

Reviews

Aliyu Mu'azu, *Bakin Al'adu a K'agaggun Littattafan Soyayya na Hausa (Foreign Customs in Hausa Love Novels)*, Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press Limited, 2013, 132 pp.

This book is an enlarged version of Aliyu Mu'azu's Ph.D. thesis written under the guidance of Prof. Sa'idu Muhammad Gusau from the Department of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University in Kano. It was aimed at finding out foreign customs (and items!) which have been found in the Hausa love novels known as *littattafan soyayya*. They are of two kinds: those borrowed from afar (Europe, India, Middle East) and others coming from the neighbouring countries.

The book consists of five chapters. Not all of them refer straight to the topic but „additions” constitute a background to the analysis. Chapter one contains an introduction and a discussion on the meaning of word *al'ada* in Hausa. It presents the history of Hausaland (starting with the Bayajidda' story), its natural environment, living conditions and information on social stratification of the Hausa people. When discussing the genesis of the language, the Author shares common opinion of its membership in the Afroasiatic family.

In chapter two main reasons of contacts between Hausa people and strangers are given: commerce, travelling trade, exploratory travels, dry season migrations, visiting historical places, wars, and others. In the second part of the chapter one can find short history of the development of Hausa literature. Special attention has been paid to the condition of the love novels which became source materials for the research of foreign customs that have penetrated *littattafan soyayya*.

The third chapter is dedicated to those foreign customs and items which have been introduced to the Hausa love novels by Arabs, Europeans and inhabitants of India. Having provided short information on the history of Islam in Hausaland, the Author has traced three customs which are believed to be brought by Arabs: putting henna on bride's body, wearing *jallabiyya*, and use of praying mat. The majority of foreign customs have come from Great Britain: lancing party (*lancin fati*), cocktail party (*kwaktal fati*), ornamentation of bride's and bridegroom's car, marriage invitation cards (*katin daurin aure*), calendar (*kalanda*), cutting cake (*yanka kek*), birthday ceremony (*bikin ranar haihuwa*), parents' day, wearing festive attire, tea party (*liyafar shan shayi*), picnic (*liyafar ya da rana*), and wedding dress (*rigar amarya*). As far as inhabitants of India are concerned, the Hausa novelists borrowed from them the habit of offering flowers, spending time among flowers and trees, embracing each other in love plays, painting flowers on fingers, use of lipstick, and engagement ring.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to the foreign items and customs which have been borrowed by Hausa people from the neighbouring ethnic groups. From Yoruba they have acquired words like *goggoro* (yardage cloth), *ashoke* (kind of cloth), and *anko* (bridesmaid). Part dealing with the Fulani influences is preceded by their short history and expansion, especially during their jihad against the Hausa states. They are supposed to have lent the Hausa people *goyon ciki* (carrying a baby on the back), *zanin saki* (woven cloth), *daurin kirji* (not commented upon), *shimfida farin kyalle a gado* (spreading out white cloth on bed to prove the virginity). According to the Author, *fura* (milk gruel) also was borrowed from the Fulani. Kanuri's presence in foreign items and customs encompasses *lafaya* (Kanuri's women cloth), *turaren wuta* (bark scent), *sisin gwal* (golden shilling used in matrimonial payment), and *dilka* (removing any hair from the bride's body). Only one item of Nupe origin has been taken into account: *sabulun salo* (a soap used as medicine against pimples).

Each foreign item and custom has been confirmed by citations from the literary source materials. Eleven of novels were of masculine authorship and fifty six came from the female creativity. Names of the authors and titles of their works are given in two appendixes at the end of the book which is pioneer undertaking in tackling the topic.

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