¹⁷ *deef* 'guest', often used in the sense of 'outsider'.

¹⁸ *Jitt* < *jidd* 'grandfather, ancestor'

'I began in 1944.'

<L> ween

'Where?'

<M> badeet fii katsína, fi tɔ̀raab hausa (25.23)

'I began in Katsina, in the Hausa area.' (25.23)

<L> fi ayi waɗá

'In what specialization?'

<M> fii xidímt al yaabaat, forestri, haw misil tammeet, misil išəriin sána ke, minis fayn ha yom indipendes yamta l hurriya jaat, maafi adminustretiv ofisers hana an naas hana al ingliis kula ke mášo, haada haada šaaloona aniina aš šiyaab šiyaab, dassoona fi adminstrešin, xalleet xidimt al yaabaat mašeet fii legos, bigiit adminəstretə (25.56)

'In forestry, then when I had finished like twenty years **minis fayn** , minis fayn and when independence came, when independence came,¹⁹ there weren't any administrative officers for the people since all the English left. So they brought us, the experienced²⁰ ones, and put us into administration. So I left forestry and went to Lagos²¹ and there I became an administrator.' (25.56)

<L> ween gareet

'Where did you study?'

<M> ana gareet fi madrasa binaaduuha bɔ̀reewa fi kastína, xallás, mašeet fi ibadan teknikal skuul forestrii, xallás, gade xadám, gade mašeet fi oksfəd, sawwet fərestri fi inglənd, mádərasa oksfəd, jiit xadám, ášara sana, gadé daxál fi adminsitrešən gadé mašeet lee manchester yuniversity, sowweet pablik adminstrašən, yamta gabbál gadé, sawweet xamstašar sana fi leegos, pəmanent secretary ášara sána, (26.30)

'I studied at a school called Barewa in Katsina.²² I finished and I went to Ibadan Technical School of Forestry. I finished and went back to work again, then I went to Oxford and studied forestry in England, at Oxford University. I came back and worked for ten years, I entered the administration again then went on to Manchester University where I studied Public Administration. When I returned again I worked for fifteen years in Lagos as a Permanent Secretary for ten years.' (26.30)

<L> forestri

'Forestry?'

<M> kullu waahid, no no no adminəstrešn da, badeet fi maynz an pawə, pəmanent sekretari

¹⁹ Nigeria became independent in two steps, in 1960 and 1963. Which is intended here is not specified.

²⁰ Interpretation of *šiyaab* 'old people'.

²¹ Then capital of Nigeria.

²² Katsina College in Zaria was one of the first educational institutions in northern Nigeria, an elite school founded in 1921, only a few years before Musa Daggash would have attended it. Katsina College was re-named Barewa College, which may be the cause of confusion of his placing the college in Katsina.

maynz and pawər, pəmanent seketari, difens, zamaan al ku al awwalaani (26.47)

‘No no, in regards administration, I began in Mines and Power, Permanent Secretary Mines and Power, (then) Permanent Secretary Defence, at the time of the first coup.’²³ (26.47)

<L> zamaan [?]

‘The time of gawaan, ribaado’²⁴

<M> no hu bígi maafi, emta bígi maafi, sawwo ingəlaab walla šunu, gawan bígi hed ov stet, (27.04) ana bas pamanent sek hana dəfens, wara da bigiit pəmanent sekrateri transfot, haw dahada, da xalleeta, sawwooni, caman fedəral tendəz bood, kulla sawweet caman, sawweet caman baakliz bank, yawa, hada xalleeta jiiit hineen, cad basin diveləpment əθoriti ana badeeta min hine, xalleeta, kan, jiiit caman pablik komplent komišn kəmišn, dahada xalleeta da bigit caman hana sivil sevis komišan, misil xamsiin sana, al yoom (27.48)

‘No, he had died. And when he died, there was a coup or whatever and Gowan became the head of state. (27.04) I was the Permanent Sec for Defence. After that I became Permanent Secretary for Transportation, then I left it and they made me the Chairman of the Federal Tenders Board. I was the chairman. I was Chairman of Barclays Bank, then I left that and came here, to the Chad Basin Development Authority, I began it here, left it, then became Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, for like five years.’ (27.48)

<L> wa fi sivil savəs kəmišn da, xidímtu šunú, tisowwu šunu

‘And in the Civil Service Commission, what work was it, what did you do?’

<M> sivil səvəs kəmišn, isma kulla, ayid wálad xaarəm min al madrasa aniina naad’í xidime,

‘The Civil Service Committee, its name, anyone who has graduated from school we’d give a job.’

<L> li ayy wizaara

‘In which ministry?’

<M> li ayyid wizaara kula, təraab borno kullu, təraab borno kullu, sivil səvəs (28.07)

‘For any ministry at all. In all of Borno, all of Borno. The civil service.’ (28.07)

<L> farq been al adminəstrešn hana zamaan wa dugut,

‘And what’s the difference between the administration then and now.’

<M> mi šúqul talummu kaamil, misil al fi wa la mafí ke, (28.20)

‘It’s not a single difference. Like there used to be this, but not that (28.20)

<L> maalaa

²³ It is not clear which coup the speaker is referring to. There were two in 1966, the first which brought Ironsi to power, followed by a second which brought Gowon to power. Below he talks about General Gowon coming to power, which was 1966.

²⁴ Hardly audible. Two names appear to have been mentioned, which could be Gowon and Ribado.

Actually three coups occurred in 1966, one very short-lived led by Major Kaduna Chukwuma Nzeogwu in which inter alia, the Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa was killed, Nzeogwu being displaced by Ironsi, who in turn was displaced by Gowon.

‘Why?’

<M> displin mafi, d’aʔaam mafi, kalaam al ingliis maafi prayd fi xidime, mafi d’aʔaam maafi, šunú kula, be da bígi braybori an korapšn, ayid naadim idowwur maal kan ligi l maal mafi naadim níšida, (28.40) zamaan kúure kan ad’ook maal hana baysikl advans, tíšir baysikəl, mašeet šareet mašíin, kabiir íji binšidak, ligiit maal ween šareeta hu, kan kan, kan tidoor fúsux kula, waa, ammi, ammi ad’adni bagar, bagarteen mašeet biitaha ziida maal al advans šareet motorsaykel, wa ʔammattin,²⁵ yu wil bi kwerid, binšiduuk, ligiit al maal, al foogaani ligiit humma ween, ad’ook advans hana fam išuriin, motosaykəl maala xamsiin, wi nšiduuk ligiit al fam da talatiin min ween, (29.17)

‘There’s no discipline. No displin mafi, d’aʔaam²⁶ mafi, In English, there’s no pride in work. There’s no pride, nothing. – Bribery and corruption have emerged. Anyone who needs money, if he doesn’t have money and a person asks him, (28.40) it used to be if they gave you money for a bicycle advance, to buy a bicycle, then went and bought a motorcycle, your boss would come and ask you, “where did you get the money, where did you buy it?” If you try to lie, “My mother, my mother gave me a cow, two cows and I went and sold it and added it to the advance and I bought a motorcycle”. You will be queried where did you get those thirty pounds from?’ (29.17)

<I> le ruhut le l madrasa (29.26)

‘Why did you attend school?’ (29.26)

<M> madrasa, xabbartak, awwalooni leθəm sinyə rezident,

‘School, I told you, at the time Lethem was the Senior Resident.’

<I> ahalak waddook (29.38)

‘Your parents sent you?’ (29.38)

<M> baxabbərak, baxabbərak be al xabar, leθəm sinyə rezident jaab al madaaris da, (29.45) humma mutaʔallimiin humma talaata, min al árab, min as sudaan, xabbar mistə prays ijukešn afiso híne, ámiš ʔyaal al arəb, jibhum, al faqara doola iderriswuuəm, šaalooni aniina sittiin xamsa, xamsa wa sittiin wálad arabi

‘I’ll tell you the story. Lethem²⁷ the Senior Resident brought the teachers. (29.45) The teachers, they were Arabs, Arabs from the Sudan. He informed Mister Price the education officer here, “Go to the Arab children, bring them, and these teachers will teach them. They took 65 of us, 65 Arab children.’

<L> min ween hillitku ween (30.04)

²⁵ ʔammattin. Consensus that this is the word, but its meaning is unclear.

²⁶ d’aʔaam ‘tastiness, harmony of social relation’. Intended is probably ‘pride’, though in this case the speaker is extemporizing a concept missing in traditional NA vocabulary.

²⁷ Gordon Lethem, important British colonial officer in NE Nigeria known inter alia for his assessment of Islam in NE Nigeria. The British in particular were wary of the impact of Mahdism spreading from the Sudan to Nigeria. Lethem, like many British colonial officers, had risen via the Sudan Civil Service. He is also author of *Colloquial arabic: Shuwa dialect of Borno, Nigeria and of the Lake Chad region*. London: Crown Agent for the Colonies, a partly useful, partly misleading description of the Arabic of the region (see Owens et al. to appear, Appendix, for detailed criticisms).

‘Where was your village?’ (30.04)

<M> aná šaalooni, fi mən kərenaawa, aw xabbar le mistə prays, xabbaro, imta mášo le kərenaawa gaal, fəlaan fəlaan fəlaan naas al kubaar kubaar dool da, maaruufiin, indak wálad fi, ana abui isma jibriin, gaal jibriin indak walad, gaal ámiš jiiba le l madrasa, (30.26) emta máša abídəna fi indina ábid abiid, human jamaaʔa, misil friid slev ke, humma našaara inglis, ma xalleena, dat sot av dəmestik slevri, maahum, fišan wald al xaadim be wald al hurra kulla waahid, maafi, dahada abui šaal al abid, wuleedna saqeyyir, abídna, ha abui naadem ahamar, bilheen bilheen bi faayit, prays, ejukešn afəsa gaal la, jibriin inta da ahamar haw hu da azərak, gaal laa, waladí, amma xaadim, le amm as səriyye, (31.08) naguul le səriyye kənkubayn, gaal laa, ha ámiš wadda jiiib al axar waahid, hámar mi səriyye, yo ana bas as saqayyar axaayaaní kubaar, šiya ke ke, akubár minní, waahid bufkur fi l bágar waahid bufkur fi l xeel, (31.24) hu kula bədoor bəseyy le prays najaada, da karabni bi l iidí waddaani, gaal hu dada isma muusa, saqayyir bilheen, xalla santeen, taalaata ke kibir, ana bašiil bawaddí leeku, gaal la la la, aniina nidoor al gádər doola bas dahada šaalooni, (31.51)

‘Me they brought from Kirenawa and he informed Mister Price, they informed him, when they went to Kirenawa, he said “so and so and so of these important people. They are well known. ‘Do you have children?’ ‘Me, my father’s name is Jibrin.’ He said, “Jibrin, do you have a child?” He said “go bring him to the school.” (30.26) When he had gone, well we had a slave, we had a slave. There were many like freed slaves. The English didn’t allow us to have, that sort of domestic slavery, it wasn’t like, because the child of a slave and the child of a freeman were the same. It wasn’t like that.²⁸ So my father brought the slave, our little small child, our slave, the son of my father, a reddish man, very very red. Price the education officer said “Nope”. Jibril you’re reddish complexioned and this one is dark.” He objected “No, he’s my child, but a servant; his mother’s a slave wife.” (31.08) We call *siriyya* a ‘concubine’. He said “Nope. Go bring the other one, the reddish one not the child of a concubine.” And lo and behold I was the smallest of my brothers. There was one a little bit older than me, one who looked after the cattle, and one after the horses (31.24). He wanted to trick Price. Then and there he grabbed me by the hand and brought me out. “This one there his name is Musa, very small. Let him grow up for two or three years and then I’ll take him and send him to you.” He replied “No, no no! We want exactly this size and he went and carried me off”.’ (31.51)

<L> bakeet

‘Did you cry?’

<M> ana maani ʔaarif waqət d’aak, ammi bákát, ammi bakat bilheen amma ana mani aarif al báki kula al wáqut d’aak, šaalooni min kərenaawa jaabooni le maidúguri hineen, (32.04) elf wa tisamiya di arəba wa išəriin, awwal marra maafi yaal aarif šay fišan ma indina najaada hine baagi, maana aarfiin, ana bilheen saqayyir, xamsa wa sittiiin, walad šaalooəm jaabooəm aniina, ana akəbár min waahid tul, binaaduua isma jidda, kan wagafna, ad’areena ke, ana bagiif hineeni, wa waagi ille jidda, ha kulluhum maafi duggut, yuunus, jiina ye yoom waahid, haw haw mašeena le forestri, [?] yoom waaid, amma ana xalleet forestri daxál fi administrešn, ha mašeet gaʔát fi legos xaməstašar sana, (32.45)

‘At the time I didn’t have a clue. My mother cried, she cried a lot. But I didn’t know what crying

²⁸ It is not clear what circumstance *maafi* references, that there is no longer slavery, or that although the English had abolished it, it was still implicitly adhered to

was at that time. They carried me from Kirenawa and brought me here to Maiduguri in 1924. (32.04) At the time the kids didn't have a clue about anything because there wasn't any awareness. We didn't know. I was very tiny, sixty five, children they went and brought us. I was bigger than just one other, whose name was Jidda. If we stopped and stood²⁹ in a line, the only one behind me was Jidda. And now they've all died.' (My friend) Younis, we came and went to the Forestry department [?] on the same day, but I left forestry and went and stayed in Lagos for fifteen years.'

1.4 Circumcision (41.27-43.53)

<M> bilʔabooha be huɾaab, be gangá, buɗúrubu gangá, (41.30) haw tambal, haw induəm, šuqul misil talaata arba kulla, haw aš ſubiyaan bušuulu l hiɾaab, haw buzugguuhin tizigg ke, haw bullaggúuhan budussuuhan ke, haw binšu ke haw bijú ke, šúqul hana as salaamaat, dalaal hana salaamaat, haw an nuggaara kula tineen, nuggaara hiil al qawaalme hu šik, nuggaara hiil as salaamaat kulla šik, (41.51)

They dance with spears, with a drum, they play a drum (41.30) and a small drum and they have something with three or four, and the youths take spears and throw them up whoosh like that, and they twist them around and stick them in the ground, and they go and come back. It's a Salamat custom, a Salamat dance. And there are two drums. The Gawalme drums are different and the Salamat are different (41.51)

<L> keef an naas billammo
'How do people gather.'

<M> al ʔiid walla šunu
'You mean for a festivity?'

<L> ad' d'ahuura (42.05)
'Circumcision (42.05)

<M> oo kalaam al d'ahuur, oo yes d'ahuur, zamaan kuure d'ahuur šúgul bilheen gaasi, ad daar catta talimm, ana yoom d'ahharooni nayntiin ʔəti, tammo sabʔa yoom biddaalalo,
'Okay, about circumcision. Yes, circumcision. It used to be that circumcision was really difficult. The whole village would gather. Me, I was circumcised in 1930. They celebrated for seven days.'

<L> sabʔa yoom (42.22)
'Seven days!' (42.22)

<M> sabʔa yoom biddaalalo, mi ana waahidi, aniina jamaaʔa, ana abuí haadi, abuí giddaam, (42.27) amma kan misil bəd'ahhiruuna da, yaal al masaakiin catta ma bəgdaro, bəd'ahhiruuhum dahada bulummuuhum, bəd'ahhuru, aniina d'ahharooni misil išəriin xamsa, xamsa w išəriin, amma abuí šaal it tugul, tamma sabʔa yoom biddaalalo, ɗabaho išəriin bagara, toor, nayntiin ʔeti, ad' d'ahuur šuqul gaasi kuure, amma dugut, aná nafsí, d'ahar, waladi d'ahharta fi həspital, zamaan,

²⁹ *ad'dareena* < and'areena 'we were lined up' (form VII).

anbádal, (42.58)

‘Seven days they danced. Not only me. All of us. My father was the most prominent. (42.27) But like if they circumcised us, the children of poorer could be circumcised as well. Us, they circumcised like 25. But my father took the main responsibility.³⁰ It took seven days of dancing. They slaughtered 20 cattle. Bulls. 1930. They gave something to everyone. The circumcision was very expensive. But now, I myself, I circumcized my children in the hospital. Times have changed.’ (42.58)

<L> zamaan al xalaq jaabo guruus katiir (43.03)

‘In those days a shirt was expensive.’ (43.03)

<M> zamaan daaka, kan bagar aná

‘At that time, if a cow [...]

<L> al xaal leek

‘Your uncle’ [?]

<M> ay aguul leek da bas ana, ana nafsí haadi da, ligiit sap?a bagara,

‘I am just telling you [?], I can just say, I myself, I got seven cows.’

<L> sab?a (43.15)

‘seven’ (43.15)

<M> yamta d’ahharooni, ana şayayyir, amma ad’ooni sab?a bagara, ahaalí, abaahaatí xawaalí, (43.24) wa kan d’ahharó, tişuuf biyaad’ú şúqul jamaa?a, al induhum, mi l miskiin, aná aná nafsí da ad’ooni sab?a bagara, ligiit sab?a bagara d’ahharooni, wágut d’aak al bagara hi bas al maal, aniina baggaara, ma indina, ma indina jumaal, aniina min gammeena abbaahaatna juduudna şuqulhum bágar, raas al, al ad’i da ille al bagara bas (43.53)

‘When they circumcised me, I was little, but they gave me seven cattle, my relatives, fathers, uncles. (43.24) And when they circumcised him, you’d see they gave something to everyone, those who could, not the poorer ones.³¹ Me personally, they gave me seven cattle I got seven. In those days cattle were wealth. We the cattle nomads, we don’t have camels. Since the time of our ancestors, our ancestors, their subsistence was cattle. What they gave (as presents) were only cattle. (43.53).

³⁰ Many people came for the circumcision, including guests some with their own children for circumcision, from outside the village. Musa Daggash’s father was the main organizer of the circumcision ceremony. He provided the food, including the cattle for slaughter, organized living arrangements for the guests, organized the dances and horse shows. As the description depicts clearly, it was a communal event where both rich and poor were served.

³¹ Presents were given to Musa Daggash by his relatives. It appears that a number of his relatives had cattle wealth as he got seven cattle from different relatives. If none of one’s relatives had wealth, nothing special was given to them. It was not the custom of the wealthy in the village to give presents of cattle to non-relatives at the time of circumcision.