

An Early 20th-Century Arabic Vocabulary as Evidence of Language Contacts in the Uele district and the Redjaf-Lado Enclave

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines the Arabic component of a five-language vocabulary published at the beginning of the 20th century (Wtterwulghe 1904). The aims of the analysis are: (i) to illustrate the multiple sources of this variety of Arabic; (ii) to establish the nature of the variety of Arabic represented in the vocabulary, which Luffin (2004) calls “arabe véhiculaire”. The comparison made with other contemporary sources on African Arabic-lexified pidgins and creoles (Cook 1905, Jenkins 1909, Meldon 1913, Owen & Keane 1915, Muraz 1926) suggests that the variety illustrated is a pidgin-like mix, with input from a wide range of sources, including Egyptian, Sudanese and Moroccan Arabic as well as several African languages, e.g. Bari, Luganda, Swahili, and Zande. It is also shown that the Wtterwulghe’s (1904) vocabulary contains some of the earliest attestations of features also found in the African Arabic-lexified creoles Nubi and Juba Arabic.

KEYWORDS

Language contacts, Arabic, pidgin

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is concerned with a vocabulary (Wtterwulghe's 1904)¹, also analyzed by Luffin (2004), which is illustrative of the Arabic once spoken in the Uele district and the Redjaf-Lado enclave of the former so-called "État Indépendant du Congo". It aims at illustrating the multiple sources of this variety of Arabic as well as at ascertaining its nature. For reasons of space, only a limited number of topics are examined.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 discusses two issues pertaining to morphology: the paradigm of possessive and the verbal system. Section 3 focuses on selected lexical items. Section 4 summarizes the findings.

All examples appear in the orthography or system of transcription used in the sources. Relevant items in quotations are in bold characters. All examples and quotations are accompanied by their translation.

2. MORPHOLOGY

2.1 POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Wtterwulghe (1904: 27-28) includes in section "XII. – Quelques pronoms usuels" the paradigm of possessive pronouns. The forms and their variants (Wtterwulghe 1904: 27), including a variant which appears elsewhere (Wtterwulghe 1904: 4), are compared in table 1 to those found in the first records of early Nubi² (Cook 1905), Jenkins (1909), Meldon (1913), and Owen & Keane (1915)³.

As can be seen, the forms provided by Wtterwulghe (1904) are similar to those reported in other contemporary sources documenting Nubi, with the exception of <tt>, which, however, cannot possibly stand for an etymologically unjustified [tt]. A few remarks are in order here. Consider first the 1SG forms. The variant *bitta-y* is identical with the forms found in Jenkins (1909), Meldon (1913), and in Owen & Keane (1915), whereas the variants *bittana/bittâna* resemble the form recorded by Cook (1905). Thus, Wtterwulghe (1904) is the only source explicitly recording this variation in the form of the 1SG possessive. As for the variant *bittâna* (Wtterwulghe 1904: 4), assuming that <â> stands for [a:], this may well correspond in fact to **bita-ana*, i.e. it reflects the occurrence of the independent 1SG pronoun. The following circumstantial evidence can be adduced in support of this interpretation. Firstly,

¹ A first printing was published in 1899 (Luffin 2004: 379) and a second one in 1903.

² Kaye & Tosco (1993) and Nakao (2016) use the term "Early East African Pidgin Arabic".

³ Of these, Cook (1905) and Owen & Keane (1915) refer to the language as "Nubi".

Table 1 – Possessives in five early records of African pidginized/creolized Arabic

	Wtterwulghe (1904: 4 and 27)	Cook (1905)	Jenkins (1909: 2)	Meldon (1913: 6)	Owen & Keane (1915: 14)
1SG	<i>bitta-y/bitta-na/bittâna</i>	<i>bitana</i>	<i>bitai</i>	<i>bitai</i>	<i>bitai</i>
2SG	<i>bitta-k</i>	<i>bitita</i>	<i>bitak</i>	<i>bitak</i>	<i>bitak</i>
3SG	<i>bitta-hu/bitto</i>	<i>bito</i>	<i>bitau</i>	<i>bithu</i>	<i>bitau</i>
1PL	<i>bitta-na</i>	<i>bitanina</i>	<i>bitatina/bitaniina</i>	<i>bitana</i>	<i>bitatna</i>
2PL	<i>bittakoum</i>	<i>bitako</i>	<i>bitakom</i>	<i>bitakum</i>	<i>bitakom</i>
3PL	<i>bitta-houm</i>	<i>bita nyashumq</i>	<i>bitahom</i>	<i>bitahum</i>	<i>bitahum</i>

there is one instance of an independent 1SG personal pronoun used after a preposition:

(1) *alay-ana/alay-i* ‘sur moi’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 26)

Secondly, in Moltedo (1905) independent pronouns also occasionally occur in possessives, alternating with pronominal suffixes⁴:

(2) *bit-ana/bit-ai* ‘le mien’ (Moltedo 1905: 20)

As in Wtterwulghe (1904), also recorded are instances of independent personal pronouns occurring with prepositions:

- (3) a. *ma-ana/ma-i* ‘avec moi’ (Luffin 2004: 392)
 b. *ma’ua/ma-o* ‘avec lui’ (Luffin (2004: 392)

Note also that the 2SG form provided by Cook (1905) consists of *bit* and the independent pronoun *ita*. Nakao (2013) also provides several examples of such forms occurring in samples of pidginized Arabic formerly used in Sudan:

- (4) a. *banteloon bitaa enta*
 trousers POSS 2SG
 ‘your trousers’
 b. *beledi bita uwa*
 village POSS 3SG
 ‘his village’

⁴ See also Luffin (2004: 392) and Nakao (2016: 417, f.n. 30).

The evidence suggests that the 1SG form *bittâna* with the independent pronoun *ana* is a basilectal variant. The 2SG form in Wtterwulghe (1904) is identical with those in Jenkins (1909), Meldon (1913), and Owen & Keane (1915), with preservation of the Arabic possessive pronominal suffix. As for the 3SG possessive, Wtterwulghe (1904) again records variants: *bitta-hu* is similar to those found in Jenkins (1909), Meldon (1913), and Owen & Keane (1915), whereas *bitto* is identical with the form attested in Cook (1905). The 1PL form in Wtterwulghe (1904) is identical with the one given by Meldon (1913) and differs from all the forms recorded in the other contemporary sources. The 2PL form in Wtterwulghe (1904) is again identical with the one in Meldon (1913), and contains the vowel /u/ in the reflex of the Arabic pronominal suffix, whereas all the other contemporary sources list forms with the vowel /o/. Finally, the 3PL form in Wtterwulghe (1904) is identical with those in Meldon (1913) and in Owen & Keane (1915).

Consider next (table 2) the paradigms of possessive pronouns in modern Nubi (Pasch & Thelwall 1987: 120, Kaye & Tosco 1993: 283, Tosco & Owens 1993: 238, Wellens 2003, Luffin 2005: 173-174) and in Juba Arabic (Miller 1984: 193-194, Kaye & Tosco 1993: 283, Tosco & Owens 1993: 238, Nakao 2014: 5, and Watson 2015: 20).

Table 2 – Possessives in Modern Nubi and Juba Arabic

	Modern Nubi	Juba Arabic
1SG	<i>'tai/ta'yi</i>	<i>(bi)ta'ai/(bi)ta'i</i>
2SG	<i>'taki</i>	<i>(bi)'tak/(bi)'taki</i>
3SG	<i>to</i>	<i>(bi)'to</i>
1PL	<i>'tena/'tenna/'teyna /'tinna</i>	<i>(bi)'tana/(bi)ta'anna/(bi)ta'nina/te'ina</i>
2PL	<i>'takum/'tokom/'tokum</i>	<i>(bi)'takum</i>
3PL	<i>'toumon/to'umon/'tomwon</i>	<i>(bi)'tómon/(bi)to'umon</i>

On the whole, the paradigm in Wtterwulghe (1904), just as all those found in contemporary sources, is more conservative. The most striking difference resides in the loss of *bi-* in modern Nubi and its being only optional in Juba Arabic. Kaye & Tosco (1993: 283) write that Juba Arabic optional *bi-* “was probably reintroduced via decreolization”. However, as also shown by Avram (2015: 165), the fact that *bi-/be-* is found in earlier sources suggests that Juba Arabic optional *bi-* is rather a residue illustrative of earlier stages of the language. Note further that Miller (1984: 194) and Nakao (2016: 417) mention

the use in Juba Arabic of the structure *(bi)ta* + independent personal pronoun:

- (5) a. *sekin bita ana* (Miller 1984: 194)
knife POSS 1SG
'my knife'
- b. *bita ita* (Nakao 2016: 417)
POSS 2SG
'yours'

Miller (1984: 194) writes that "l'emploi quasi exclusif de la tournure avec pronom indépendant relève d'un niveau très basilectal" and according to Nakao (2016: 417) such forms are found in "archaic JA [= Juba Arabic]". This accords with the analysis suggested above for the variant *bittâna* attested in Wtterwulghe (1904). One of the 3SG variants in Wtterwulghe, *bitto*, has the same word-final vowel with its modern Nubi and Juba Arabic counterparts. Similarly, the 1PL form in Wtterwulghe (1904) is identical with *(bi)'tana*, one of the variants used in Juba Arabic. Finally, the 2PL form in Wtterwulghe (1904) identical with the Juba Arabic form *(bi)'takum*.

Summing up, the forms of possessive pronouns recorded by Wtterwulghe (1904) are consistent with evidence from other contemporary sources documenting early Nubi as well as from modern Nubi and from Juba Arabic.

2.2 THE VERBAL SYSTEM

With three exceptions, all the verbs occur in section X. – Verbes usuels (Wtterwulghe 1904: 18-21), which also includes instances of the copula. With the exception of the copula, the verbs are glossed with the infinitive of their French equivalent. The form of the 94 verbs (excluding variants) is derived from Arabic perfects (mostly 3SG, but also 2SG), imperfects, imperatives, active participles, passive participles, nouns, and adjectives. Selected verb forms are compared in table 3 to those in four early records of African pidginized/creolized Arabic, including Turku⁵.

With the exception of *goul* and *qalam*, the forms of the verbs meaning 'say' recorded by Wtterwulghe (1904) and listed in Table 3 are similar or identical with those attested in at least one other variety of African pidginized/creolized Arabic. Several forms are worth commenting in some detail.

The <s> in *aus* 'want' is most likely a misprint and should read <z>. On the assumption that *aus* stands for [auz], the form in Wtterwulghe (1904),

⁵ On the relation between Nubi and Turku see Tosco & Owens (1993: 236-253) and Wellens (2003: 206-266).

Table 3 – Selected verb forms in five early records of African pidginized/creolized Arabic

Wtterwulghe (1904)	Cook (1905)	Jenkins (1909)	Owen & Keane (1915)	Muraz (1926)	Gloss
<i>arbuttu</i>	<i>arabuto</i>	<i>rabat</i>	<i>arbut</i>	<i>arbottou/rabotou</i>	‘tie, bind’
<i>aus</i>	<i>awuju</i>	<i>aūz</i>	<i>auz</i>	<i>doro</i>	‘want’
<i>be-dji/begui</i>	<i>begi</i>	<i>begi/beji</i>	<i>begi</i>	<i>beji</i>	‘come’
<i>chouf</i>	<i>aieno</i>	<i>shūf</i>	<i>shuf</i>	<i>choufou</i>	‘see’
<i>choule</i>	<i>shil</i>	<i>shūlu</i>	<i>shilu</i>	<i>chili/choulou/sili</i>	‘take’
<i>djybu</i>	<i>jibu</i>	<i>jib</i>	<i>jib</i>	<i>djibou</i>	‘bring’
<i>dousse</i>	<i>dushu</i>	<i>dūsu</i>	–	<i>lobodou</i>	‘hide’
<i>esma</i>	<i>ashuma</i>	<i>asmā</i>	<i>asma</i>	<i>bassman</i>	‘hear; listen’
<i>goul, kallem, qalam</i>	<i>kelemu</i>	<i>gāl, kellem</i>	<i>kellem</i>	<i>oro</i>	‘say; tell’
<i>gousse</i>	<i>gushu</i>	<i>gūssu</i>	–	<i>koussu</i>	‘search for’
<i>kabass</i>	<i>kabas</i>	<i>kabbas/kibiss</i>	–	–	‘lie; deceive’
<i>nadu</i>	<i>anado</i>	<i>nadī</i>	<i>nadi</i>	<i>nadi/nadu</i>	‘call’
<i>nessyt</i>	<i>neshito</i>	<i>hasītū*</i>	–	<i>niss</i>	‘forget’
<i>otbour</i>	<i>ten</i>	<i>istanna</i>	<i>ishtanna</i>	<i>assbour</i>	‘wait’
<i>sidd</i>	<i>shidu</i>	<i>sidū/shidū</i>	<i>sidu</i>	<i>siddi</i>	‘shut’
<i>sow</i>	<i>sho</i>	<i>amal</i>	<i>ammal</i>	<i>sao/so</i>	‘do’

* Where <h> should read <n>.

like those in Jenkins (1909) and in Owen & Keane (1915), is close to the acrolect – Egyptian Arabic *‘āwiz*, unlike the form in Cook (1905).

The verb ‘come’ is of interest for three reasons. Firstly, it is illustrative of [g] ~ [ɟ] variation, also attested by Jenkins (1909). The variant with [g] can presumably be traced to Egyptian Arabic, whereas the one with [ɟ] is presumably of Sudanese Arabic origin, since, as stated by Kaye & Tosco (1993: 295), [ɟ] is “the pronunciation most typical of the SA [= Sudanese Arabic] *Sprachraum*”. Secondly, it is interesting to note that ‘come’ includes the imperfective prefix *be-* in all these early records of African pidginized/creolized Arabic. Thus, the paradigm of the verb ‘come’ (Jenkins 1909: 4-5), typical of how verbs are conjugated in what Jenkins (1909: 3) calls “‘A’ being the way the majority speak” contains exclusively *beji/begi*, for all tenses, persons and numbers. Meldon (1913, Introduction: 11) also specifies that

Table 4 – Selected verb forms in Modern Nubi and Juba Arabic

Modern Nubi	Juba Arabic	Gloss
<i>aju/azu</i>	<i>awz</i>	‘want’
<i>shuf</i>	<i>shuf</i>	‘see’
<i>shilu/sulu</i>	<i>shilu</i>	‘take’
<i>jib/jibu</i>	<i>jibu</i>	‘bring’
<i>dusu</i>	<i>dusu</i>	‘hide’
<i>asma/asuma</i>	<i>asma</i>	‘hear; listen’
<i>gul</i>	<i>gul</i>	‘say’
<i>gusu</i>	<i>fetish</i>	‘search for’
<i>kabas/kabasu</i>	<i>kabas</i>	‘lie; cheat’ (modern Nubi) ‘deceive’ (Juba)
<i>nadi</i>	<i>nadi</i>	‘call’
<i>nesit/nesitu/nisitu</i>	<i>nisitu</i>	‘forget’
<i>sidu</i>	<i>gofulu</i>	‘shut’
<i>su</i>	<i>amilu/amulu</i>	‘do’

“the verb $\epsilon \text{ } \text{جآ}$ *jā* to come is used with the prefix ب ”. Similarly, Tosco & Owens (1993: 217) write that “the verb *beji* [...] regularly [...] has the form *beji*, though here *be-* must be regarded as morphemic material frozen in the Turku word”. Thirdly, the variant *be-dji* is glossed ‘come’, whereas *begui* is glossed ‘arrive’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 217). This bears a striking resemblance to Turku *bedji* which is glossed ‘come’ (Muraz 1926: 123), but also ‘arrive’ (Muraz 1926: 131).

The verb *kabass* ‘lie’ in Wtterwulghe (1904) is etymologically derived from Sudanese Arabic *ḥabbās* ‘intriguer’ (Amery 1905: 192, Hillelson 1925: 156). It also provides further evidence in support of Kaye & Tosco’s (1993: 302) conclusion about the variants found in Jenkins (1909) that “the semantic shift from ‘intrigue’ to ‘lie’ is easily understood”.

Another interesting item is *otbour*⁶ ‘wait’, which is derived from an Arabic etymon ultimately meaning ‘be patient’, just as its Turku counterpart.

Many of the forms recorded by Wtterwulghe (1904) and listed in Table 3 closely resemble their counterparts in modern Nubi (Pasch & Thelwall 1987, Wellens 2003, Luffin 2005) and – with a few exceptions – in Juba Arabic (Miller 1984, Smith & Ama 2005, Nakao 2014, Watson 2015) (table 4).

⁶ Where <t> should read <s>.

In the case of the verb ‘say’, the form *goul* provided by Wtterwulghe (1904: 20) is the only attestation in these early records of African pidginized/creolized Arabic of the modern Nubi and Juba Arabic form *gul*.

With respect to modern Nubi *kabas/kabasu*, Kaye & Tosco (1993: 302) write that “as the word has not been recorded for JA [= Juba Arabic], it is an important [...] isogloss”. In fact, this word cannot serve as an isogloss. As shown in Table 4, the word does occur in Juba Arabic. Moreover, in early Nubi, as recorded by Cook (1905), the meaning of *kabas* is ‘deceive’, as in Juba Arabic. Finally, *kabas/kabas* also has a similar meaning in modern Nubi.

A number of verbs listed by Wtterwulghe (1904) contain the reflexes *be-* or *b-* of the prefix *bi-*⁷. Most of these are written as a single word:

- (6) a. *bedrab* ‘tirer (un coup de feu)’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 19)
- b. *bedrop* ‘frapper’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 20)
- c. *bedour* ‘aimer’/*bedur* ‘vouloir’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 18,)
- d. *benoum* ‘dormir’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 18)
- e. *berouh* ‘partir’/*berowe* ‘aller’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 18, 20))
- f. *birgi* ‘revenir’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 21)
- g. *byekhâf* ‘avoir peur’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 18)

In two of them the reflex of the prefix is written as a separate word:

- (7) a. *b-asma* ‘comprendre’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 19)
- b. *be-arfou* ‘connaître’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 19)

Reflexes of the prefix *bi-*, mainly expressing the future or the present progressive, are already attested in early records of Nubi⁸. Consider the following examples:

- (8) a. *ana ma bidūru* (Jenkins 1909: 50)
1SG NEG like
‘I don’t like him’
- b. *enta bikasar* (Meldon 1913: 8)
2SG PREF break
‘you are breaking, you will break, you are going to break’
- c. *ana bi rua* (Owen & Keane 1915: 18)
1SG PREF go
‘I will go.’

⁷ Leaving aside *be-dji/begui* ‘come, arrive’, already discussed.

⁸ See also Kaye & Tosco (1993: 280), Avram (2015: 187) and Nakao (2016: 417).

Moreover, Meldon (1913: 8) clearly specifies that what he calls the “aorist” is built by “addition of letter ب B before the verb”.

There are also two instances, in pre- and respectively post-verbal position, of reflexes of the completive aspect marker *ḥalāṣ*, used in certain varieties of Sudanese Arabic:

- (9) a. *begui kalass* ‘arriver’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 18)
 b. *khalass eflat* ‘se sauver’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 21)

Such examples are comparable to evidence attesting to the use of such an aspectual marker in early Nubi⁹:

- (10) a. *ana shūf kalass* (Jenkins 1909: 3)
 1SG see COMPL
 ‘I saw (I have finished to see)’
 b. *enta kasar khalas* (Meldon 1913: 8)
 2SG break COMPL
 ‘thou breakest’
 c. *ana rua khalas* (Owen & Keane 1915: 18)
 1SG go COMPL
 ‘I have gone.’

Note that in early Nubi *khalas* occurs exclusively in postverbal position. In this respect Meldon (1913: 8) is again quite explicit on the formation of what he calls the “past” which is built by “suffix[ing] of word ص لاخ *khalās* after the verb”.

In sum, the verbs in Wtterwulghe (1904) appear to be morphologically frozen forms. There is only *prima facie* evidence of the occasional occurrence of the aspectual markers *be-/b-* and *kalass/khalass*. Luffin (2004: 384) argues that “dans certains cas au moins, les préfixes TMA ne sont pas figés” and adduces in support of this claim the fact that *be-/b-* is sometimes written as a separate word as well as the occurrence of *kalass/khalass*. This is, however, a moot question, since neither of these two alleged aspectual markers occurs in any sentence¹⁰. Furthermore, just like all the other verbs, those containing *be-/b-* or accompanied by *kalass/khalass* are glossed with the infinitive of their French equivalent. Finally, only three of the verbs containing *be-/b-* also occur in non-prefixed forms, two of which (11a-b) differently glossed:

⁹ See also Kaye & Tosco (1993: 281) and Avram (2015: 187).

¹⁰ There are only six sample sentences in Wtterwulghe (1904).

- (11) a. *b-asma* vs. *esma* ‘entendre, écouter’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 20)
 b. *bedrab/bedrop* vs. *darab* ‘battre’ (Wtterwulghe: 20)
 c. *birgi* vs. *redjaa* ‘revenir’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 21)

On the whole, the, the evidence is suggestive of a pidgin-like system.

3. LEXIS

Since the Egyptian, Sudanese¹¹ and the Classical Arabic words in Wtterwulghe (1904) are discussed by Luffin (2004: 386-387), this section mostly focuses on lexical items of other origins.

Luffin (2004: 386) mentions the occurrence in Wtterwulghe (1904: 27) of *dyel-ek* ‘yours’ as “an isolated term, typical of Moroccan Arabic”. In fact, there are three other items of Maghrebian Arabic origin¹², two of which are from Moroccan Arabic:

- (12) a. *bork* ‘canard’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 8)
 b. *terbyah* ‘petit enfant’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 4)
 c. *zyt* ‘huile’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 8)

In Behnstedt & Woidich (2011: 318 – Map 108 Enten) Morocco is the only Arabic-speaking area where forms phonetically similar to *bork* are attested for ‘duck’: *bər̥k*, *buṛk* (Behnstedt & Woidich 2011: 319). For ‘baby’, phonetically similar forms are recorded only in Malta and Morocco (Behnstedt & Woidich 2011: 44 – Map Baby). Therefore, *terbiyah* can be traced to Moroccan Arabic *terbiya*. As for *zyt*, given that in Wtterwulghe (1904) <y> frequently appears to represent [i:]¹³, it is similar to Maghrebian Arabic *zīt* ‘oil’ (Behnstedt & Woidich 2012: 275 – Map Öl), hence it could also be of Moroccan Arabic origin.

A lexical item derived from Egyptian Arabic *kubbaniyya* ‘gang, group’ (Hinds & Badawi 1986: 730) illustrates the semantic shift ‘gang, group’ > ‘friend’:

- (13) *kubanir*¹⁴ ‘ami’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 12)

¹¹ Nakao (2013) roughly estimates that “the lexicon [...] is half Egyptian and half Sudanese”.

¹² For the presence of Moroccan (and Tunisian) merchants in geographically contiguous areas, see Luffin (2004: 386).

¹³ See also Luffin (2004: 380).

¹⁴ Where <r> should read <a>.

Interestingly, similar forms with similar or identical meanings are found in two records of early Nubi:

- (14) a. *kubaniya* ‘to make friends’ (Cook 1905)
b. *kūbaniya* ‘friend’ (Jenkins 1909: 36)

Consider next one of the forms for ‘pepper’:

- (15) *chitéda* ‘poivre’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 8)

No similar forms from any Arabic dialects figure in Behnstedt & Woidich (2012: 262 – Map 248 Pfeffer). However, Hinds & Badawi (1986: 465) list *ḡiteeta* ‘bird pepper’. Reflexes of this form are attested in early Nubi (16a) as well as in modern Ugandan Nubi (16b):

- (16) a. *siteita* ‘pepper’ (Jenkins 1909: 62)
b. *šitita* ‘pepper’ (Behnstedt & Woidich 2012: 263)

Also worth mentioning is the following compound, literally ‘egg of hen’:

- (17) *bède gidaada* ‘œuf’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 8)

Similar forms are attested in two other early records of varieties of African pidginized/creolized Arabic, such as early Nubi (18a), Turku (18b), as well as in modern Nubi (18c):

- (18) a. *bete kidada* ‘egg’ (Cook 1905)
b. *bed-guidad* ‘œufs’ (Muraz 1926: 267)
c. *bééda gidáda* ‘fresh eggs’ (Pasch & Thelwall 1987: 144)

As noted by Luffin (2004: 386), a number of words of ultimately Turkish origin are recorded in Wtterwulghe (1904). With one exception, these are also found in records of early Nubi¹⁵: (table 5).

Two of these are worth commenting. Wtterwulghe’s (1904: 12) *fissigli*, from Sudanese Arabic *fashaklik* ‘bandolier’ (Amery 1905: 28), is the most “pidginized” form, exhibiting the substitution of [s] for etymological /ʃ/ and the loss of the etymological word-final /k/.

Egyptian Arabic as *karakoon/karakool* ‘police station’ (Hinds & Badawi 1986: 745) and Sudanese Arabic *karakōl* ‘guard’ (Amery 1905: 166, Hillelson 1925: 131) can account, both phonetically and semantically, for *karakōl*

¹⁵ Except for the first item, these words are also found in Juba Arabic (see Smith & Ama 2005).

Table 5 – Turkish-derived words in four early records of African pidginized/creolized Arabic

Wtterwulghe (1904)	Cook (1905)	Jenkins (1909)	Meldon (1913)	Gloss
<i>bach</i>	–	–	–	‘chief’
<i>beirat*</i>	<i>bera</i>	–	–	‘flag’
<i>fissigli</i>	–	<i>fashaklik</i>	<i>fashlek/fashleek</i>	‘cartridge belt’
<i>karakol</i>	<i>kolokon</i>	<i>karakōl</i>	–	‘chain’, ‘guard’
<i>sengi</i>	–	<i>singi</i>	<i>singi</i>	‘bayonet’

* Where <t> should read <k> or <g>, cf. Sudanese Arabic *beirak* ‘flag’ (Amery 1905: 144), *bērag* ‘flag’ (Hillelson 1925: 112).

Table 6 – Shared Africanisms in four early records of African pidginized/creolized Arabic

Wtterwulghe (1904)	Cook (1905)	Jenkins (1909)	Meldon (1913)	Gloss
<i>korofai</i>	<i>korufu</i>	<i>karraffa</i>	<i>korāfah</i>	‘leaf’; ‘branch’
<i>kiata</i>	<i>kyata</i>	<i>khiaātā</i>	–	‘(sweet) potato’
<i>kibri</i>	<i>kibra</i>	<i>kibera</i>	<i>kibrah</i>	‘forest’

‘guard’ in Jenkins (1909: 40) and for Juba Arabic *korokoon* ‘sentry post’ (Smith & Ama 2005: 62). Rather surprisingly, the form *karakol* is glossed ‘chain’ by Wtterwulghe (1904: 12). Consider, however, the form *kolokon* in Cook (1905), which occurs only in the following phrases:

- (19) a. *anas bita kolokon* ‘prisoners’ (Cook 1905)
 b. *kolokon bita bagara* ‘yoke’ (Cook 1905)

In both these cases, *kolokon* may plausibly mean ‘chain/irons’: the literal translation of (19a) may well be ‘people in chains/irons’ and the one for (19b) ‘irons for cows’. The meaning of the forms in Wtterwulghe (1904) and in Cook (1905) may be partly influenced by Swahili. According to Rechenbach

(1967: 244), Swahili *karakoli/karakoni/korokoni* (and other variants) also means ‘jail’. The forms in Wtterwulghe (1904) and Cook (1905) may illustrate the semantic shift ‘jail’ > ‘chain/irons’.

Luffin (2004: 386-387) does not mention any borrowings from African languages in his section on the vocabulary in Wtterwulghe (1904). Three such loanwords found in Wtterwulghe (1904) are also attested in early Nubi (table 6).

The word for ‘leaf’, ‘branch’ is from Bari *karófo* ‘Blatt’ (Müller 1864: 45), *korópo* (*korófo*) ‘n. pl. Blatt eines Baumes’ (Mitterrutzner 1867: 202), *koró’fo* ‘leaves’ (Owen 1908: 140), *karɔpɔ/koropo* ‘leaves’ (Spagnolo 1960: 107). This is also the etymon suggested by Kaye & Tosco (1993: 300) and Nakao (2012: 133) for modern Nubi and Juba Arabic *korófo* ‘leaf’.

For ‘(sweet) potato’ Pasch & Thelwall (1987: 142) suggest a Swahili etymon *kyazi* ‘sweet potato’. However, this is not sufficiently similar to the phonological shape of the various forms for ‘(sweet) potato’ in Table 6, which all contain /t/ and end in /a/. More recently, Nakao (2012: 133) lists as possible etyma Acholi *kiyata* ~ *layata*, Bari *kayata*, Ma’di *kaata* ~ *kiata*. However, Acholi *layata* and Ma’di *kaata* cannot be the etyma and should therefore be excluded from the list. Acholi *kiyata* may itself be a borrowing, given that only *layata* appears in Acholi Language Manual (2009). The Bari form *kayata* is slightly less similar phonetically. Another possible etymon is Lugungu *kyata* ‘sweet potato’ (Robert & Diprose 2012: 169). Therefore, it is not possible to determine the source language.

The word for ‘forest’ is from Luganda *kibira* (Murphy 1972: 181). This is also the etymon mentioned by e.g. Pasch & Thelwall (1987: 142) and Nakao (2012: 133). The alternative origin suggested by Kaye (1991: 13) is less convincing. In his discussion of the etymology of the name Kibera, a suburb in Nairobi where the Nubi live, Kaye (1991: 13) claims that Kenyan Nubi *kibra* and Ugandan Nubi *kíbra* are derived from Sudanese Colloquial Arabic *kabra* ‘thorny gate or fence for a corral; dried thicket’. According to Kaye (1991b: 13), “when Kibera was founded around 1900, it had lots of corrals, trees, bushes, and shrubs [and] it was only natural for the first SUD [= Sudanese] KN [= Ki-Nubi] speakers to call it kíbra”. Kaye (1991: 13) further writes that “the a > i is a special KN development of SCA [= Sudanese Colloquial Arabic] dialects, probably to be explained via dissimilation”. On the strength of these arguments, Kaye (1991: 13) concludes that “this is a SCA borrowing into Luganda rather than the other way around”. Several objections can be levelled at this account. Firstly, it needs to invoke a “special KN development”. Secondly, no independent evidence is provided for the dissimilation *a > i. Thirdly, forms with similar or identical meanings exist in other relevant Bantu languages, e.g. Lugungu *kibira* ‘forest; large area of very many trees and other plants growing closely together’ (Robert & Diprose 2012: 59) and Lunyoro *kibira* ‘forest’ (Maddox 1902: 99).

Also attested are four borrowings from Swahili:

- (20) a. *bonduki* ‘fusil’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 13) < *bunduki* ‘gun, rifle’ (Rechenbach 1967: 39)
b. *dokhani* ‘fumée’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 13) < *dohani* ‘smoke, soot’ (Rechenbach 1967: 70)
c. *lakini* ‘pendant que’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 24) < *lakini* ‘but, however, nevertheless’ (Rechenbach 1967: 260)
d. *samaki* ‘poisson’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 8) < *samaki* ‘fish’ (Rechenbach 1967: 465)

Finally, there is one loanword from Zande:

- (21) *yulu* ‘nuit’ (Wtterwulghe 1904: 9)

The Zande etymon is *yúro* ‘Nacht’ (Schweinfurth 1872: 41), *yourou* ‘nuit’ (Colombaroli 1895: 476), *yolu* ‘Nacht’ (Czekanowski 1924: 76).

Note that the loanwords under (20)-(21) appear not to be attested in either Nubi or Juba Arabic.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Wtterwulghe’s (1904) vocabulary provides evidence of language contacts involving not only varieties of Arabic, but also African languages such as Bari, Luganda, Swahili, and Zande.

Luffin (2004: 395) writes that Wtterwulghe’s (1904) vocabulary is illustrative of “plusieurs parlers arabes”, while Nakao (2012: 129-130, 2013) includes it among vocabularies of early Arabic creoles. Luffin (2004: 396) also mentions the possibility that it may additionally reveal “l’existence d’un parler arabe pidginisé, voire créolisé, utilisé par certains des informateurs”. The morphological and lexical data examined in this paper are consistent with evidence from early 20th-century records of Nubi. This suggests that the variety at issue is early Nubi. If so, Wtterwulghe’s (1904) vocabulary contains the first attestations of several morphological and lexical features of Nubi and/or Juba Arabic.

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