

IM08Abd al Gaadir

AG = Abdulgadir, ML Mohammad Allamin (his older brother),

8.1 Abdul Gadir introduced; why he left Kirenawa and came to live in Maiduguri (0-7:22)

8.2 Issue of language use in Maiduguri, Abdul Gadir's education and why it was cut short (10:52-13:15)

8.3 A discussion about Rabeh, with Mohammad Allamin and Abdul Gadir (34:05-end)

8.1 Abdul Gadir introduced; why he left Kirenawa and came to live in Maiduguri (0-7.22)

<I> ismak mine

'What's your name?'

<AG> ismí, abd algaadir,

,My name's Abdul Gadir'

<I> wildook ween

'Where were you born?'

<AG> wilidooni fi kərenaawa,

'I was born in Kirenawa.'

<I> ammak abuuk čattuhum arab

'Are your mother and father both Arabs?'

<AG> aḡḡmí abuí, čattuhum yaal an najerya bas, čattuhum árab, (0:41)

'My mother and father, all of them are children of Nigeria, all are Arabs.' (0:41)

<I> arab min təraab yatu

'From what region?'

<AG> árab min təraab aṣ ṣabá,

'From the east.'

<ML> arab min təraab an najeri, wildoohum fi nejerya

'Arabs from Nigeria, they were born in Nigeria.'

<AG> aráb, abuí da, wildó fi kameruun, saqayyir da wildó fi kamerun, amma kəbər fi najjrya, kibir fi nayjiirya, kibir fi nayjiirya, aḡḡmí, (1:04)

'Arabs, my father, he was born in Cameroon. He was small and born in Cameroon. But he grew up in Nigeria. He grew up in Nigeria. My mother.' (1.04)

<I> wildó fi ayy hille

'He was born in which village?'

<AG> wildó fi lafiyá, fi l kameruun, aḡḡḡmí saqayyir, amma saarat jaat beyya le najjrya,

assablaq fi najjrya, ʔarṣat fi najjrya, (1.19) axad aḡḡmí kulla fi nayjeerya, zamaan gaaʔidiin fi nayjeerya hineen, kee ja, aḡḡmí, aḡḡmí, aḡḡmí Qilbat, be axuí al kabiir, hu bas al ʔawwalaani, ja ju wahid kabiir, daar al xariif mafi, naas gaaʔadiin fi gamaka, lammo be šerafa, be n naas al

katiiriin, mášo le l ʔánum, mášo le l ʔánum, buud'a waade fi buguulu laha kabiire buguulu laa bulumtisike, wildo magajíy da fi l bakaan da, abuí maša qaadi le l ánum, xarraf, daarat, (2:08)
 'He was born in Lafiya, in Cameroon. His mother was small, she was small when she moved and came with him to Nigeria. He came of age in Nigeria and came into manhood in Nigeria (1.19). He married my mother as well in Nigeria. When they were living in Nigeria, my mother my mother became pregnant with my big brother. He was just the first. Then there was a great famine. There wasn't any rain in the country. People living in Gamaka, they gathered in Sherafa, and with a lot of people they went south, they went south to a large seasonal pond called Bulumtisike and my older brother was born there. He spent the rainy season and the cold season.' (2.08)

<I> abuuk da naššaaq
 'Your father was a herdsman?'

<AG> sakkaani, hallaali, maša le l ʔánum, wílid, ja raat, wild allamiin, fi kørenawa, allamiin wildó fi kirenawa, muusa fi kørenawa, habbaaba, xadiija, halimata, yenaba, kullu wuldooëm fi kørenawa, ana kula wildooni fi kiirenawa, fi axar fi gafaayí ana ille hajj aməra kulla wildó fi kørenawa, ma indina bálad illa nayjeerya, min nejeerya, mən nejeerya baladna kørenawa, (2:43)

'A settled person, a villager. He went to the south, gave birth then came back. Allamin was born in Kirenawa. Alamin was born in Kirenawa and I as well was born in Kirenawa and as the last after me Hajj Amra also was born in Kirenawa. We don't have any other country than Nigeria and in Nigeria our village is Kirenawa.' (2.43)

<I> kubur ween
 'Where did you grow up?'

<AG> kibər fi kørenawa, mən kørenawa gaʔád assabaláx rahalo lei kula fi kørenawa, gaʔád wəlít bud'uun¹ xamsa fi kørenawa, fi aaxir dahada sír jiit le bornu hineen,
 'I grew up in Kirenawa I stayed and came of age and married in Kirenawa. I stayed and gave birth to five (children) in Kirenawa then in the end I moved and came here to Bornu.'²

<I> leek kam sana fi maiduguri
 'How long have you been in Maiduguri?'

<AG> fi l maiduguri indí ašara haw sabʔa sana, fi maiduguri hineen, dugut giddaam kan gaadiin be axayaani kull zeriibe waahide, kan nišiif alalla iseyy yaa giddaam, dugut da bas balanna, ma indana balad illa, dugut da yoom da fi maiduguri hineen bas, (3:19)
 'In Maiduguri seventeen years, here in Maiduguri. For the future now we are staying with my brothers all in one compound. We'll see what God does in the future. Now it is our city; we don't have any other. Now we are just in Maiduguri.' (3.19)

<ML> ašaan zarna fi kirenaawa
 'Because our farm is in Kirenawa.'

<AG> kan gammeena dawwarna al xidime, nəgumm min jaay nimši kørenawa, naxadim gwoos, gwoos, niteerib dura, niteerib libiya, kolči, kan al xariif bígi katiir, ničoq fərkiyye, aj

¹ His wife was pregnant five times.

² Odd designation for Maiduguri. Perhaps it references the fact that in Kirenawa the percentage of Arabs was higher.

jagəma, qalla beeḍa, tambuna, kullu naxadima fi, zerr hana kərenawa al waahid da, kan nigdar niçelliha, xalaas dadda, nuduggaha, nijjibha nuṣubbaha fi l beet, (3:59)

‘If we go and look for work we leave from here and go to Kirenawa. We work on the sandy soil. We plant corn, bean, groundnuts. If there is a lot of rain, we plant in the black cotton soil, guinea corn, sorghum, yellow guinea corn. We do this at, the one farm in Kirenawa. If we cut (the grain) down and thresh it and store it at home.’ (3.59)

<I> axawaanak fi kirenawa

‘Are you brothers in Kirenawa?’

<AG> axawaaní, yaal axawaani kullu waadiin fi kərenawa, gaadiin qaadi milmaddiniin kan ana mašeet kulla ninzil fookəm humma, náxadim az zerr kula fookəm humma yam baxalas, kan dugó niji raad, dugut humma gaadiin fi kirenaawa xalas, (4:19)

‘My brothers, the children of my brothers some are in Kirenawa, settled there. If I go there I stay with them, work the farm with them and when I finish, then I return back. Now they are settled in Kirenawa’³ (4.19).’

<I> inta nafar yatu

‘What is your clan?’

<AG> nafari ana aṣəli, ammi isaaʔiye, aḅwí aṣəli, doola tumfaarí,

‘I am Aṣəli. My mother is Isaaʔiye, my father Aṣəli. Those are my origins.’

<I> inta saakin fi mayduguri fii

‘You live in Maidugur at?’

<AG> gambori, gambori (4:37)

‘Gambori, Gambori’⁴ (4.37)

<I> al arab katiiriin fi gamborí

‘Are there a lot of Arabs in Gamborí?’

<AG> al arab katiiriin fi, gwoonge, dikeçəri, gamborí, ha maidugurí, árab katiiriin fi l bakaan da, fi yerwa da bas bakaanum, gade ma induhum bakaan, katiiriin, (4:59)

‘There are a lot of Arabs in Gwange, Dikkeçeri, Gamborí, Maidugurí. This is where there are many Arabs in Maiduguri.⁵ Otherwise they don’t have an area of concentration.’

<I> keef tišiif al maʔiisha fi mayduguri be kirenawa (5:08)

‘How do you compare Maiduguri and Kirenawa?’ (5.08)

<AG> al maʔiše fi maiduguri, hineen gaasi, al búhu l waahid, inda nayra, šuwaal waahid inda nayra miye haw sittiin, fi kərenaawa, kan aš šuwaal inda naira miye, áfdal hana kireenaawa áfdal min maidugurí hineen, qaadi šiie kan raxiis, ha hineen fi, qaadi huut axadar, kula katiir,

³ Note the meaning of of n- in the previous paragraph from ‘we’ to ‘I’ in the current paragraph. In the previous n- follows *gammee-na dawwar-na* ‘we went and looked...’ whereas in the current one it follows *ana mašeet*. The morphology of the 1PL imperfect is studied in detail in Owens (1998). AG’s use of n- for both ‘I’ and ‘we’ is found throughout these excerpts; see e.g.

n. 11.

⁴ The area he lives is called both Gamborí and Gamború. For linguistic description of the compound where Abdul Gadir lived, see Owens (1998: 278-90).

⁵ Yerwa = popular name of the larger Maiduguri metropolitan area. Speaker’s earlier use of Maidugurí referred to Old Maiduguri village, located in north central Maiduguri city.

haw huut yaabis buguulu leyya bandá?, kullu busullú min lubb ač čaad⁶ daaxil, kan bijuubu le s suuk, kulla bubuua, darraaba xađra, darraaba xadəra kula katiire, kullu fi s suug da badiin,⁷ faayit hana maiduguri be?iid, badiin, ya dugut (5:59)

‘Life in Maiduguri here is expensive. One bag (of grain) costs, one sack costs 160 naira whereas in Kirenawa it is 100. It is better than here in Maiduguri, there it’s a little cheaper. And here there is ... there there is fresh fish, a lot and dried fish that is called bandá?. They get it all from inside Lake Chad. They bring it to the market and sell it, a lot of fresh okra as well in the market, more than Maiduguri by a long shot, up to now.’ (5.59)

<I> mala intu al arab taxarmo min kirenawa
‘Why did you leave Kirenawa?’

<AG> al aráb da, šuyul xaramna min kərenaawa jiina le mayduguri da, wakit da gaa?idiin qaadi ayni haaja kulla dinya hilwe, ma bígat murra šabah al yoom, (6.25) kee ad dinya arraddat yaawara, kullu yoom murr, al xariif ma bíji katiir, al haaj muusa da, hu, axuuna, gaa?id fi legos, ke baxadim fi legos hu kula gaal ana xidime hana legos da xalleeta náji nakərub xidime fi maidugurí, hu ja la maidugurí, sawwa leyya beet, sawwa ?yaala, (6.50) kulla ja gaad hineen, yam ja gaad hineen kan, axuwí at taabi kula ja, allamiin, fi gafáa, hu kulla ja ga?ado bakaan waade ke ana gul ana kulla ma bagood gede barra fi biladeega, mag?ad hana barra da murr, nimši nugood fi birni, šunu naakul al weeke nađiife, akil nađiif, nurgud bakaan nađiif, ma nugót fi kərenaawa, da bas aj jaabni le, le maidúguri, da bas al jiil leya (7:22)

‘The Arabs, what made us leave Kirenawa and come to Maiduguri, at that time when we were staying there, everything was nice. It wasn’t difficult like today. (6.25) Then the world has regressed. Every day was difficult. The rains failed. Haaj Musa⁸ our brother was living in Lagos working in Lagos and then he said, “I’m leaving work in Lagos and am coming to work in Maiduguri”. He came to Maiduguri and built himself a house, had children (6.50) and came and stayed here. When he came and stayed, my older brother came as well, Allamin, after him. He came as well and stayed this place and I said, I won’t stay in the village either. Life in the countryside is difficult. I’ll go and stay in the city. Why not eat nice soup, food and sleep in a nice place. I won’t stay in Kirenawa. That is just what brought me here to Maiduguri. That’s what brought me to it.’ (7.22)

8.2 Issue of language use in Maiduguri, Abdul Gadir’s education and why it was cut short (10-52-13.15)

<I> fi raffak hineen, tilkallam
‘What language do you use in this neighbourhood?’

<AG> be fi raffi hineen da, nilkallam be l ?arab, amma lyoom da, al ?yaal da mana?oona, al ?yaal ad dugaag dugaag dugaag doola, mana?oona, mana?oona da, ille kan boggo barra da bilkallam be hausa bas, al yaal, (10:52)

‘In my compound, I⁹ speak Arabic. But these days, the children prevented us. These small small children prevented us. They prevented us (from requiring Arabic). Only when they go outside should they speak Hausa.’ (10.52)

⁶ Lake Chad (see TV70a-Gulumba-ajaa n. 6, TV112-Mada n. 45 and IM19Gur n. 1.).

⁷ *badiin*, in this context, “having everything”. Applied to a person “spoiled”.

⁸ Musa Daggash, Text 1.

⁹ Here n- could be either ‘I’ or ‘we’. The context probably argues for ‘I’, though ‘we’ also fits; see also n. 13.

<I> al yaal
‘The children?’

<AG> al wilidnaaum, naam al yaal as suqaar suqaar hineen da, al wilidnaaum doola, kan ille baggo bas dada mana?oona dada ille bilkallamo be hausa, kan humma, kan humma, bi al banaat al gadərəm kulla, kan binaašidu kulla binaašidu be hausa bas, kan humma yaal ad dugaag bijulsu kula ille bujulsu be hausa bas (11:18)
‘Our children. Ya, the very small ones here. These children of ours. Once they go outside (the compound) they prevent us and they only speak Hausa. If they, along with the girls of the same age, if they converse with one another it is only in Hausa. If the very small children speak it is only in Hausa.’ (11.18)

<I> hineen daaxil al beet walla
‘And here inside the house?’

<AG> gafa l xaarij barra, kan daxalo fi l beet, aniina niterəm naguul ma tilkallamo kalaam hausa, kallimu kalaam al arabi bas, bilkallam be arabi, ke kan xaramo barra fi xaarij kan dada, bilkallamo be hausa bas, mmm (11:36)
‘After outside the house. Once they enter the house, we prevent them and say, “don’t speak Hausa, speak only Arabic”’. And they speak Arabic. But when they leave outside, they just speak Hausa (11.36).’

<I> inta darás fi sangaaya
‘Did you study in a Koranic school?’

<AG> mahamadiya, la mahamadiyye ille gareet tahaziib, tałaata hana, hana ş şala bas, fi korenaawa, aa mahamadiyya (11:54)
‘A mohammadiya¹⁰ No, a Koranic school, just a few verse,¹¹ three, just for prayers. In Kirenawa, a Koranic school.’

<I> sangá fi kiranawa
‘A koranic school in Kiranawa?’

<AG> fi koreenəwa, seed hanaana kula fi korenəwa, ha wakit da aniina maašiin al beet ninši nigəri, haw naji, nagəri, haw niji, dada ligiit tizaab tałaata, hine aš şala dahada xalleeta, arabi kulla nuktub, uşumí, al bismi, nigdar nuktub, da bas hu assabláx xalleeta kan dahada abuí maat, (12:20) yam abwí maat kan hu dada, dada sawwaani ana šaba l abid ke, al gaš nijjiiba nuşubba le jawaad, ninši nigd’a? šiibe, šeder, nijjiiba nibini l beet, kulla niseyyi le axuwí da, (12.33) haw niji nisəra be l bagar, fi l xala, nirbuť, yamta mənəşşaba nijjiib al bagar nidissin fi l beet, narəbətəttin, haw nahaliphin, lebenhin binişerba, haw nimši, gide nigd’a al gaš hana j jawaad nijjiiba nişubba leya, nišiil al kadanka, nimši z zerr, nigeyyil, fi z zer ke, nibga şalá đuhur kan niji, min az zer, nijjiib al gaš nuşubba, daada šan bəgat, saa?a xamsa, nədxul nahálb al bagara, nuxumm al ba?ar hana jawaad nuşubba, dada nəşallí l muqurub, kan dugo nugood ninjamma, fi korenəwa dí bas şaqalanna, aniina nisowwí fi (13:15)
‘In Kirenawa, our teacher was in Kirenawa, we would go, we’d go to the house and study and come and study, so I learned three hizib, for prayers, then I left it. I write Arabic, my name, the “bi sm allaah”, I can write that. Then I came of age and I left it and my father died (12.20), then

¹⁰ See IM11 n. 2 for terminology.

¹¹ *Tahaaziib*, actually a unit of Koranic memorization which can be larger than or shorter than a verse.

when my father died then he (unspecified who)¹² made me like a slave. I'd fetch grass and feed the horses, I'd go and cut branches and trees to use as house supports and bring them and built a house. All this I'd do for my brother (12.33) and I'd come and herd the cattle, in the bush, tie them up and in the morning bring them and put them in the house, I'd tie them up and milk them and we'd drink their milk and I'd go again and cut the grass for the horses and bring it and feed them. I'd take a hoe, go to the farm and spend the day working, in the farm. At the afternoon prayer I'd come from the farm bringing the grass and distributing it. Then at five I'd enter (the house) and milk the cattle, gather up the horse dung and distribute it, then I'd pray the first evening prayer then come and rest. This was out regimen in Kirenawa. This is what we¹³ did'.¹⁴ (13.15)

8.3 A discussion about Rabeh, with Mohammad Allamin and Abdul Gadir (34:05-end)

<I> inta gul abuuk gaaʔid fi zamaan rabe,¹⁵ gaal leek qišša ʔan raabe (34:05)
 'You said that your father was alive at the time of Rabeh. Did he tell you about him?' (34.05)

<ML> čatta xabbarni beya fi zamaan raabe,
 'He told me everything about his time.'

<AG> keef raabe xadam, keef šaqal
 'How Rabeh worked.'

<ML> abui šabi, šabi fi zamaan raabe,¹⁶ wald am ʔisəriin haw sitte sana, fi zamaan raabe, raabiye da, ja sapʔa sana, haw sabʔa šahar, haw sabʔa yoom daaji kataló, kataló fook kuseri, ja mən kordofaan, (34.29) mən əs sudaan, ja be jeeš, jeeš misil, jeeš da, bənaaduəm banda, bənaaduəm banda koreej, al aj jeeš haná da bandaay, kabariita čatta banda, yamta ja ligi l arab ye xammaahum ja beehum, dada katal suld'aan hana kikwa, šumma čari, sulṭaan čaari hana bornu, (34:56)

'My father was a youth, a youth during Rabeh. A boy of 26 years in his time. Rabeh, he came for seven years, seven months and seven days then they came and killed him. They killed him in Kuseri. He came from Kordofan, (34.29) from the Sudan. He came with an army, an army, this army, they call them Banda. They call them Banda Krej. Rabeh's army, its leadership was all Banda. When he came (here) he found Arabs and he brought them, then he killed the Sultan of Kikawa,¹⁷ whose name was Chari, Sultan Chari of Bornu.'

<I> fi jeeša miin fiiha

¹² Probably his older brother, ML, who is also taking in the conversation, and in fact is sitting right next to him; see n. 14 below.

¹³ As far as the reference of n- this selection is intriguing because it clearly begins with n- = 'I' (*sawwaa-ni* ... 'made me', with -ni = 'me') but ends with n- = 'we' (*aniina* 'we' *ni-sowwí*). It is not clear where the transition lies.

¹⁴ There is not only a shift in person but also a shift in pragmatic focus. Abdul Gader begins by complaining that his older brother forced him into servitude. By the end of the passage he says that all of the servile tasks he did were what others in Kirenawa did. One can speculate that as he spoke he realized that he had criticized his older brother (ML) to his own face, and finds a way in the end to withdraw his criticism.

¹⁵ For more on Rabeh, see n. 6 and p. 8 ff. in TV58Dala-axaderi.

¹⁶ Rabeh captured Borno in 1893. He was a lieutenant of the Sudanese warlord Suleiman (himself the son of the warlord Zubeyr Rahma) who was defeated and killed by Count Gessi in the southern Sudan in 1879. Rabeh gathered up the defeated army and set out west, establishing himself in what is today the eastern Central African Republic in a region known as Dar Banda, also inhabited by the Krej. He eventually conquered Borno, as recounted here.

¹⁷ Kukawa, the capital of the Kanemi-ruling dynasty of Bornu.

‘Who was in his army?’

<ML> jeeš hana raabe, (35:00)

‘Rabeh’s army?’

<I> arab walla

‘Arabs, or who?’

<ML> arab haw bandá, banda, banda, ujum fi ja beehum, amma yamta ja da, aj jeeš čatta be
ʔarab šaalooa bəruuxu beyya, (35:11)

‘Arabs and Banda. Banda. There were non-Arab speakers who came with him. But when he came, the whole army, they co-opted Arabs who moved with him.’ (35.11)

<I> mən kamaruun

‘From Cameroon?’

<ML> mən kameruun haw mən čaad haw mən najeerya, čatta šaalooa buruuyu beyya, haw fiya
hu da, gumnatí hukuma, hukuma bigi sapʔa sana, sapʔa šahar haw sapʔa yoom, maša le kuseri
dají, fəransa katalata, (35:28)

‘From Cameroon and Chad and Nigeria. They co-opted all of them and they went with him. And from that, the government, the rule lasted seven years, seven months and seven days. He went to Kuseri and then the French killed him.’ (35.28)

<AG> yam ja nazal šaayil ad darb tuwaššif laa hu da walla

‘When he descended (on Borno) and his path, describe it to him.’¹⁸

<ML> yamta jaʔ, šaayil ad darb da ja foog čikana, ja foog abu bašša, foog atiya, gamma min as
suudaan, mən kurdufaan, bagga foog as sudaan, min as sudaan daaji fook aatiya aa foog abbeše
foog atiya, (35.48) fook čikana, čikana bikaan suld’aan hana bagirmi, daaji daxal nayjeerya,
daxal neyjeerye, wakít da kameruun kula mafi, kameruun kula najiirya bas, suld’aan hana
kikuwa bas nayjiirya, indina suld’aan waahid gaaʔid fi kuseri, (36:06)

‘When he came, He came via Chikana and via Abbeche, and Atia. He left from the Sudan, from Kordofan, he left from the Sudan and from the Sudan went to Atia (35.48) and Abbeche and Chikana. Chikana was the capital of the Sultan of Bagirmi, then he entered Nigeria. He entered Nigeria – at that time there wasn’t a Cameroon. Cameroon was a part of Nigeria, under the rule of the Sultan of Kukawa.¹⁹ We had a Sultan in Kuseri.’ (36.06)

<I> ween gaʔad

‘Where did he stay?’

<ML> raabye gaaʔid fi diikwa, fi dikwa, sapʔa sana, haw sapʔa šahar, haw sapʔa yoom daaji
maša,

‘Rabeh stayed in Dikwa.²⁰ In Dikwa for seven years, seven months and seven days, then he left.’

<I> yaal ja beehum mawjuudiin, yaani yaalhum (36:19)

¹⁸ Abdul Gadir cues his older brother to describe Rabeh in more detail for me.

¹⁹ I.e. under the control of the Kanemi.

²⁰ I.e. the capital of Borno moved from Kukawa under the Kanemi’s to Dikwa under Rabeh. At one time Rabeh’s headquarters in Dikwa was nicely restored and made into a museum by Dr. William Seidensticker of Maiduguri University.

‘And the soldiers that came with him are they still around, that is, their children?’

<ML> al yoom moojuudiin ke da, majuudiin al haaḍər²¹ raabye ke da maafi, al haaḍər raabye ke da čatta maat, čattum maat, ʔyaalhum fi, yaalhum da fi, yaalhum al arab al humur humur da čatta sei abaahaatum gaadiin fi l bikaan da, waadiin fi gamboru, waadiin fi manawaji waadiin fi ngala haw ke bas, (36.40)

‘Today they are sort of around. Rabeh is no longer. Today Rabeh is dead. All of them are dead. Their children are around, their children are around. Their children the light-complexioned ones are around here. Some are in Gamboru, some in Manawaji, some in Ngala, like that.’ (36.40)

<I> bilkallamo luqa arabiyya (36:42)

‘Do they speak Arabic?’

<ML> arabiyya, al banda zuruk abiid,

‘Banda were blacks, slaves.’

<I> humma kula alkallamo arabi

‘Did they speak Arabic?’

<ML> bilkallamo arabi, bilkallamo arabi humma čatta, amma humma gabbal kula humma čaad, haw yawaraaši yamta, raabe maat kula čatta mašo le čaad, humma banda, (37.06) raabye kula bitta mašát le čaad maatat fi čaad, bandaai ke da mafi, towwa, abiid as suld’aan fi ke kula abiid as suld’aan kula tammo, haw yamta raabye bigi mafi ka humma banda, haw baazingir, dool čatta raddo, mm, raddo lee, (37:29)

‘They speak Arabic. They all speak Arabic. But they returned to Chad and then afterwards, when Rabeh died they all went to Chad. (37.06) Those the Banda. Rabeh’s daughter as well went to Chad and died there. There aren’t any more Banda (here). The slaves of the sultan (Rabeh) all of them, the slaves of the sultan they all died long ago. And when Rabeh died those the Banda and the Bazingir, all of these returned, they returned to ...’ (37.29)

<I> keef waqt ar raabe le naas fi najeriya

‘How was the era of Rabeh for the people in Nigeria?’

<ML> le naas fi najerja le l arab zeen, amma le l bornu fasil, da, an naas ibiiʔu an naas, ille, hukum fasil, hana raabye da, hukum aḍalam, simiita da fihimta, aa wallai, hukum aḍalam, buktulu n naas min jam ke bas, bala šariye bas, mm (37:56)

‘To the Arabs he was good, but he was bad to the Kanuri. People would sell people, the government was simply bad, Rabeh’s that is. A benighted rule. Did you hear, and understand? Really the rule was benighted. They would kill people for no reason, without any legal justification.’ (37.56)

<AG> raabye da, le l arab zeen, marra waahid, yam biji, šaba al balad al kabiir dahada bəddalla fiya, bəressil le l ahal doola, al arab doola taʔaalu, mine kabiirku, arab busowwu rijjaal alf, da kabiirna, yo agoodu ba s sahi, bəressil le doolaka an nafara d’iike kulla n naas zuruk ko humur kula kullu biju, mine kabiirku intu arab arab, mine kabiirku, da kabiirna, agoodu be l aafe, agoodu be l aafye, agoodu be l aafye, (38:30) kullu naas waahidiin al kubaar kubaar doola bulummu fooga bubgo humma kula naas raabye bas, suld’aan bas, ana kula nišəri ley jawaak kabiir, haw nišiil kaare hana duwaas da dada nimši ma raabye, bimši le balad di bitumm fiya, sana waahid, al xabar kulla bismaó, min jaay da ween yaa kiikwa, yaa l kayyal, kullu bismao be

²¹ < haḍar „be present“; haḍir „one present at, witness“.

raabye ja, gaad ke sawwa ʔamalata dadda, bimši le duwaas, bimši le hille l kabiire hille waade buguul lea ngurno, kula maša nazal fiiha, (39:03) kula tamma fiiha gariib sana, ke bimši binzil ya giddaam, tamma sitte šahar ke amta maša l kiikwa, be čaari, allammo, addaawaso, akal čaari, ja raad, mən ke, bərkab, binzil, bərkab binzil, ja le diikwa, al balad fi diikwa, gaʔad, mafi suldʔaan ille hu bas, an našaara sumʔo beyya, yaa jo le raabye, fi diikwa fi gafá, sabʔa sana, sabʔa šahar, našaara jo, sabʔa yoom, an našaara induəm bunduk, induhum naar, bəşubbu fiya, be raabye buduusu bəduusu bəduusu, ya dada katalo raabye fi kusəri, (39:52)

<AG> Rabeḥ was good to the Arabs, absolutely. When he came, the country is large and when he descended on it, he would send to its inhabitants, the Arabs among them, “Come. Who is your leader? The Arabs comprise 1,000 and this is our leader.” “Okay, stay in safety.” He’d send to those ones, that group, all of the people whether light or dark complexioned, they all would come. “Who is your leader, you Arabs? Who is your leader?” “This is our leader.” “Okay, stay in health”.²² (38.30). All the other people the leaders would gather before him and they all became Rabeḥ’s people. The Sultan. I’d buy myself a big horse, and I’d bring my weapons and go with Rabeḥ. He went to a village and finished it off, one year. The news spread for all to hear. From here wherever up to Kukawa, up to Kayyal. They all heard that Rabeḥ had come. He went on preparing for his attack,²³ then he’d go to war. He went to a big village called Ngurno, he went and occupied it.’ (39.03) He stayed there about a year the continued on ahead. He took six months, then he went on the Kukawa, to Chari. They all gathered and fought. He defeated Chari and came back. From that point he would attack and set out, attack and set out, until he came to Dikwa. He stayed there. He was the only sultan. The Europeans heard of him, in Dikwa and after, seven years, seven months, the Europeans had guns, canons, that they loaded with ammunition²⁴ and they fought and fought and fought with Rabeḥ, until in the end they killed Rabeḥ in Kusari.’ (39.52)

<I> fi kusəri
‘In Kusari’

<AG> fi kusəri, fa našaari abyad katal raabye, hiya²⁵ sataró fi l bahar da bas, dahada, kalaam hana raabye da intaha fi bakaan da bas, amma raabye le arab zeen ma fasil (40:07)

<AG> In Kusari. A white European killed him. Then they buried him in the lake, and so ended the episode of Rabeḥ in this place. But Rabeḥ was good to the Arabs, not bad.’ (40.07)

<I> [?]
[?]

<AG> al arab gaadiin bas
‘The Arabs were just there.’

<ML> nasaara jo, jaman jo šaalo, min dikwa qaadi čatta jaman, kuseri haw diikwa čatta jaman, jaman gaʔado fi l bakaan da, yo hedkota hanaahum da gaʔad fi, fi kusəri, haw waahid bənaaduua musa nabuul kula ja le diikwa, yo ač čaad, fəransa geedo fi čaad, ingliis gaado fi najiirye, yawaraši najiirya, ingliis haw be faransa lammo qašimhum foog jaman daawaso jaman salloohum, yam salloohum, ingliis gaado, taalo nilgassam al, al arđiyye, (40:53) mən be gambaru haw le kusəri ibga faransa, haw mən kusəri, min gambaru haw le dikwa, ibga ixud’d’ú foog najiirya, ilimmu foog daji foog najiirya, fiya hu da nasaari, binaadú kaptən simi, kaptan simi daji gaal lamma n naas gaado as suldʔaan at tawwa da kan be ʔyaala ijiibuuəm (41:18), gaal

²² *yo agoodu ba s sahi*, = *agoodu aafe* ‘stay in peace’, signals subservience to Rabeḥ.

²³ *gaad ke sawwa ʔamalata* Lit. ‘He stayed and did his work’, intended here, the work of preparing for battle.

²⁴ Intention of *bəşubbu fiya*, lit. ‘they poured into it = loaded with ammunition’.

²⁵ Probably discourse marker *hiya*, see IM50 n. 2. The current speaker is the father of the interviewee in IM50.

be ʔyaala, mašo le naadim waahid binaadú sanda wal ndarama,²⁶ sanda wal ndarama jo xad'd'ó suld'aan fi dikwa, (41.26) gade tɔraab yerwa, gade garbaay, suld'aan garbaay jo xad'd'ó fi, kabbaró fi yerwa, sald'ana bugo tineen, amma čatta ʔyaal as suld'aan al gabalaani hine kikuwa, ha fiya hu da da gaʔado, daají nasaari, al hukum, gaal lamma našaara lamma as sald'ana gaal al hukum da, aniina beeku nilgisim ha naxadim fiya jamí, misil aniina gomnati haw intu tugoodu ʔeen ke bas, (41:53) al kalaam kan minnuku intu gamma binši leena aniina, a kan intu kataltú kula kan xalaas, daají fi bakaan da, rezident, dio, nasaara humma itineen, min hineen da, yaa gambaru kulla, aniina, yerwa bitišiifa, našaari waahid binaaduaa mista buja gaaʔid fi diikwa, hu kula gaaʔid dio, edio kabiir, haw doola našaara tineen haw doolaaka, d'aaka kan čatta daají fɔransa šaalta, jaman baggat, ma sawwo harb a, fihimta, jaman baggo, yam baggo da mašo gade da, yaa dualaa, kula jaman, tabo jaman da fi kusari, (42:34) haw jaman fi bongar, a fi duala, fi garwa, fi marwa čatta jaman, daají jaman lamlamo kaare rowwaho le daarhum, daají l ardiye di, šiggaha mašo garwa bəga fɔraansa, ma daaga, bigat ingliis, najeerya, diikwa, bəgat najeerya, daají bugo nasaara itineen bas, (42:59)

'The Europeans came. The Germans came. Kusari and Dikwa were all German. The Germans occupied that area. Their headquarters where they stayed was Kusari. And someone named Musa Nabul came to Dikwa. And as for Chad, the French stayed in Chad. The English occupied Nigeria. Afterwards Nigeria, the English and French joined forces against the Germans and fought the Germans and drove them out. Once they had removed them, the English stayed "Come, we'll divide up the land, (40.53) from Gambaru up to Kusari let it be French, and from Kusari, from Gambaru up to Dikwa, let it be put in Nigeria, let them join it to the Nigerian map. From that an European called Captain Simi, Captain Simi said he joined everyone and the former sultan with his children, should be brought (41.18), he said including his children. They went to a certain person called Sandawa Wal Ndarama, Sandawa Wal Ndarama. They came and made him Sultan in Dikwa. (41.26) Then another one in Maiduguri, Garbay, Sultan Garbay, they came and installed him in Maiduguri. So the sultanships became two. However, both were children of the former (Kanemi) Sultan from Kikawa. So in this way they stayed, then the Europeans, the government, the Europeans gathered ... gathered the (two local) rulers and said, "We'll divide things up with you and work together. Like we are the government and you'll just stay watching on the sidelines".' (41.53) If a problem arises from you, he should come and ask us, even if you've solved it yourselves.²⁷ Then in that place the Resident, DO, there were two Europeans, between here up to Gambaru and Maiduguri.²⁸ There was one European called Mister Buja staying in Dikwa, he was the District Officer, Assistant District Officer and these two Europeans and those ones, that one the French removed. The Germans left. There had been a war, right? You understand? The Germans left and when they left they went on to Duala, it had all been German up to Kusari (42.34) and the Germans were in Bongar, Duala, Garwa, Marwa, it was all German. Then the Germans packed their bags and returned to their country. Then this land, one part, Garwa, became French, and Daaga became English, Nigeria Dikwa became a part of Nigeria, and then there were two European rulers.' (42.59)

<I> suʔaali, baad waqt ar raabe borno ma gaalo, intu al arab intu saaʔado saaʔattu raabe, yaani dugut aniina zaalaaniin minku (43:15)

²⁶ In 1901 Dikwa, currently in Nigeria, was awarded to German Cameroon. This meant that the old Bornu empire was split in two, one part controlled by the colonial British, the other by Germany. Shehu Garbai was first made Emir of Dikwa, but the British offered him the Emirship of British Bornu, which he accepted. The Emirship in Dikwa was then assumed by Sanda Mandara, probably the same as Sanda wal Ndarama. After WW I Dikwa was mandated to the British Cameroon and was administered by the British. In a plebiscite in 1961 it chose to join Nigeria (see Text 001 n. 13 for more).

²⁷ *Kan intu kataltú* 'even if you've solved it', lit. 'killed it'.

²⁸ Probably the intention of *yerwa bitišiifa* lit. 'Maiduguri you see'. There were two residents responsible for the area between Gambaru and Maiduguri, one the German, the other the English.

‘My question is Rabeh, after you the Arabs helped, now we (the Kanuri) are angry with you.’
(43.15)

<ML> yaa l yoom fi, yaa l yoom zaʔalaaniin, yaa l yoom zaʔalaaniin, ma budowwruuna aniina,
yaa l yoom, fi zamaar raabye l arabi murr leyya bukuɾbu wol borno bimši bibiiʔú al arab kullu
tallafo, tallafo humma kula, bukuɾbu ʔyaal bornu bubuuʔuuhum, (43.32) haw fi ya hu da yaa
lyoom kula baqaada fi, walá biriiduuna walá niriithum haw naas gaadiin fi daarna
‘Up to today that is how it is. Up to today they are angry, Up to today. They don’t like us up to
today. In Rabeh’s day the Arabs were bad to them they’d kidnap Kanuri children and go and
sell them. They Arabs became bad, they were bad. They’d snatch Kanuri youth and sell them,
(43.32) and as a result of this up to today there is hate. They don’t like us and we don’t like
them, but everyone is living here.’