

THE ARABIC TEXTS FROM AD-DUWAYM (SUDAN). I

1. Introduction

The Sudanese-Arabic Textes which we insert below contain one longer tale, one anecdote and six proverbs. The tale has been related by a Sudanese youth Huseyn Maḥmūd Ḥasan. He was born on the 2nd of July, 1936 in ad-Duwaym in a family of a farmer. The anecdote and the proverbs come from his cousin 'Abd al-Min'am Bašīr Ḥasan, born on the 12th of March, 1936 in ad-Duwaym in a merchant's family. Both speak the same dialect which is the dialect of the Middle Sudan. It is to be admitted that the tale and the proverbs are also known in other Arabic countries in the same or somewhat changed form, while the anecdote is originally rather Sudanese.

2. Transcription and Phonetical Remarks

Because of the scarcity of our text, the present system of transcription and phonetical remarks have no generally binding character. We only want to make the kind readers know what kind of sounds occur in the Arabic dialect of Middle Sudan.

CONSONANTS

Class. Ar.	Class. Ar.
' ء shows a tendency to disappear except in the word <i>mas'ala</i> .	g' ح Strongly palatalized „g“ like Hungarian „gy“ in Magyar. This sound occurs also in Central and Southern Arabia*.
b ب	
t ت and ث	

* Comp. G. Bergsträsser, *Einführung in die semitischen Sprachen*, München, 1921, pp. 157 a. n.; S. Hillelson, *Sudan Arabic Texts*, Cambridge, 1935, p. XIV.

Class. Ar.	Class. Ar.
h ح	m م
ḥ خ	n ن
d د, ذ, ت	h هـ
r ر	
z ز, ذ	w و
s س, ش	y ی
š ش	
ṣ ص	
ḍ ض	
ṭ ط	
ʿ ع	
ḡ غ	
f ف	
q ق	
q ق only at the ends of the words and before ت	Diphthongs
k ك	eʾ pronounced like a long „e“ with slightly marked „y“ at the end.
l ل	ay, aw, ew.

Vowels

Long: ā, ī, ū, ē, ō (the last developed from the former diphthong „aw“).

Short: a, i, u, e.

Very short: ă, ĭ, ě, ŭ, ǫ.

3. Texts

I

Fi wāḥed aḥinā kida meyīt ḥālu u maratu kull marra big'iblu banāt u banāt u banāt kawwamat 'indu desta bta'it banāt u šāḥibnā fī nihāya bagā zā'il g'iddan u 'indu ganābil zirriya katīra min al-banāt. U ḥalaf 'aleḥō biṭ-ṭalāq ṭalāq telāta u kullu ma ṭḥill tiḥram. Maratu 'd-dūr al-g'ayy kân g'ābat weled illi yiṭbaḥ leḥō ḥarūf ṭul danabu sab'a ašbār. Wa'š-šudfa'l-garība g'āt innu maratu wulidat g'ābat weled u bagā fāt az-zarība bta't al-bahāyim u'btadā yigīš fī danab al-ḥurfān u kullu mā yigīš danab ḥarūf yilgā lu nāgaš šibīr šibre'n. Bagā ḥina g'aglab ḥalāš ḥabardišeri bas ti'ib ḥalāš mā 'arif yusawwi šnu. Fāt lišāḥibna 'l-gādi gāl leḥō anā budda kida kida u hanaktub aṭ-ṭalāq ṭalāq telāta kân maratī wuldat

g'ābat weled anā adbaḥ le'hā ḥarūf danabu sab'a ašbār u ma-
 šeṭ li'z-zarība fattāštū 'l-ḥurfān kulluhūm mā lgeṭ ḥarūf tūl
 danabu sab'a ašbār asawwi šnu halgeṭ. Šāhibna 'l-gāḍī gāl
 le'hō wallāh yāḥi 'l-mas'ala muntahiyya maratak ṭalgāna 'ašān
 tānī ya'nī mā tista'g'il maratak ta'milhā maṭiyya u taḥlif
 'ale'hā bi 't-ṭalāq u 't-ṭalāq da aṣlu ḥāg'a sahla u middinlak
 'alā keṭfak, u ḥarašu 'ala 'l-ūm al-gāḍī. U be'na 'r-rag'il ta'ib
 g'iddan keṭf yiṭalliḡ maratu u fi 'l-waqt 'indu weled u hu
 biḥibbu ta'ib ḥāliš bagā fakkar yōm kāmīl fāt le'hō wāḥed
 maṣṭūl bta' ḥašīš bahlawānī kida gāl le'hō yāḥi ḥaṣal kida
 kida kida al-ḥall keṭf ē. Gāl le'hō da ḥāg'a baṣīṭa baṣīṭa g'iddan
 aḥillāhā leṭk fi dagīga. Gallō kida ḥillāhā yabūhā. Gāl le'hō
 weledak ṣgīr muš 'indu šībīr. Gallō 'indu ṭab'an. Gallō g'ib lu
 ḥarūf fi 'l-beṭ u sīb weledak aṣ-ṣgīr da šilu u gīs bīdu da-
 naba 'l-ḥarūf kān tamm sab'a ašbār ḥalāṣ adbaḥ u sammi
 liweledak as-simāya u klū u fraḥū u ḥayyisū u yintahi 'l-mawḍū.
 Gallō wallāh yāḥi da ḥall ḥakīm g'iddan 'āša aṣḥāb al-'uḡūl
 ya'nī fi'lan 'indak 'agel temām ya'nī šāhibnā fāt ištara 'l-ḥarūf
 u g'āb weledu ṣ-ṣuḡeyyir gās bīdu sab'a ašbār kemān ṭala'a
 arba'taṣer šībīr dabāḥū u ḥayyasū, u akalu 'l-marār u' š-šeyye.
 U fi amantillāh innu ba'd al-yōm ḥalāṣ intahā u šāhibnā it-
 kayyaf g'iddan min šāhibna 'l-maṣṭūl fāt lilgāḍī u gallō we'n
 inta yāḥi'n-nās fi dagīga ḥallu 'l-mas'ala da gallō ḥaṣal kida
 kida. U ṭab'an za'al g'iddan keṭf wāḥed min aš-šāri' yithad-
 dūhu u yiḥill al-mas'ala u hu zōl muḥtaṣṣ u biyaḥud māhiya
 u mā yiḥill al-mas'ala di gallō ṭayyib yāḥi'sma' al-mas'ala
 ya'nī lāzim takūn g'add šweyye g'ib šāhibak al-mḥaššīš da wal-
 maṣṭūl da u ba'de'n anā bag'ib g'amā'atī u big'ib g'amā'atu
 bnitlagā fi 't-ṭariḡ bnimtaḥin ba'aḍ naṣūf al-fāhim minu. Gallō
 ṭayyib naṣūf. Šāhibna 'l-gāḍī g'āb lu g'amā'atu u 'l-maṣṭūl
 g'āb lu maṣāṭilu kulluhūm bta'al-ḥašīš u tlāḡū fi 't-ṭariḡ 'ala
 masāfit kida zay miyat miter al-gāḍī ewwel mā šāf šāhibna 'l-ma-
 ḥašīš da gām rafa' lu ušba' wāḥed lifōq bāšir li's-samā
 šāhibna 'l-maṣṭūl dak ašār bi ušba' u lilwaṭā ja'nī lil-arḍ. Šā-
 ḥibna 'l-gāḍī ašār bi iṣba' wāḥed bi't-tig'āh ufugi ba'de'n
 šāhibna 'l-maṣṭūl dak ašār lu bi ušbu'e'n tne'n fi neṣ it-tig'āh

it-tig'āh ufugi. Ba'de'n šāhibna 'l-gāḍī ṭala'a le'hō beṭa ta'rifū
 beṭa min g'aybu šāhibna 'l-maṣṭūl dak ṭala'a le'hō farḥa
 ṣuyṣiyu ṣuḡayyir. Ḥina 'l-gāḍī itlaḥam g'iddan g'iddan u iḥtar
 u rag'a' lig'amā'atu maḥzūn. Aṣḥābu gāl le'hō ē ḥaṣal ē ḥaṣal
 leṭk ē hazzōl il-baṣīṭ da yihizmak. Gāl le'hōm wallāhi dazzōl
 'allāma bes zōl fāhim g'iddan g'iddan. Gallō keṭf. Gāl gult
 le'hō rabbuna rafa' a's-samā gāl leṭ basaṭ āl-arḍ. Gāl gult
 le'hō allāh wāḥed gāl gāl leṭ mā lu tānī mā 'indu šarik ya'nī
 beshu wāḥed. Gāl gult le'hō hu yuḥrug' al-meyyit min al-
 ḥayy. Gāl leṭ yuḥrug' al-ḥayy min al-mayyit. Gālu wallā al-
 ḥagīga da fāhim. Fātū lišāhibna bta' al-ḥašīš gālu lu keṭf inta
 ya zōl ya muḡaffal ya bta' al-ḥašīš ya maṣṭūl tahzim āl-gāḍī
 da kullu bigadru u big'alaltu. Gāl le'hōm da mā yafham ayya
 ḥāg'a. Gallō keṭf. Gāl gāl leṭ aṭayrak fi 's-samā gāl gult lu aḡaṭ-
 ṭisak fi 'l-waṭā gāl gāl leṭ agiddi lak 'eynak wāḥde gāl gult
 lu agudd lak 'ayūnak al-itne'n gāl gāl leṭ ān-nās yaklū beṭ
 gult lu 'n-nās yaklū fraḥ. Wa 'l-mas'ala intahat 'ala kida
 u werik 'ala innu ya'nī fi ašyā mumkin al-wāḥed kida yiḥil-
 lāhā kida ya'nī biḥazāga šweyyē u lebāga kida wa 's-salām
 'aleṭkūm.

TRANSLATION

There was our brother, such a one, whose condition was poor and his wife brought him every time daughters and daughters and daughters (and so) a dozen of daughters heaped at his (side), and our friend, in the end began to be very angry and there were (simply) numerous atomic bombs of daughters at his (side). And it came upon him to divorce (and) to divorce thrice as everything (else) that would solve (the matter) was forbidden. (May) his wife (in her) coming fruit bring a boy for whom he would cook a lamb whose length of the tail would be seven *šibrs*¹. And what a strange chance! It happened that his wife bore (and) brought a boy and he went to the stable

¹ *šibr* — space between thumb and small finger used as a measure of length.

for lambs and began to measure tails of the lambs and every lamb's tail was wanting one *šibr* or two. At this time he became very angry and he left it. He only got completely tired not knowing what to do. He went to our friend, the judge, and told him: „I want so, and so and let us write the divorce, the threefold divorce (because) my wife bore (and) brought a boy and I (want) to butcher a lamb for her (the measure) of whose tail is seven *šibrs* and I went to the stable and examined all the lambs (and) I did not meet a lamb whose length of the tail is seven *šibrs*, what shall I do at present?“. Our friend, the judge told him: „oh my brother, the question is settled your wife is divorced for the second reason i. e. do not be in a hurry to use your wife as a riding-animal and do not tell her (all the time) *ṭālīq*¹ and divorce, is it an easy thing? and do as you like“, and the judge rebuked him severely for all that. And while the man, very tired (of the thought) how to divorce his wife and in time when he had a boy and he loved him, and so completely tired he thought continually all day long (and) it came to him (to go to) a certain ḥašīš-smoker (and) acrobat (and so) he told him: „Oh my brother, the matter is so, and so, and so, what is the solution?“. He told him: „this matter is simple, very simple, I'll solve it for you in a minute“. He told him: „solve it oh it's father“². He told him: „your boy is small, is not his measure a *šibr*?“. He answered him: „it is, of course“. He told him: „bring to him the lamb to the house, take this your small boy and bring him and measure the tail of the lamb with his hand and [the matter of] seven *šibrs* will be settled, and finished. Go and give the name to your boy and eat, and be happy, and enjoy yourselves, and (so) the subject comes to an end“. He told him: „by Allah oh my brother this solution is a very clever one, long live possessors of reason i. e., in fact you have a perfect mind“. Thus our friend went away,

¹ *ṭālāq* — „divorce“, word used as formula of divorce.

² In the Arabic text „*yabūhā*“ — 'oh it's father', i. e. the father of the matter in the meaning that the solution of it lies in his hands.

bought the lamb and brought it to his very small boy, and measured with his (the boy's) hand seven *šibrs* more (and so) it (the measure) amounted to fourteen *šibrs*. (So) they butchered the lamb and ate the *marāra*¹ and *šeyye*². And under the protection of Allāh when the day ended and was over and our friend was very pleased with our friend the ḥašīš-smoker (and) he went to the judge and told him: „and where you are oh my human brother, they solved this matter in a minute“, and told him: „the matter is so and so“. And he (the judge) was very angry how one from the street (can) outdistance him and solve the problem and he was a competent person and took salary and he had not solved that question (so) he told him: „good, listen oh my brother, it is necessary that this matter becomes serious in some degree (so) bring your friend this ḥašīš-smoker, this stunned one and then I'll bring my people and he will bring his people and we shall meet each other on the way and we shall put each other on trial, we shall see that intellectual, who is he?“. He told him: „good, we shall see“. Our friend the judge brought to him his people and the ḥašīš-smoker brought to him (the judge) all the ḥašīš-smokers and they met on the way. In the distance of about one hundred meters the judge, first when he saw our friend this ḥašīš-smoker raised up one of his fingers looking at the sky. Our friend that ḥašīš-smoker showed with his finger downwards i. e. to the earth. Our friend the judge showed with one finger in the direction of the horizon. Then our friend that ḥašīš-smoker showed with two fingers in the same direction i. e. the direction of the horizon. Then our friend the judge lifted

¹ *al-marāra* — national food in Sudan prepared in the following way: the intestines, the stomach, the liver and the heart taken out of a butchered camel or sheep, raw and still warm are cut into small pieces, mixed up and then poured with gall and served (comp. R. Dozy, *Supplément aux Dictionnaires Arabes*, Paris-Leide, 1927, t. II, p. 577).

² *aš-šeyye* — probably „the roast“. This word seems to be the Sudanese form of شوية (comp. R. Dozy, op. cit., t. I, p. 807).

up an egg, you know an egg, out of his pocket. Our friend that ḥašīš-smoker lifted up a chicken, a very small chicken. At that moment the judge, very, very confounded and in bewilderment turned sadly to his people. His friends told him: „what is the matter, what is the matter with you? Did this simple person challenge you?“. He told them: „by Allah, that person is an erudite, simply a very, very intelligent person“. They told him: „how?“. He told: „I told him our Lord lifted up the sky (and) he told me: and spread out the earth“. Then I told him: Allah is one and he told me: there is no other God, He has no companion i. e. He is only one. Then I told him: He brings out the dead from the living and he told me: He brings out the living from the dead“. They told him: „By Allah, indeed, this is a clever man“. They went to our friend the ḥašīš-smoker and told him: „how did you challenge this judge in all his ability and his dignity, oh, person! oh simpleton! oh ḥašīš-smoker! oh stunned!“. He told them that he did not understand a single thing. They told him: „how?“. He went on: „he (the judge) told me: I will rise you to heaven, then I told him: I will dip you to hell. Then he told me: I will pick up your one eye and I told him: I will pick up your two eyes. Then he told me: the people eat eggs and I told him: the people eat chickens“. And so the matter has come to an end in this way and shows you that in important matters it is possible that such a one solves them in this way, i. e. by a slight presson and such cleverness, and peace be upon you!

II

Fi ta'lim al-ummiya

Wāḥed kār bi'allem fi 'n-nās al-ummiyyīn u ba'de'n begūl le'hō g'ib kalima tibṭadī masalan bi'l-ḥarīf elif aw bi'l-ḥarīf be aw hakaza u nās aṣḥāb il-ḡarīb min ḡarbi's-sūdān dayman yinṭagūn il-ḡe'n ḥā. Fabagā yig'ib kalima awwalḥa ḥā gallō ḥanamāya.

TRANSLATION

On the education of the illiterate

One taught the illiterate people and then he told him (to one of them) „say a word beginning with the letter „a“ or the letter „b“ or so“, and the people living in the West, from the West of Sudan always pronounce *ḡeyn* as *ḥā*. And when he (one of those people) was to say a word beginning with „h“ he told him: *ḥanamāya*¹.

III

Amāsila Sūdānī — Sudanese Proverbs

1. aṣ-ṣagur waqt iga kutr il-badābit 'ayb.
When the hawk falls down to taunt much is bad.
(When an outstanding personality stumbles you should not plunge him deeper with your idle talk).
2. ilma tilḡagu g'addi'du.
This what you do not reach, repeat it.
(If you did not succeed in attaining your aim, try to attain it again).
3. al-fātak fūtu.
Leave whatever you have to leave.
(Do not worry about what you are obliged to leave).
4. al-kalbu yanbaḥ wa l-g'amal māši².
The dog barks and the camel passes on.
5. da ḡālīd u da ṭawīl u da ḥaram ma yinkawī bu.
This is fat, and that is long, and this is not allowed to iron with.
(Be quick with your decision).
6. al-bāb illi big'ik minnu riḥ siddu wistriḥ.
Close the door from which a wind comes to you and take a rest.
(Leave alone the thing which gives you much trouble).

¹ *ḥanamāya* — for *ḡanamāya*.

² This proverb is also enclosed in S. Hillelson's, *Sudan Arabic Texts*, p. 4 but in a somewhat different form: *al-kelib yinbaḥ w'aḡ-ḡemel māši*.