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“The Wood Ibises”: a Fulbe *Mbooku* Poem

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The present paper aims at presenting a poem, “The Wood Ibises”, composed and sung by one of the most well-known *mbooku* singers in Diamaré Prefecture of North Cameroon. The performance of this poem is a good example of how Fulbe humour is produced. The annotated text and translation follow the general introduction. Another version by a younger singer is added for the purpose of comparison.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to introduce a *mbooku* poem, “The Wood Ibises”, one of the poems composed some fifty years ago during the reign of the Bogo chief, Laamdo Usmaanu 6ii Hamman Gaare (1925–48), by Ardo Aakal, one of the most well-known *mbooku* poets in Diamaré Prefecture, North Cameroon.¹⁾ As in my previous paper [EGUCHI], I have presented for comparative purposes an additional text of the poem, sung by Ardo Aadamu Daarifu, a younger singer, to illustrate the transmission of a newly composed poem.²⁾

In this paper, I have tried to simplify the introduction in order to avoid the repetition of statements appearing in former paper.

1) In 1976 I participated in the scientific mission to North Cameroon under the direction of Professor Shun'ya Hino of the Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. On this occasion, I carried out research on the *mbooku* poems. The field research was sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Education.

The programme was registered with the Institute of Humanistic Sciences (I.S.H.), National Office for Scientific and Technical Research (O.NA.RE.S.T.) for 1976–77, and 1979, under the title: “Collection of the Fulbe oral tradition in Diamaré Prefecture, and of *ajamiya* manuscripts”.

The *mbooku* poems belong to one of the Fulbe genres of oral literature and exist only in Diamaré Prefecture.

I am deeply grateful for the wholehearted assistance of Mr. Abba Ulakdi (1906–77). Without his help, I would never have been able to appreciate the depth of Fulbe literature.

2) There are two kinds of *mbooku* poems: those traditionally transmitted, and those newly composed.

The following recordings of the three versions of the poem were used for the present study:

- 1) "Wood Ibises" (*KI 1*), 170 lines, performed by Aakal, in front of my friends (commoners) at Mr. Kaaw Madam's compound in Dugoy District, Maroua, on October 10, 1976.
 - 2) "Wood Ibises" (*KI 2*), 204 lines,³⁾ performed by Aakal, in front of Chief, Hammadu, his son Daayru, and his subjects, and recorded by Eldridge Mohammadou in Bogo around 1966.
- 3) *KI 2* has forty four lines more than *KI 1*. This difference is due to the fact that *KI 1* contains greetings and eulogies of the chief and his son. These are as follows:

Haa mi saana mo ngilliiden.
Haa mi saana laamiido.
Ngagga Malle caanan-mi.
 10 *Ngagga Malle gasol Duumu,*
sirla Seehu Usmaanu, /

/ hakiika Gaare taannii maa,
fakat boo Sammbo jaannii ma.
A ron laamu, a soodaay ngu.
Laamu nii tawtawum tawdaa.

'Let me greet the one whom we are visiting.
 Let me greet the chief.
 I will greet the great ox of Mali.

- 10 The great ox of Mali in the town of Bogo,
 Shaikh Othman's son,
 indeed, Gaare's grandson,
 certainly, Sammbo's great-grandson.
 You inherited the reign, but you did not buy it.
 You found the reign from your birth.'

Jamaare, yimbe laamiido.
Gooto gooto mi saanii on.
Yimbe ngomna laamiido.
Yerima Daayru caanan-mi.
Dawdu mo njuka piurooje.
Mardo baaba mari baawde.
Kadi mba'don jabre.
Alla woonane laamiido.
 160 *Hul Alla, taa hul duniya.*
Jood' Alla nii, taa jood' duniya.
A jawmu lumse nasaraaku.
Mo Alla borni de fiu foofiti.
Gaydo maa kala min ngalda.
Alla wirgu ganyo maa fu.
Wirga wila ba caaliingol.
Gaydo maa wanya yaa muudum.
Turta boo wanya baam maako.
A woodaa ganyo dow duniya.
 170 *Koo mo don mi anndaa mo. /*

/ Mbonndi bod'de hacitoo mo.
Nduumndi tobrugo nder loogo.
Gawjo tooknu o harloo mo.
Ba dajje hina de dahataako.
Bonde sooje sirloo mo.
Sinigaljo tufoo nofru,
nannga roonda mo gongogru.
Yeftu o kalle jawgerru.
Nannga naada mo danngayru.
 180 *Suudu baaba yidam woodaa.*
Suudu wuttudu wanya diina.
Suudu yaasdu riba komiser.
Suudu haa mi wi'a moolaandu.
Moolanaandu datal juulbe.
Ceniido halku ganyo maada.
Njagaawu mbonngu harloo mo.
Mannga waandu doflooo mo.
Mo buulel wara suftoo mo.
Damma tamma mo rummoodu.

- 3) "Wood Ibises" (*KI 3*), 43 lines performed by Aadamu Daarifu, recorded on October 8, 1976 in Mbam near Bagalaf.

Transcription was carried out using the Fulfulde alphabet proposed by the UNESCO meeting of experts at Bamako. The meaning of the text was determined with the help of informants. The text was annotated for the convenience of the reader.

The primary audience of this poem consists of the inhabitants of Bogo. It is the Bogo people, especially old people, who can truly understand the context of the

- Everybody, people of the chief.
I would like to greet each one of you.
The people of the powerful chief.
I will greet Prince Daayru,
the chief's important subject who owns airplanes.
He has his father and wealth.
Please sing in chorus.
May Allah give you benediction, chief.
160 Fear Allah, but do not fear the world.
Trust Allah, but do not trust the world.
You are the owner of European clothes.
The one whom Allah made wear clothes does not have any worry.
If you have an enemy, we will all help you to get rid of him.
May Allah destroy all your enemies.
Let them be destroyed and laid down like the ruins of an ancient city.
Let your enemy hate his mother.
Let him also hate his father.
You have no enemy in this world.
170 Even if there is any, we will ignore him.
May the most horrible one of all the snakes eat him for breakfast.
The snake who has spent the wet season in the hollow of a tree.
May a hunter who has poisoned his arrows catch him,
with the authentic poison which has no remedy.
May he have a prisoner's uniform put on him.
May the Senegalese soldiers whose ears are pierced,
catch him to make him carry a can.
May he be forced to lift up a big box.
Let the soldier arrest him and throw him into the prison.
180 The prison is a house where one cannot say, "Help me".
It is a horrible house where no one wants to practice his religion.*
It is a wide house where a police superintendent makes profit.
It is a house which I say is cursed.
It is a cursed house against the Moslem's way.
May the Holy One get rid of your enemy.
May a fierce lion catch him.
May a vulture come and pick him up.
May it step on him, lusting for his anus.'

* The meaning is not certain.

poem and its characters, who were young and active some fifty years ago when the poem was composed, such as Umaru bii Bakari, Danndi maccungel Aduwa, Sannda Omaru and so forth.

The composer and performer of this poem was about seventy years old (in 1976) and blind. He was born in Maroua and has lived in Bogo for many years.

It is important to recognize the exstance of the interaction between performer and audience on the occasion of the performance.

Aakal, the performer, criticizes the Fulbe audience of Bogo for catching and eating harmless game, represented by wood ibises (*Ibis ibis ibis* (Linnaeus))⁴. He says that even the non-Fulbe population such as those in Baghirmi, those in Mbangmati, the Musgum in Guirvidik, the Massa and Tupuri in Yagoua, Mofu and Gisiga in Maroua and so forth do not hunt these birds. The Fulbe of Bogo, however, eat the birds which the *haabe* or pagans refuse to eat.

Incidentally, wood ibises do not make nests in Bogo now. According to the

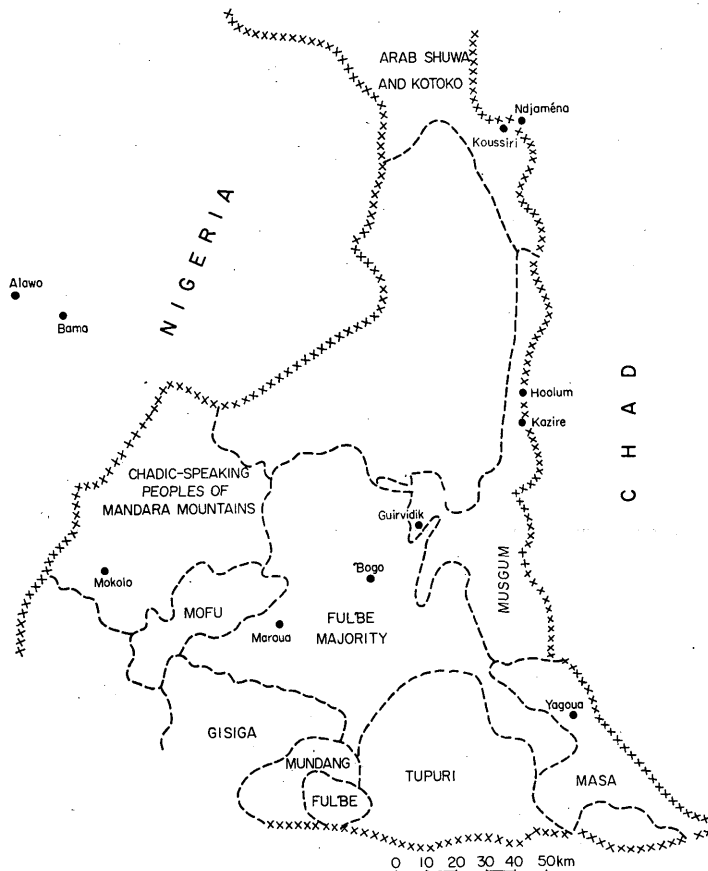


Figure 1. Distribution of ethnic groups mentioned in this article

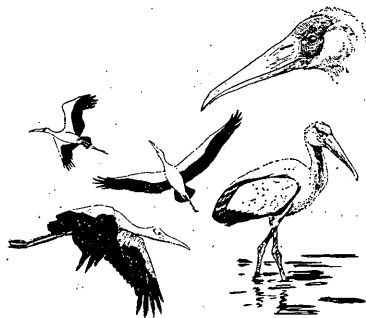
people of Bogo, they pass the wet season near Agayda, and Bagalaf in Diamaré Prefecture. They used to come to Bogo some fifty years ago.

The audience responds to the performer, himself a Fulbe man living in Bogo with the same reproach. I would like to point out that this interaction between the performer and audience produces the laughter between them.

The following is a resumé of the plot of the three versions adopted in this paper:

	<i>Kl 1</i>	<i>Kl 2</i>	<i>Kl 3</i>
No flight of young birds	1		1
Compassion for wood ibises	4~7	1~7	3
Wood ibises not touched in various areas except Bogo	10~24	193~199	4~10
Wood ibises move into Bogo. Aakal's anxiety.	25~26	200~201	11
Bogo people plot to hunt wood ibises.	27~48	44~62	12~13
Other birds hunted by the Bogo people	50~65	29~43	
Persons surrounding the hunters	70~91	119~136	14~23
Sanda sends Aakal to ask for meat of wood ibises but Aakal does not receive anything	94~121	71~96	24~33
Innocence of wood ibises	129~134	17~21	
Chief butcher's sigh	135~138	25~28	

- 4) According to Good, *Ibis Ibis ibis* (Linnaeus) is called 'wood ibis' in English, and 'tantale ibis' or 'ibis blanc' in French. The description of the bird according to him is as follows: Entire bird white, tinged with rose on the back, and some short bars of crimson-lake on the wing-coverts. The large wing feathers and tail are black. In flight the bird looks white, with a broad black border on the wings. Iris brown. Bill orange, shortly curved at tip. Bare skin of front part of head red. Legs and feet pink. Wing: 490. Tail: 175. Tarsus: 210. Bill: 225. This bird may be found in almost any region, but is uncommon except in the north, where it is reported as common about lake Chad. It is a large bird, standing about a meter high. Though called Ibis, it is placed in the family of the Storks, and not that of Ibises. [GOOD: 36]



Ibis ibis

[DEKEYSER & DERIVOT: Pl. 20]

Sympathy for Sannda Mayna and appreciation for Faadme	142~150	140~148	
Buuba Cardi's complaints	152~155		37~41
Ephithet of wood ibises	167~169	24~25	
Conclusion	170		42

Note that Aadamu's lines from 35~36 were not included on the list above because of their ambiguity.

The first problem lies in the difference in the introduction of the chorus between *Kl 1* and *Kl 2*. In *Kl 1*, *De piirnaay Duumu* 'The wood ibises could not have their young birds fly out of 'Bogo. In *Kl 2*, *Kanje njurmii-mi* 'It is the wood ibises which made me feel sorry' This difference is more musical than semantic, as the words of the *Kl 2* chorus are a subjective expression resulting from the fact expressed in the *Kl 1* chorus. That is, the fact that the young birds were slaughtered by the 'Bogo people and could not grow up to fly makes the poet feel sorry.

From the comparison of Aakal's two versions, we can observe the following compositional characteristics: Both *Kl 1* and *Kl 2* have in common the story of how the Bogo people hunt and eat the wood ibises, in the "nuclear" part of the poem. In *Kl 1*, the information that the non-Fulbe population outside Bogo do not catch the wood ibises comes before the "nuclear" part, while in *Kl 2*, it appears after the

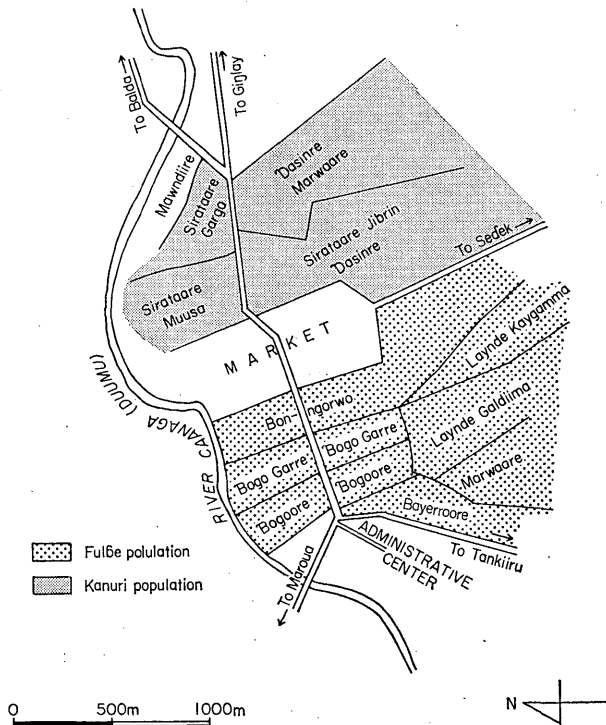


Figure 2. Map of center of Bogo

“nuclear” part. In *Kl 1*, the expression of the wood ibises’ innocence and the butcher’s lament appear after the “nuclear” part, and in *Kl 2*, before the “nuclear” part.

As for interjectional phrases, there are general ones which appear in all poems by the same composer, and particular ones which appear in the particular poem.

General interjectional phrases which emphasize the character of the *mbooku* poem can be seen in *Kl 2*. They are *Bolle mbooku ndillan-mi*. *Mbooyo woni gabil mallum*. ‘I will express the *mbooku* words. A *mbooku* singer resembles an Islamic teacher’ (lines 123–124)

Both in *Kl 1* and *Kl 2* there are general interjectional phrases concerning the harmony of the chorus, such as, *Sewbe, kakkilanon jabre* ‘Thin men, be careful with the chorus’, and *Na jabre nde narra* ‘The chorus should be harmonious’.

Additional phrases (*Kl 2*, lines 79–114) emphasizing the necessity of harmony follow *Sewbe, kakkilanon jabre*:

- Waloojo mbooyo caka meeden.*
Ngarten ma ba mba’anooden.
 100 *Kawrital nafi caafaali.*
Nyiibi njaala ngorindoo di.
Keddal nafi doldolde.
Gamali njaalata mbiddoo de.
Kawrital nafi honndorde,
haa de kaadi de ginnaaji.
Kawrital nafi miirooji,
di kawritan di ndasa poola.
Kawrital nafi buuwurdi,
mbaadi dammude buuwaade.
 110 *Kawrital nafi babbatti.*
Zamanu yeewa di don saara.
Misira yeewi di boo saaran.
Nasaara’en nde ngoodii goonga.
Gard’o fuu nii kumanndaajo.

‘Big man of the *mbooku* singers among us.

Let us go back to the harmony as we had before.

- 100 Unity profits bushdogs.
 Even if elephants meet them, they run away from them.
 Living together profits African foxes.
 Even if stallions meet them, they run away from them.
 Unity profits grain ants.
 So they are said to be jinns’ creatures.
 Unity profits black biting ants.
 They unite together and pull a dead pigeon.

- Unity profits a broom,
 which makes entrances clean.
- 110 Unity profits grasshoppers.
 When people see them from afar, they fear them.
 Even when Egyptians see them from afar, they fear them.
 Europeans know indeed what to do.
 Any European says that he is a commander.'

Particular interjectional phrases for the poem of "Wood Ibises" are *Habar(u) kuluuje kollan-mi* 'I will show you the story of wood ibises', and *Yimre kuluuje kollan-mi* 'I will show you the song of wood ibises'.

In comparison with Aakal's versions, Aadamu's version has many blanks. It is because Aadamu is not a composer, and is learning Aakal's poem.

Some prosodical remarks:

- 1) $\cup\cup\cup$ is the dominant meter, but $\cup\cup\cup\cup$, $\cup\cup\cup$, and $\cup\cup\cup$ substitute for $\cup\cup\cup$.⁵⁾
- 2) There are a considerable number of irregular meters, due to endings such as $-aa$, $V(V)+-I$, $-m$, and $-n$.

Like all other *mbooku* poems, this poem is performed polyrhythmically, and an *ostinato* melody is employed. The musical notes⁶⁾ for the first ten lines of *Kl 1*, *Kl 2*, and *Kl 3* are given on pages 133-135.

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

For the sake of economy, *Kl 1* and *Kl 3* have been adopted as texts. Although there are no differences with regard to plot items between *Kl 1* and *Kl 2*, there are correspondences and differences in the words within each plot item. Such differences have been noted in footnotes indicating the line number. Interjections, and mutually exchangeable expressions, however, have not been marked.

For convenience I have adopted the following variation signs: \lceil , $\lceil \dots \rceil$, \lrcorner , \square . The signs \lceil and \lrcorner signify respectively that instead of the following word of the text, and instead of the following words thus enclosed, something has been substituted. \lrcorner signifies that other versions have an interpolation. \square signifies that the following word has been omitted.

Regarding footnotes, please note that the symbols *a*, *b*, *c*, etc., and *1*, *2*, *3*, etc., refer to the corresponding symbols in the text, and translation respectively. The numbers *1*, *2*, *3*, etc., refer to the line number of the text.

5) The meter has been scanned by treating CV as \cup , and CVC and CVV(C) as $\bar{\cup}$.

6) My colleague, Mr. T. Sakurai, was kind enough to make musical notations of the first ten lines of *Kl 1*, *Kl 2* and *Kl 3*.

Aakal's version (K1 I)

Transcribed by T. Sakurai

$\text{♩} = 126$

Oct. De piir-naay Duu—mu. Sew-be ka—kki-

Oct. De piir-naay Duu—mu.

-la—non ja—re. Na ja—re nde nar—ra.

De piir-naay Duu—mu. De

Ha—sa—na Gal—jo goo mo lo—ra—nii—mi. Yim-re ku-luu—

piir-naay Duu—mu. De piir-naay Duu—mu.

-je ko—llan—mi. Ko yu-r-mo-too—mi bo yu-r—maay be.

De piir-naay Duu—mu. De

yu-r-mo-too—mi ba ku-lu maa—yo, ruu—mi sab—bu-

piir-naay Duu—mu. De piir-naay Duu—mu.

-go fiir-naa—yi. Sew-be ka—kki—la—non ja—re.

De piir-naay Duu—mu. De

De di—mi—de A—la—wo do—w mbee—la.

piir-naay Duu—mu. De etc.

Aakal's version (KI 2)

Transcribed by T. Sakurai

$\text{♩} = 130$

Oct. Ka—nje nju—r—mii—mi. Se—w—be

Oct. Ka—nje nju—r—mii—mi.

ka—kki—la—non ja—6—re. Kan—je njur—mo—too—mi.

Ka—nje nju—r—mii—mi. Ka—

Mo ku—lu—ho—n maa—yo. Yur—mo—too—

—nje nju—r—mii—mi. Ka—nje nju—r—mii—mi.

—mi ba ku—lu maa—yo, ruu—mi so—ppu—go fii—raa—yi.

Ka—nje nju—r—mii—mi. Ka—

Haa mi saa—na mo ngi—llii—den. Haa mi sa—

—je nju—r—mii—mi. Ka—nje nju—r—mii—mi.

—a—na laa—mii—ido. Nga—gga Ma—lle caa—na—n—mi.

Ka—nje nju—r—mii—mi. Ka—

Nga—gga Ma—lle. ga—sol Duu—mu.

—nje nju—r—mii—mi. Ka— etc.

Aadamu's version (Kl 3)

Transcribed by T. Sakurai

$\text{♩} = 176$

Oct. De pii-r-naay Duu—mu. Fuu bo-

Oct. De pii-r-naay Duu—mu.

-nee—ji bo-ne maa—ji. Yu-r—mo-too—mi ku-lu maa—yo.

De pii-r-naay Duu—mu. Haa

Yi—w—de maa—je haa A—la—wo. Wa—ri 6e

mbo-yen Bee—da. De pii-r-naay Duu—mu.

Ku—si—ri mee—maay de. Nga—ri Hoo—lu—m mee—maa—ka.

De pii-r-naay Duu—mu. De

Nga—ri 6e Ka—zi—re dow maa—yo. Don de

pii-r-naay Duu—mu. De pii-r-naay Duu—mu.

ndi-mi de koo—'aa—ka. Haa—6e Gi—r—bi—di—k ma—na—no.

De pii-r-naay Duu—mu. De

Don de ndi-mi de koo—'aa—ka. Nga—ri Duu—

pii-r-naay Duu—mu. De pii-r-naay Duu—mu.

-mu de duu—maa—yi.

De etc.

DE PIIRNAAY DUUMU (*KI I*)

by Aakal

- 'De piirnaay Duumu^a.
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jabre.
 Na jabre nde narra.
 Hasana Galjo goo mo loranii-mi.
 Yimre kuluuje kollan-mi.
 'Ko yurmotoo-mi bo yurmaay be^b.
 Yurmotoo-mi ba kulu maayo^c,
 ruuma sabbugo^d fiirnaayi.¹
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jabre.
 10 De dimde Alawo dow mbeela,
 'ton boo kuluuje meemaaka.
 Dimde Bagarmi dow maayo,
 ton boo kuluuje meemaaka.
 Dimde Mbanmati dow Boori,
 'ton boo kuluuje meemaaka.
 Na Girbidik be meemaay 'de.
 Aka Yaaguwa hooyaay kon^e.
 Bananna tawi de koo faalngo.
 To, weelo boo burataa Leere,
 20 nden do kuluuje meemaaka.
 Berni boo burataa Marwa,
 to duudgo sooje don Marwa,
 naa kaadon Mufu don keedi.
 Nden boo kuluuje meemaaka.
 'Nde de peru-no Bogo ngon-mi.
 Fakat mi anndi de layataa-no.¹

a. *de* refers to *kuluuje* (plural of *kuluuwal* 'wood ibis'); *piirna* < *fiirna* (< *fiir-* 'to fly' + *-n* 'causative suffix') 'let fly'; *Duumu* (< Arabic د) signifies the Duumu river in Bogo primarily. *Duumu* also refers to Bogo. See foot note p. 71 [EGUCHI].

b. *Ko yurmotoo-mi boo yurmaay be* means *Ko laati jurumɗum haa am laataaki jurumɗum haa maɓbe*. It is a poetical form for *Ko yurmotoo-mi boo yurmaaki be.*; *be* refers to *yowtoobe* 'those who hunt birds'.

c. = *Ko yurmotoo-mi bana kulu maayo woodaa*.

d. *sabba* = *nyiba suudu*

e. *kon* refers to *kuluuhon* (plural of *kuluuyel*).

1: ' *Kanje njurmii-mi*.

6-8: ' *Kanje njurmotoo-mi*.

Mo, kuluhon maayo.

Yurmotoo-mi ba kulu maayo.

The wood ibises could not have their young fly over the Duumu river.
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
Let the chorus be harmonious.
Again I talk about Hasana Galjo.¹
I will show the song of wood ibises.
What makes me feel sorry never made them sorry.
There is nothing that makes me feel sorry but the wood ibises in the river,
spending the rainy season building nests without having their young fly.
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
10 The birds gave birth to young birds in Alawo by the big pond,
but even there they were not touched.
They gave birth to young birds in Bagirmi by the river,
but even there they were not touched.
They gave birth to young birds in Mbangmati by the Logone river,
but even there they were not touched.
In Guirvidik people did not touch them.
Even the Yagoua people did not take them.
The Massa found them without any interest.
There is no place like Leere where hunger prevails,
20 but then the wood ibises were not touched either.
There is no city like Maroua.
There are many soldiers in Maroua.
Non-Muslim Mufu are their neighbours.
Even then the wood ibises were not touched.
One day they moved to Bogo where I was.
I was sure they would not multiply.

Ruuma suppugo firaayi.

'It is the wood ibises which make me feel sorry.

The wood ibises of the river.

There is nothing which makes me feel sorry but wood ibises, which spent the whole rainy season pecking but never flew away'

11: 'Nde

15: 'nden

16: 'kon

25: 'To

26: 'Yoofata bibbe be ndunya cabbe

1. Aakal warned Hasana Galjo not to make disharmony, but he did not listen to him. He repeated the same error.

- Daraaki lewru 6e ndawrani 6e.
 Jaaki lewru^f 6e kippi 6e.
 「Njowta^g 6i66e, 6e ndunya^h ca66e.
 30 □To, Babban Kanoⁱ Hawsaajo,
 Hawsa wi'i 6e 6uran gerto,
 musta kooli 6ata newre.
 Sew6e, kakkilanon 6a6re.
 Wakiilu^j Umaru 6ii Bakari,
 wakiilu colli naa gamali^k.
 Be 6'on njowta, nga 6'on leela.
 Na Sirla Buhu 6e njammata mo.
 Sew6e, kakkilanon 6a6re.
 Dajje Fali 6e mba6i geemba6,
 40 na, dajjanoowo kulu maayo,
 na, juul6o mo dilataa caanngu^l.
 Mi nan Bananna 6'on fela mo:
 "A juul6o ko mba6ataa caanngu?"
 Nde Dajje Fali nde 6aabii mo,
 "Kuluuje 6ii ndiyam maayo.
 Kulu e liingu daydaa6um."[†]
 Kadi mba6on 6a6re.
 "Kulu e liingu daydaa6um."
 Sew6e, kakkilanon 6a6re.
 50 Mbo6ooje^m 「ngari-no haa ca66a.
 Mbo6ooje yami habar Bogo'en,
 「yami kuluuje waasiiⁿ 6e:
 "Mbo6o, a maw6o 6e 6alataa maa.

- f. When the moon goes out of sight early at night, they say *lewru yehi* 'the moon has gone', *jaaki lewru*, or *jaharle lewru*. When it reappears, *lewru warti* 'the moon has come back', *lewru darake* 'the moon stands up', *daraaki lewru*, or *darorde lewru*. When it becomes full or nearly full, *lewru naybini* 'the moon has become full', or *naybinki lewru*.
- g. *njowta* < *yowta* (< *yowa* 'to put over, or on') 'to take off (and drop on the ground)'
- h. *ndunya* < *dunya*=*yer6a* 'to push'=*jukka rufa* 'to knock down and pour out'
- i. *babban Kano* 'a nickname of an old Hausa man'
- j. *wakiilu* (< وکیل 'agent, deputy, substitute'; 'to point as agent')=*gakkilaado* (cf. *gakkilaado* 'one appointed to watch the affairs of another; overseer' [TAYLOR 204])=*aynoowo wuro* 'one who watches the town' Here *wakiilu* was an epithet given to Omaru who died before the reign of Hammadu the chief, that is, before 1948. Being a sagacious man, he always watched the movements of the wood ibises and plotted the assault.
- k. *gamali*, plural of *gamalu*=*puccu ngorgu konu* 'stallion for war'
- l. *dilataa caanngu*=*koo caanngu boo nyaaman* 'will eat even impure flesh'
- m. *mbo6ooje*, plural of *mbo6oowal* 'pink-backed pelican; *Pelecanus rufescens*'
- n. *waasa* 'to give advice, admonition, teaching'; *wasuye* 'advice, admonition, teaching'

- At the new moon people plotted to hunt them.
When there was no moon, they assaulted them.
They grasped the young birds, and threw them away from the nests.
- 30 Now, there is an old Hausa man called Babban Kano.
He says that a wood ibis is more delicious than a chicken,
and that after having eaten it he has to lick his fingers and bite his palm.
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
Wakiilu Omaru, Bakari's son,
is a specialist in birds but not in stallions.
While they were grabbing the birds, he kept singing to encourage them.
They call him 'Sack trousers'² by way of nickname.
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
They made Dajje Fali the road authority,
40 who let the wood ibises walk proudly.
He is a Moslem who dares to eat forbidden flesh.
I heard a Massa man criticizing him:
"You are a Moslem. What are you going to do with forbidden flesh?"
Dajje Fali then answered him:
"Wood ibises are the children of river water.
Wood ibises and fish are born together."³
Now, sing in chorus.
"Wood ibises and fish are born together."
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
- 50 Pelicans came to make nests.
The pelicans asked the wood ibises for the news.
They asked and the wood ibises warned them:
"Pelican, you are big. They will not leave you alone.

29: 「*Njofta*

46: 「*Bii ndiyam maayo boo saadan naa?*

50: 「*ngar-no*

52: 「*Nan-mi*

2. Omaru Bakari used to make trousers with rough sacks, originally employed for the transportation of millet grains, etc.
3. Dajje Fali, a nickname, literally means 'the poison of the Fali', a mountain tribe living near Garoua. Dajje Fali insisted that there was no difference between fish and wood ibises which spend a long time in the water. All the birds which do not eat carrion may be consumed if they are slaughtered according to the lawful manner. As wood ibises are assaulted and killed without any such caution, it should not be lawful for a Moslem to eat them. This rule, however, may not be applied to creatures living in water.

- ʼBe poonduʼ mbojo e ndammoowa^o.
 To famdere a burataa nyaalel^p,
 cewngel niisa kaakaade.
 Ngel boo nde rufi luutaay be.
 To famdere burataa coojje^q,
 ʼtowde wooda lipillaajiʼ,
 60 juuta daande, yawoo mboodi^s.
 Den boo nde ndufi luutaay be.
 Famdere burataa dumare^t,
 dumare nyaawe ciikooje.
 Den boo nde ndufi luutaay be.
 Mbojooje, kuucanee Juutnde^u.ʼʼ
 Habar kuluuje kollan-mi.
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jabre.
 Jabre mbooku torotoo-mi,
 wafoobe ngarabi^v yambbayru.
 70 Bonngo^w be mbaɗi kumiserjo^x.
 Na kumiser wari widdii ki.
 Kanyum aynata yowtoobe.
 Habar kuluuje kollan-mi.
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jabre.
 Wafoobe ngarabi yambbayru.
 Modaaari nde wari taari de.
 Modaaari tamma maa buutu.
 Yimre kuluuje kollan-mi.
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jabre.
 80 Mbojo suudataa goonga.
 Borto-buʼa Hirsawama^y,
 kanko be mbaɗi galdiima,
 Danndi maccungel Aduwa,

o. ndammoowa either means *mbaala* 'ewe' or *mbeewa* 'she-goat'.

p. nyaalel 'cattle egret; *Ardeola ibis*'

q. coojje, plural of *cooduwal* 'grey heron; *Ardea cinera*'; Probably it also corresponds to black-headed heron (*Ardea melanocephala*).

r. lipillaaji=*bileeji lipillaaji* 'blue feathers'

s. yawo mboodi=*hulataa mboodi*

t. dumare, plural of *dumaryl* 'sacred ibis; *Threskiornis aethiopica*' It is said that it makes a nest in the *tanni* tree (*Balanites aegyptiaca*).

u. Juutnde or Juunnde 'a tall rocky mountain in Mindif'; See footnotes in [EGUCHI 1979: 66]

v. ngarabi=*bone*, *taaku* 'difficulties'

w. bonngo 'chief's private policeman or guard'

x. kumiserjo < French, *commissaire*.

They regard a pelican like an animal as big as a sheep.
 There is no bird as thin as a cattle egret,
 a slender bird with a very bitter taste.
 The cattle egret laid eggs but could not escape from them.
 There is no bird as thin as a grey heron,
 tall and elegantly white,
 60 with a long neck, merciless to a snake.
 When the grey herons laid eggs, they could not escape from them.
 There is no bird as small as the sacred ibis,
 which makes noisy cries.
 When they laid eggs, they could not escape from them.
 Pelicans, send your fellows back to Mount Mindif."
 I will tell you the story of the wood ibises.
 Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
 I am asking for the *mbooku* chorus,
 of those who undergo difficulties in *mbooku* singing.
 70 They regard the chief's guard as superintendent of police.
 The superintendent came and walked around the tree.
 He is the one who watches those who catch birds.
 I will tell you the story of the wood ibises.
 Thin men, be careful with the chorus,
 you who have difficulties with *mbooku* singing.
 A python came and coiled around them.⁴
 It thought they were easy prey.⁵
 I will tell the song of the wood ibises.
 Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
 80 A *mbooku* singer never hides the truth.
 'Borto-bu'a Hirsawama,
 they appointed him as *galdiima*,⁶
 Danndi, the slave from Aduwa,⁷

y. *Borto-bu'a Hirsawama*, a nickname, literally means 'take-off-clothing-and-defecate, and, slaughter-and-dance'.

54: 'Foondu

59: 'townga

4. Probably the eggs of wood ibises.

5. It is very difficult to interpret the lines 76 and 77. Even Aakal cannot tell the meaning. Metaphorically the python probably refers to the chief's guard.

6. One of the most important ministers of a traditional chief, responsible for affairs occurring outside of the *wuro* (village or town). Here, *galdiima* is only a nickname.

7. Long dead, Danndi used to live in Marwaare.

- habaru kuluuje kollan-mi,
 6ii Nasuru maa taan Muusa.
 Kanko fiyanta yowtooƆe.[†]
 SewƆe, kakkilanon jabre.
 †Sarwataake^z e 6ii Aabu,[†]
 †o Ɔorataa fuu †mo way yinta.
- 90 Koo paatu mo tullan dum.
 Habaru kuluuje kollan-mi.
 SewƆe, kakkilanon jabre.
 Sannda Omaru min mbaaldu.
 Sannda 6aleejo 6ii Biiri,
 jemma altine^a min mbaaldi.
 Alat nyalli mi Ɔon maandi.[†]
 Omaru Sannda yewni-mmi.
 “Na Aakal Mise^b Marwaare.
 Na war mi nele nelal sirri.
- 100 Koo a mboojo, a dawdaaƆo.^c
 Koo a mboojo, mi kooliiƆo.”
 Omaru Sannda yewni-mmi.
 Sannda leesti soofndii-mi.
 “Caananaa-mi Abba Kiji.
 Mo hokkora-mmi kulu maayo.
 Ko.Ɔe cosƆi^d mi mettaaki.”
 Mi juulaayi, mi Ɔon yaawna.
 Mi taw malaawa^e Ɔon joodi.
 “Abba Kiji a waalii jam?”
- 110 Mi saanu nyawnga^f jaabaaki.
 “Abba Kiji ko mbaƆ-maa-mi?[†]
 Na Sannda Omaru nel-noo-mi.
 Ndokkoraa mo kulu maayo.

z. *sarwataake e 6ii Aabu* = *6ii Aabu he'aay sarweego*; *sarwa* (< Arabic, شاور).

a. *jemma altine* literally means 'eve of Monday'. Thus it is Sunday evening.

b. *Mise* (< French, *Monsieur*), Aakal's nickname.

c. *dawdaaƆo* < *dawa* 'to make an early start to go somewhere'

d. *sosƆa* = *rima*

e. *malaawa*, a kind of *kuudi* 'abusive expression'; There are similar expressions with different suffixes, such as *malaare*, *malaayel*, *malaawo* and so forth.

f. *nyawnga* (< *nyawa* 'to be sick'), a kind of *kuudi*.

87: †*Garga CaƆla 6e mbaƆi naawƆum.*

Be ndoyyi Garga haa faƆd'a.

Be ngaabootiri dow maako.

WodƆe mbi'a mo caaliiƆo.

WodƆe mbi'a mo saalaaki.

I will tell you the story of the wood ibises,
 Nasuru's son, Muusa's grand-son.
 It is he who plays the drum and wakes them up.
 Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
 The news about wood ibises will never be heard from Aabu's son⁸,
 who does not pluck the feathers and put them on the fire.

90 He is even worse than a cat.

I will tell you the story of the wood ibises.

Thin men, be careful with the chorus.

In the same hut, I slept with Sannda Omaru,

Sannda the black man, Biiri's son.

Sunday night I slept with him.

I remember what happened on the same day.

Omaru Sannda called me.

"Mr. Aakal from the Maroua district.

Come. I want to send you on a secret errand.

100 Even though you are a *mbooku* singer, we grew up together from early days.

Even though you are a *mbooku* singer, you are trustworthy."

Omaru Sannda called me.

He bent down his body and whispered to me:

"Say hello to Abba Kiji⁹ in my behalf.

I wish he would give me some wood ibises from the river.

Since they laid eggs, I have never tasted them."

I gave up the prayer and hurried.

I found the malicious man sitting.

"Abba Kiji, good morning."

110 I greeted him, but the unpleasant man did not answer.

"Abba Kiji, what have I done to you?"

Sannda Omaru sent me.

Please give him some wood ibises from the river.

Be ngadda kulu, koyel bayto.

They tortured Garga Caffa.

They knocked him down.

They argued about him.

Some people said he was already dead.

Some people said he was not yet dead.

When they brought a wood ibis, he lifted up his head'

89: †*Nanantaake*; †*laamd'o coojje(?) d'atal colli*.

90: †*nga*; †*nga*.

97: †*Babbirki mo yewnii-mi*. 'early in the dawn he called me'

112: †*Naa mi rookete kulu maayo*. 'I would not beg for a wood ibis'

8. Aabu's son is dead.

9. A Kanuri dyer, long dead.

- Ko de cosbi mo^g mettaaki.”
 「Nde nyawnga jaabii-mi.
 “「Sonaa min woni dow maaki.
 Na Maalum woni dow maaki.
 Gooje^h kuluuje naa gamali.
 Naa Sannda Kila nga Marwaare.”
 120 Omaru nel-no boo humtaayi.
 Mo tammunde wadi dum suumreⁱ.
 Habaru kuluuje kollan-mi.
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jafre.
 Mbojo suudataa goonga.
 Sukkunde suudataa kulfo.
 Wadfooobe ngarabi yambayru.
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jafre.
 Kuluuje uftataa aawre.
 Sakko kuluuje 「mbeelan be.
 130 Kuluuje nyaamataa kinco^j,
 nyaamataa bana baβbatti.
 Sakko kuluuje 「torran be,
 kuluuje nguure mum liingu.
 Na sarki paawa don sinka:
 “Kuluuje dimde 「Bogo Duumu」,
 mi hirsaa rimare koo faalngo.
 Na kanje ndimi kusel buuri.”
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jafre.
 Yimre kuluuje kollan-mi.
 140 Wadfooobe ngarabi yambayru.
 Sannda Mayna yurmii-mi.
 Ngam ṅakkugo dum baaba,
 na saare defi be ndokkaay mo.
 “Ndikka hikka dow rowani.
 Rowani Duudu def-noo de.
 Hikka Faadme^k defi kuluuhon.
 Faadme nde laati banndiiko,

g. mo=0

h. gooje=kaygamma

i. suumre, acid dyspepsia, pyrosis, hyperacidity.

j. When a millet seed sprouts and grows as big as ten centimeters it is called *kinco*. In case of a grass, it is called *ngalbere*.

k. (فاطمة <) It is an uncommon Fulfulde form. In Kanuri, *Faad'imá* or *Páati*.

- Since they laid eggs, he has never tasted them."
Then the unpleasant man answered me:
"Unless I am up in the tree, you will never get any.
It is Maalum¹⁰ who was up in the tree.
He is the *kaygamma*¹¹ of birds but not of stallions.
It is Sannda Kila from the Maroua district who was up in the tree.
120 Omaru sent me there, but could not get what he wanted.
His expectation made him hyperacid.
I will tell you the story of the wood ibises.
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
A *mbooku* singer never hides the truth.
A thick bush never hides a coward.
Those who undergo the difficulties of *mbooku* singing.
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
Wood ibises do not pick at sown seeds.
They never cause them a famine.
130 They do not eat any sprouts.
They do not eat like grasshoppers.
They never give them trouble.
They live on fish.
The head butcher was complaining:
"Wood ibises laid eggs in Bogo.
I slaughter a sterile cow, but they do not care.
They laid eggs and meat became unwanted."
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
I will show you the song of the wood ibises.
140 Those who undergo difficulties in *mbooku* singing.
Sannda Mayna made me feel sorry.
Since he lost his father,
they did not give him any at all, when they cooked wood ibises.
"It is better this year than last year.
Last year it was Duudu who cooked.
This year it was Faadme who cooked.
Faadme then became his relative.

117: 「*Naa min*

130: 「*torran*

133: 「*mbeelan*

136: 「*Marwaare* 'the Marwa district of Bogo'; See the map of the center of Bogo.

10. A Kanuri man, dead.

11. One of the most important subjects of a chief, responsible for affairs occurring inside the *wuro* (village or town).

Sirataajo buran endam.
 Faadme dokkudo yam daande.”
 150 Habaru kuluuje kollan-mi.
 Buuba Cardi don sinka.
 “E, teego Pullo maa naawdum.
 Ngadda kuluuje mo sala defugo.
 Ndikkana-mmi Marmayjo^l.”
 Habaru kuluuje kollan-mi.
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jabre.
 Na mbooyo suudataa goonga.
 Na mbooyo woni gabil mallum.
 Jangga waazina joodiibe.
 160 Abba Kiji be mba^di goofa^m.
 Goofa nga woofataa colngal.
 Habaru kuluuje kollan-mi.
 Sewbe, kakkilanon jabre.
 Alla dawri kala fistiⁿ.
 Habaru kuluuje kollan-mi.
 ‘To, wooja’ kolce, wela baarte,
 daneje kolce dabbooje.
 To kanje ndimi, kusel buuri.
 De piirnaay Duumu, hey.

l. Marmay, a Musgum woman.

m. goofa, chief's slave.

n. cf. *Himbe ndawra, Alla hoddira* 'Man proposes, God disposes' [TAYLOR: 33]

- A Kanuri woman is more sympathetic.¹²
Faadme gave me a neck."
150 I will tell you the story of the wood ibises.
Buuba Cardi¹³ was sighing:
"Married life with a Fulbe woman is a difficult thing.
I brought some wood ibises, but she refuses to cook them.
I should have had a Musgum wife."
I tell you the story of the wood ibises.
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
A *mbooku* singer never hides the truth.
A *mbooku* singer resembles an Islamic teacher,
who reads and gives sermons to the sitting audience.
160 They nicknamed Abba Kiji their slave.
Because the slave would never fail to collect all the fallen ibises.
I will tell you the story of the wood ibises.
Thin men, be careful with the chorus.
Allah proposed and they obtained all the means.¹⁴
I will tell you the story of the wood ibises.
Now, the birds with red legs, delicious breasts.
The white birds with legs like sweet stalks of millet.
When they laid eggs, meat became unwanted.
The birds could not have their young fly over the Duumu river.

12. It is generally believed that the Kanuri people have very strong ethnic unity. They help each other more than the Fulbe do.
13. He used to be a saddle maker, living in the Sirataare district of Bogo. He is not working now.
14. Even Ardo Aakal could not understand why he sang this line. It would have been better to have an expression such as *Yimbe ndawri, Alla fisti* 'they proposed and Alla gave them the means'.

DE PIIRNAAY DUUMU (KI 3)

by Ardo Adamu

- Fuu boneeji bone maaji^a.
 Yurmotoo-mi kulu maayo^b.
 Yiwde maaje haa Alawo.
 Wari 6e Kusiri meemaay de^c.
 Ngari Hoolum meemaaka.
 Ngari de Kazire dow maayo,
 don de ndimi de koo'aaka.
 Haa6e Girbidik mana-no^d.
 Don de ndimi de koo'aaka.
- 10 Ngari Duumu de duumaayi.
 Mukki muuri 6e ndawrani de,
 njowta 6i66e, ndunya ca66e.
 Bakari Damaaje Mal Mannga,
 kanyum winndata jowtaade.
 Inna Suuno may pumpum^e,
 kanko fiyata taasaawo,
 fiya finndina hooyo6e.
 Suudi 6ingga Mallum Yaaya^f,
 colli 6urani dum mbiiru,
- 20 yowta haada Sanndaare.
 Jowtol mbari Bakariiwa,
 kanko hurgata nawneego^g.
 Nane ko Umaru sofndii-mi,
 noddud'o yam, "Mise Aakal.
 Koo a mboojo, a koolaado.
 Koo a mboojo, a dawdaado.
 Haa mi nele nelal sirri.
 Caananaa-mi Abba Kiji.
 Ko kulu naati mi mettaaki."
- 30 On nde yahi nde sofndii mo:
 "Naa min woni dow maaki.
 Toytowoni dow maaki,
 njowta 6i66e, ndunya ca66e."
 Eli looftere bam Muusa,

a. The expression *Fuu boneeji bone*...appears frequently in "Famine (*Weelo*)"; See foot-
 notes p. 86 [EGUCHI]. *maaji* refers to *colli* 'birds'.
 b. =*Kulu maayo yurmotoo-mi*.
 c. *meemaay de* should be *de meemaaka* or *6e meemaay de*.
 d. Should be *Haa6e Girbidik manaabe no*.
 e. *pumpum* 'onomatopoeia of drum sound'

All the difficulties have come from wood ibises.
Wood ibises will make me feel sorry.
They came from Alawo.
They came to Kousseri but people did not touch them.
They came to Hoolum, but they were not touched.
They came to Kazire by the river.
There they laid eggs but they were not taken away.
The non-Moslems of Guirvidik are gluttons.
The wood ibises laid eggs, but they were not taken away.
10 When they came to Bogo, they could not stay till the end of the rainy season.
People ate pennisetum and plotted to attack them,
to catch the young birds and to destroy the nests.
It is Bakari Damaaje, Mal Manga's son,
who keeps the number of the games.
Suuno's mother, the chief drummer,
who taps enamel ware,
taps and wakes up the raiders.
Suudi, Mallum Yaaya's big son,
who prefers catching birds to staying in the chief's court,
20 catches birds and accuses Sannda without any areason.
Catching birds caused the death of Bakari,¹
who would cure pains.
Please listen what Umaru murmured to me a long time ago,
and called me, "Mr. Aakal.
Even though you are a *mbooku* singer, you are trustworthy.
Even though you are a *mbooku* singer, we grew up together.
I want to send you on a secret errand.
Say hello to Abba Kiji in my behalf.
Since the wood ibises entered Bogo, I have never tasted them."
30 Akal then went there and Abba Kiji murmured to him:
"I was not up in the tree.
Toyttoy² was up in the tree,
caught the young birds, and destroyed the nests."
Eli with a big loin-cloth like Muusa,

f. *binnga* is a kind of *kuudi* (abusive) expression. The neutral expression is *ðii*.

g. Should be *nawniibe*.

1. He might have fallen down from the top of the tree.

2. It may be a nickname.

Eli ngel elataa nyoldum.

Buuba Cardi don sinka:

“Teego Pullo maa naawdum.

Ndikka teego Marmayjo.

Mi wadda kulu, o yisa hoore.

40 Ko kulu naati, mi mettaaki.”

Yurmotoo-mi kulu maayo.

Kariwa hawla diwa wooka.

will never hate even a rotten thing.

Buuba Cardi was sighing:

"Married life with a Fulbe woman is a difficult thing.

I should have married a Musgum woman.

I brought back a wood ibis, but she shook her head.

⁴⁰ Since the wood ibises entered Bogo, I have never tasted them."

Wood ibises of the river made me feel sorry.

Kariwa³ shouts 'ho', jumps up and cries loud.

CONCLUSION

This poem consists of abusive expressions (*kuudi*), which, however, are turned into laughter by the interaction between performer and audience. I would like to point out this way in which the Fulbe express their humour.

From the point of view of techniques, this poem employs a relatively less rigorous $\sim\sim\sim$ meter, and ignores all other techniques.

In addition, we may assume that the poverty of Aadamu's version indicates that he is still in the learning stage.

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