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# Traditional Wrestling in Niger: Between state voluntarism and ancestral symbolism

## Traditional Wrestling in Niger

Traditional wrestling occupies pride of place in Niger, compared to other sports and cultural activities. Interest in traditional wrestling is widespread among Nigériens from all walks of life: young men, adults, senior citizens, young women, mature women, adult men, handicapped persons, prisoners, peasant farmers, civil servants, artisans, housewives, politicians, *marabouts* (Muslim religious leaders/imams), *féticheurs* (animist priests), *griots* (wandering poets/musicians), trainers, researchers, journalists, labourers . . . In short, it can be asserted that traditional wrestling is firmly entrenched in Nigérien culture and generates unequalled enthusiasm. This unwavering popularity, built up over the years, is the result of the transposition of certain traits of political, social, cultural, sporting and economic life of Nigérien society into the National Championships of Traditional Wrestling. These championships, held in the various regions of the country, in turn, were institutionalised in 1975 by the government. This official intervention transformed traditional wrestling into a “great sport”, the king of sports in Niger. The predominant presence of the state administration in the organisation and management of the championships is justified by the official pursuit of national unity and social cohesion through the promotion of this sporting heritage. Cultural elements, like the opening prayer (*fatiah*), praise poems (*take*), poems of self-praise (*kiran*), formal salutations (*gaysuwa*), the giving of gifts and gratuities (*kari*), the wearing of charms (*gris-gris*) and the enthronement of the champion, transposed from the life of Nigérien society to the arena of the National Wrestling Championships, are the basis for the people’s support of the championships and their identification with wrestling and wrestlers. **Key words:** Nigérien identity, wrestling, praise poetry, self-praise poetry.

A sport is more likely to be adopted by members of a social class if it is not in contradiction with the way they relate to the body in the deepest and most profoundly unconscious sense, i.e. the body image insofar as it is the guardian of an entire social worldview, a whole philosophy of the person and of the body itself.

Pierre Bourdieu, *La Distinction* (1978).

## Introduction

This quotation from Bourdieu, placed as an epigraph, will guide our discussion as we attempt to answer a few relatively simple questions. Why is traditional wrestling the major sport in Niger? How can one explain its popularity with Nigériens of all ages and origins? In other words, why do Nigériens identify, each in their own way, with the

various games that take place within the arena during the National Championships of Traditional Wrestling? What does wrestling reveal regarding the way Nigériens relate, perhaps unconsciously, to the body and the "body image"? What does it reveal concerning the deep-rooted worldview of a society at play, in joyful abandon, concerning the person and power (the motivation and the ability to conquer)?

We shall attempt to answer these questions in two stages. First of all by means of a short historical overview of wrestling in Niger, especially the official aspects of the wrestling championships, their organisation and the state ideology that underpins them, which have not been explained above. Next we shall consider the symbolic aspects of national wrestling and the ceremonial that surrounds it, in order to reveal some elements of its wider and deeper connection with certain conceptions of the person and of individual pre-eminence (being a *chief*) that is so important in Niger.

### **Some landmarks in the evolution of Traditional Wrestling in Niger**

Traditional wrestling is a combat sport, for individuals and teams, whose origins date back to time immemorial in the history of humanity. Closely linked with human history, the origins of wrestling can be traced back to man's need to defend himself against attacks by his peers or animals. In those days one had to fight to maintain one's rank, to change status or quite simply to survive. This interpretation is confirmed by numerous tales and myths. But it subsequently evolved to become a cultural and sporting activity.

The first signs of wrestling according to the rules date back 5000 years. Greek civilisation raised wrestling to the rank of a science and a divine art. It appeared in the 18th Ancient Olympic Games (708 BCE) as an independent discipline and as an event in the pentathlon. At the beginning of the 20th century, wrestling developed further in three directions: as a professional and as an amateur practice, especially in Europe and North America, and as a traditional practice on every continent (Raïko, 1993).

In Niger, most communities in pre-colonial times were acquainted with wrestling as a ludic activity on the occasion of feast days. Wrestling took on various forms depending on the region. Wrestling contests were always organised on a seasonal basis and were linked to the commemoration of certain events experienced by the community. The cycles of sowing, harvesting and migration of livestock dictated the calendar of festivals. The latter obeyed customary norms lodged in the

collective memory. Practices and performances attached to them only took on meaning in a particular spatio-temporal setting, that of the establishment of village communities (Djirmey & Col, 1992).

In this geographically confined cultural space, wrestling was a practice linked to the rhythm of village life, and which involved all members of the community. By social agreement, the practical organisation of the competition was undertaken by those responsible for the youth (*maï-samari* or *samari*), with the sanction of the village authorities.

The contests usually pitted young men from different districts or villages against one other on the public square or in the courtyard of the chief. This situation prevailed until colonisation introduced into indigenous communities Western values often foreign to local cultural practices. Among the latter were international regulations and alien performance criteria that penetrated urban areas. As a result of these innovations, traditional practices got the reputation of being “unsporting”.

The coming of independence on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1960 did little to modify the way national authorities regarded local culture. But, gradually, African nations have become conscious of the importance of promoting their own social and cultural traditions. As a result, traditional wrestling in Niger has become the cultural and sporting activity par excellence, an activity in which the whole nation has a stake.

The desire to promote traditional games dates from the First Republic (1960-1974) especially during the festivities of “Nigérien Youth Week”, held between 7 and 18 December every year. On these occasions, teams from different provinces competed in various modern sports. After a few of these gatherings of Nigérien youth, the idea was born of including traditional games as competition events, with the same standing as modern sports.

These efforts would bear fruit after the First Republic. Mention must be made here of the commitment and the valuable contribution of a certain number of patrons who became interested in wrestling long before the authorities understood its importance, in quest of appropriate policies aimed at social cohesion on a national scale. Indeed, several eminent persons and business people contributed to the emergence of traditional wrestling as a sport of note. Among the first promoters of traditional wrestling we can mention, in various towns in Niger and Nigeria: Elhadji Dandano, Elhadji Hamissou Dan Tibiri, Elhadji Balla Dan Sani, Elhadji Gouda Aoula, Elhadji Garba Soura, Elhadji Issoufou Dourbi. In Tahoua: Elhadji Iyo Ibla, Elhadji Dan Karami, the late Elhadji

Oumarou Mahamadou. In Niamey: Elhadji Saïdou, Adamou Harouna, Garba Garey, Amadou Baba Dandah, Saadou Galadima, Elhadji Banzougou. In Zinder: Elhadji adjudant Amirou, Elhadji Maikandili, Elhadji Ibrah Saïdou, Elhadji Albachir, Elhadji Kailou Bako. In Kano: Elhadji Labaran, Elhadji Naroua and, finally, in Maiduguri, there was Elhadji Gana (for locations see the map on page 7).<sup>1</sup>

These various promoters organised wrestling tournaments after the harvests, from November to April. The wrestling arenas were makeshift areas set up in the town centre surrounded by straw enclosures. In Niamey, the arena was on the square of the Soni Cinema and later in the Boukoki district. Spectators paid to attend. The wrestlers came from the regions of Maradi, Tahoua, Zinder and northern Nigeria. Opponents were chosen by a system of stakes (100 CFA francs for the great wrestlers and 25 CFA francs for beginners)<sup>2</sup> or by a challenge issued by a wrestler or spectator to another wrestler. As the competition evolved day by day, the best wrestlers would emerge, and finally the champion. Gratuities received from the public at the end of the matches constituted the main earnings of the wrestlers. The promoters provided the wrestlers with board and lodging. The family courtyard of the patron, such as Elhadji Adjudant Amirou, a wrestling promoter in Zinder in the Zongo district, served as the dining locale for the wrestlers.

During these annual gatherings, the matches went through an intense phase, due to the presence of all the great wrestlers to whom messengers or money were sent so that they could attend. This phase was followed by the gradual departure of spectators and especially wrestlers who left for other wrestling opportunities, particularly in Nigeria (in Kano, Maiduguri and Jos), filling in the period between two rainy seasons.

The atmosphere during these gatherings was characterised by conviviality, solidarity and generosity. The matches were organised by a few people without any particular authority and without the presence of security forces. The spectators and patrons provided the extrinsic motivational elements for the wrestlers: presents of money or in kind (festive clothes).

But the wrestlers fought mainly for the pleasure of the game and to win token trophies, since the gratuities they received were, after all, quite modest. Moreover, they gave some of the money away to the *griots* and they shared it with less fortunate wrestlers. Firm friendships were formed between the wrestlers who often travelled together from competition to competition.

For reasons both political (re-enforcement of national unity and the exercise of control over the youth) and sporting (establishment of a network of infrastructures for wrestling), the authorities introduced, as from 1975, championships that are held in turn in each of the provincial capitals. Within the framework of these championships, the organisation of matches falls within the ambit of the national administrative machinery, going beyond the limits of the district, in which it was previously contained. Edict no 75 - 11/PCMS of 13 March 1975 created an association responsible for promoting traditional wrestling. From 1975 to 2004, twenty-six (26) National Championships have been held. This has necessitated establishing an organisation adapted to the level of the event, which moves from one province of the country to another. The organisation of the championships is strongly influenced by that of modern sports. The various champions are famous and now form part of the sporting and cultural history of Niger.

### **Official speeches at the National Championships of Traditional Wrestling**

Official speeches form part of the ceremony of the National Championships of Traditional Wrestling. They are delivered mainly on two occasions: the speech of the Minister of Sports announcing the date and the region chosen to host the National Championships, broadcast by the State media: radio, newspapers, television, in order to inform the public of the preparations for this exceptional sporting and cultural event. Until recently these speeches were delivered at the end of the previous championships. But on the past few occasions, they have been made a few months before the opening of the championships, for reasons, it would seem, linked to agriculture and budgetary logistics.

The second round of official speeches takes place during the ceremonies marking the opening and closing of each championship. In the opening ceremony, a solemn moment is reserved for the speeches, such as the welcoming address delivered by the Prefect of the region hosting the event, and the speeches of the President of the Federation and of the Minister of Sports. The latter announces, at the end of his speech, the start of the championships, invariably in these terms: "I hereby declare the National Championships of Traditional Wrestling for the year ... open." An analysis of these speeches, which are practically identical from one year to the next, shows that emphasis is given to the following themes: the quest for national unity and social cohesion, the promotion of a Nigérien cultural identity and finally the entertainment of the public.

The Minister of Sports, representing the State, justifies the holding of the championships by the spin-offs they have in reinforcing national unity and social cohesion. Indeed, the participation of the eight regions of the country, each represented by a delegation of about a hundred people: wrestlers, trainers, doctors, managers, *griots*, *marabouts*, *féticheurs*, clowns, traditional leaders, regional officials, constitutes an ideal occasion for exchange and intermingling between participants. For the twelve days of the championships, the media cover all the activities of the gathering from the perspective of the reinforcement of national unity and social cohesion. No other sport in Niger attracts such crowds and no other sport in Niger benefits from so much support and attendance of the administrative and traditional authorities, the public and the media.

National unity, a highly political objective, is, as already mentioned, a central theme of all the official speeches on the wrestling championships and this concept is expressed in the following terms: "peace", "cultural identity", "solidarity", "fair play", "responsibility", "friendship", "maturity", etc. (see the speeches of the Minister of Sports, 1995; 1998; 2002).

The behaviour of the participants and the public is expected to be in keeping with these watchwords; all are expected to collaborate in achieving this famous "national unity" and "social cohesion", which constitute the principal official motive for organising the National Championships of Traditional Wrestling.

The promotion of the cultural identity of Niger forms part of the content of the official speeches, which stress the need to protect and promote the cultural identity of Niger through the National Wrestling Championships (Sériba, 2000). The expression and practice of the values called "traditional" that underpin, it is claimed, the unique character of wrestling, are moreover encouraged.

"Entertainment of the public" does not feature explicitly in the speeches, but can be implied from the appeals the authorities make to the contestants and organisers, urging them to provide the public with fine matches.

### **Traditional games and activities in the Traditional Wrestling arena**

Once the opening prayer (*fathia*) has been offered, the way is open for all kinds of colourful activities in the arena: the wrestling matches, naturally, but also exhibitions of mime and clowning, music, songs, dance, and verbal arts. The opening prayer has become common prac-

tice in Niger, influenced by various contradictory movements, official and personal, public and private, secular and religious. In the space of the traditional wrestling arena (but also in other spaces of everyday life) this Muslim practice coexists with other practices, which preceded Islam and the Republic and which have been updated and adapted to today's world.

During the National Championships, the arena for wrestling and traditional games is the scene for performances rich in colour, rhythms, and sporting, cultural and social interaction. Ten categories of actors – direct and indirect – have been identified (Malam, 2002). These are wrestlers, trainers, judges, *griots*, clowns, managers, journalists, sponsors, spectators and officials from the administrative and traditional authorities. Each of these actors plays a specific role in the spirit defined by the central organisation and based on a sports competition adapted to Nigérien culture, which it moreover mirrors.

In this space of sports and entertainment, various levels of interaction and activity coexist. They are not merely juxtaposed or superimposed; taking place simultaneously, they often intermingle. There is, consequently, an interlocking of several spectacles, both sporting and artistic (Sériba, 1997; 2000).

### **A performance within a performance**

The wrestler, the main actor in this multifaceted performance, also expresses himself “artistically” through a certain genre of oral art (*kirari* or self-praise) before, during and after the match. The *griots* and clowns also take part in this extra-sporting activity. The *griots* recite praise poems (*take*), while the clowns entertain the public by performing a parody of the sporting (and other) activities in the arena. On another level, officials, spectators, sponsors and journalists also act out their roles.

The oral arts performed during the championships are similar to those that are found in ceremonies of marriage, baptism and certain religious and traditional festivals. Oral genres like the praise poem (*take*), the self-praise poem (*kirari*) and gestures of generosity (*gratuities* or *kari*) towards the actors of the total performance, transposed from everyday life to the championships, enable the various performers in the arena to communicate while reproducing patterns, interactions and conceptions that society experiences in ordinary life, but especially during exceptional and extraordinary events such as festivals (see Caillois, 1950). In fact, all of these elements that make up the specific quality, charm and dynamism of the busy wrestling arena are drawn

from Nigérien culture. They combine quite harmoniously in a sporting spectacle where they exhibit various levels of meaning and symbolism.

The *take* or praise poem, delivered by a *griot* or a group of *griots* in honour of a wrestler, especially a great wrestler, as well as the *kirari*, attract attention on the fringes of the wrestling matches. The *griots* sing the praises of the wrestler, his bravery, his strength, his tactical skill; they laud his social origins, his generosity, the qualities that make him a hero, a conqueror. The wrestler, to whom the *take* is dedicated, listens to it, standing up, moved by memories of his glorious matches in the past related by his eulogists.

The *griot*, Sagalo, who has more or less “retired” (to conform to “religion”, as he puts it) used to excel in the art of the *take* (Sidi, 2002). For the whole duration of the championships, Sagalo, together with his group of *griots*, would sing the praises of the wrestlers. His style, half-sung, half-spoken, his choice of words and phrases, his mastery of irony, humour, pleonasm and simile, his juggling with words, the rhythm of his verses are engraved in the memory of those who heard him. The remarkable accuracy of his memory, his creativity and his verve enabled him to build up an unrivalled repertoire.

Every wrestler, among the hundred or so competitors who usually attended the annual wrestling championships, had his praise poem, composed and recited by Sagalo, day after day, during the championships, year after year. In keeping with the *griots'* reputation of cheekiness, he had very little concern for values of restraint in his language.

We offer as an example this *take* of the wrestler Kassou Kazuga (Sidi, 2002), the national champion of 1983 in Hausa, “A cikin taken Kassu Kazuga”.

A vast plantation is Kassou Dan Tune!  
What belongs to us is ours indeed.  
Tomorrow is ours,  
And the next day,  
If fortune smiles on us.  
I saw a whirlwind, a bad omen and a lying one,  
The day that Salma got himself trapped.  
For a whole hour Salma stood upright  
For a whole hour Kassou stood upright.  
Suddenly, they charged at each other.  
To wrestle with a beginner is a delicate matter  
Or indeed with a sorcerer,



Or yet with a marabout.

But the strength of Kassou is not that of one man alone!<sup>3</sup>

The *kirari* is chanted aloud by the wrestler, dressed or stripped to the waist, standing up, both arms stretched out horizontally. The self-praise, which lasts three to five minutes, is pronounced after a few dance steps have been executed. In accordance with his fame, the wrestler receives from the public, from his supporters, gratuities in cash, while his fellow wrestlers, from all the teams, come and greet him and present their respects to him. Of course, the *griots* and the clowns stir up the fervour of the crowd and, in particular, the enthusiasm of the wrestler who is reciting the *kirari*.

The great wrestler, Kadadé de Tahoua (Sidi, 2002), sings his own praise (his *kirari*) as follows in “Kirarin Kadade”, the first Hausa version of 1975-1976:

(...)

[It is I, Kadade!

Yiiiiii Huuuuuu!]

Wait a moment, Sagalo, master of the drum,

Lend me your ears, listen, master-wrestler!

The lone hyena returns home without delay

To enjoy his feast!

Hail to you, Hail to me

And to the one

Who returns from the field!

I am *Bungu-Bungu*,

The heavy calfskin container

Swollen with water

Difficult to lift up!

I am *Ligiza-Ligiza*,

The wicked horse,

Mane to the front

And to the back,

Horse of death

Who has found no handler!

Without chicks

The hen does not fear the hawk;  
And only the true bull  
Withstands the shocks.

Let the fights be organised  
Let news of them be given to the village!

Master of the drum,  
Break the drum!  
So that I can pulverise the Titan  
In this year when  
From top to toe  
And even in my eyes  
I abound in strength!

No man on his own  
Will make me yield!

I was a leopard,  
I am a lion.  
I shall not disappoint!  
Let those who are tempted by glory be warned!  
Those who would  
Test their strength,  
[Who would] communicate with the friend of Gisa  
Of Musa, of Intiwuila, called the hyena's tail.

Three stars we are!  
Three, here we are:  
Twin pillars, support without compare,  
Elite warriors of the king  
Who kill and dismember  
Before we return to the forbidden city.<sup>4</sup>

As with the *take*, the public and the wrestlers react with enthusiasm to this cultural utterance, especially when delivered by experienced wrestlers. The *kari* are gratuities given to the wrestlers by the public and the authorities. After the match, the wrestlers, winner and loser, pass between the bleachers to receive the audience's gratuities. The *fathia*, the *take*, the *kirari*, the *kari*, are common practices carried over into the sport-

ing and artistic interplay of the National Championships of Traditional Wrestling. The warm atmosphere, full of joy and laughter, success and failure, cordiality and generosity, invitations and provocations, involves all the actors present and the listeners and television viewers, following the activities from outside the arena, glued to their radios or TV sets.

The same actors who conduct ceremonies in villages and towns, *griots* and other clowns, are found in the arena. In this transposition, some of them retain in part or in full their roles and functions. Others have changed perspective, but are still in keeping with traditional practices.

### **Identical religious and mystical practices**

When an unknown wrestler or beginner brings down a champion or when a great wrestler confirms his superiority over a new or young wrestler, the arena seethes with excitement. For the audience always anticipates the unexpected, the illogical, looking for surprise, for the work of luck, of magic.

Every match is taken seriously. But those that take place on the first three days of the championships are always particularly full of surprises. Every wrestler does his best to reach the next level of the competition, and a fall (signifying defeat) condemns the wrestler to postpone his hopes until the following year. Prayers, sacrifices, offerings, the wearing of talismans and *gris-gris*, the recitation of magic formulas and incantations, before, during and after the matches, are proof, among others, of the omnipresence in the arena of the religious and mystical practices of everyday life.

No wrestler enters the competition if he considers himself ill prepared on a mystical and religious level. This preparation begins in his early childhood. It begins all the earlier and is thus all the more effective (according to the practitioners) if the young wrestler is born into a wrestling milieu, that is a world, essentially rural, where *marabouts* and *féticheurs* co-exist. This preparation is varied and aims at "protecting" and strengthening the wrestler.

The entry into the arena is a powerful moment during which prayers and incantations are pronounced: some wrestlers avoid entering the arena through the main entrances in order to thwart spells that may be cast by their opponents; others enter it from the east, the west, the south or the north in accordance with instructions from *marabouts* and *féticheurs*; still others enter the area backwards.

The wearing of *gris-gris* of all kinds is permitted during traditional wrestling matches provided they remain attached to the wrestler's body

and present no danger to his opponent. Some special talismans are worn until a few seconds before the match. These talismans, it is believed, perform several functions: they confer protection, luck, strength, courage and invincibility.

At the end of the bouts, the wrestlers thank all those who have helped them and especially God, the Almighty and Merciful, for enabling them, winner or loser, to reach the end of the contest in good health. This indicates the risks involved.

Prayers for protection, as well as other religious and magic practices, form part of the main psychological and sociological elements of the event. These practices are in keeping with the perception that strength is not just a force inherent in a person: it has to be acquired by religious and magic practices. Moreover, the social world is one of rivalry (eighty wrestlers who have come through a rigorous selection process dream of winning the much coveted "National Sword"), one of jealousy, of attacks and counter attacks, and the wrestling match is a microcosm in which all this interplay and the stakes involved are exacerbated. Thus the whole milieu of wrestling is very receptive to practices of this nature.

### **The enthronement of the champion**

Stripped to the waist and armed with *gris-gris* for the duration of the competition, the wrestling champion who is consecrated "king of the arenas" for the year is dressed in a long, loose-fitting and splendid *boubou* and wears a turban on his head in the manner of a newly enthroned chief. He receives a cash prize in an envelope; and is given a spirited horse with a harness. In addition to his princely attire, his riches and turban, symbol of a chief, the prize-winner is awarded the "National Sword", which he wears slung across his shoulder.

The culmination of this sporting event is thus firmly anchored in an imitation of the local culture based on the model of the traditional chieftaincy: analogous attributes, similar performances, comparable attitudes (Sériba, 2000). Indeed, the enthronement of a village or district chief, or even of a sultan, with all its ceremonies, is transposed to the arena, as if to say that no greater compliment can be given to a champion. From the royal court to the arena, the same practices are thus observed. Very often the wrestling champion is enthroned by the very person who dresses real traditional chiefs.

## Conclusion

This remarkable transposition of the royal court to the arena confers on the National Traditional Wrestling Championships a popular foundation and an indigenous cultural seal. Funded by the authorities, arousing the passion of the masses and the elite, the Nigérien high mass, traditional wrestling is in accordance with the model proposed by Bourdieu (1978) who described as follows the social integration of a sporting event: "A sport is more likely to be adopted by members of a social class if it is not in contradiction with the way they relate to the body in the deepest and most profoundly unconscious sense, i.e. the body image insofar as it is the guardian of an entire social worldview, a whole philosophy of the person and the body itself".

Indeed no other sport in Niger receives the exceptional treatment reserved for wrestling. The effective and harmonious transposition of the cultural values of Nigérien society to the National Traditional Wrestling Championships could constitute a model for any policy aimed at promoting physical and sporting activities.

However, as stated above, it is not merely a sport. The space of the arena, during the National Wrestling Championships, is multifunctional. Besides various religious and magic practices, certain indigenous verbal art forms are also performed there and these raise wrestling to the level of a symbolical jousting tournament, through the songs of glorification, addressed to someone else, or composed in praise of oneself, in the case of the wrestlers.

The dominant symbols of these songs are those that evoke the chief, the victor, and exalt the values of the traditional chieftaincy, with slight differences. The emblems of victory, awarded as prizes to the champion wrestler – the *boubou*, the turban, the sword and the horse with its harness – are indeed attributes of the chief.

Finally, the wide and unanimous popularity enjoyed by all the arts that enliven the arena seems to indicate that at many levels, at the deepest level and at the level of immediate awareness, the king of sports of Niger is in harmony with certain values shared by all Nigériens. This being the case, it is liable to provide a few keystones for the construction of Nigérien national identity.

Translated by Jill Daugherty.

Le texte original en français est disponible sur [www.letterkunde.up.ac.za](http://www.letterkunde.up.ac.za)

## Notes

1. "Elhadji" is an honorific used by Muslims who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the five pillars of Islamic faith. In some cases, it ends up as part of a person's given name or family name [eds.].
2. Niger shares a common currency, the CFA (Communauté Financière Africaine) franc, with seven other members of the West African Monetary Union. Presently the currency is maintained at a fixed rate of 656 CFA to the euro. The 2004 average South African Rand-CFA exchange rate was 1 ZAR to 80.08 CFA [eds.].
3. "Girman gona damma, Kassu dan Tune/ Abimmu namuna/ Jibi namuna/ Gàta namuna/ In akwai rabo// Naga yal karya tawuliliya/ Radda Salma ya hwacfa Mamari/ Awa guda Salma na tsaye/ Awa guda Kassu na tsaye/ Ba a jima ba, sai anka rumbutse/ Kokowa da bami akwai wuya// Koda boka, koda malam/ Kassu ya hi karhin mutum guda!"
4. "(...)/ Dakanta Sagalo mayen hwata/ Niko mayan arna/ Kira guda akai ma dan marayen kura/ In bai taho ba a cinye rabon shi// Ka san ga bara damisa bana zaki/ In na shekare amaran kowa/ A gaishe ka, a gaishe ni/ A gaida wanda ya zo gona!// Zamakin ka san ni ab'bungubungu salkar maraki/ Yaro cika uban ka shi dauka/ Kur bai kareba shi yi rangatsuwa!// Ligiza – Ligiza nike mugun doki/ Geza gaba, geza baya/ Sagalo ko da mai hawa ga doki/ Ba dokin hawa ba, dokin mutuwa/ Zamakin ni al'lingi-lingi dan dorowa/ Kaza mai diya ka tsoron shirwa/ Na girma bani tsoron mayya/ Sagalo na wuce kanana na wuce yaro/ Na wuce gaban tura bara/ Sai uban gidan bara ya tashi da kai nai// Amman jama'a na debe kaddara da bilai/ Gami da bacin rana/ Sai nuce gami da ruhewar garka/ Sai dai duk wanda busulmin Allah/ Hwaran gana cika shakka// Sagalo kashe ganga ka kwankwashe/ Niko in kwankwashe maka mata hwata/ Kado wace ko dammi/ Dondai mutun guda bai imin/ Kasa karhi, bisa karhi/ Kai sagalo ko cikin ido karhi na/ Shekaral bana ni da kwadurwa sai muturwa/ Sai in karangan sun kalle/ Ina a binda an ka rawaya an ka hwadi/ A gama kar a hana/ Maza su je gida a kai labari// Hankurin karam sai goga/ Ta yaro wirkan ba ta yi dirya ba/ Sagalo Tawa ba ta da nisa/ Kowar ce zurwa ba mus oba su zurwa// Sagalo mayen kwaba/ Sa kidinka ba ka hasara/ Sai mun koma kurwar ka mu tahi gida mu samu inkore// Wa ka tambaya, waka bida/ Wa ka tambayar wani amanai gisa/ Amanar Musa dan Intuwuiha budin kura/ Yaro gaga ka tashi da wari/ Sagalo ga mu hwarhwaru mu ukku/ Mun hi ukku maganin dangwalma/ Ajiyar sarkin Bambai/ Aman a ce ma sarkin Bambai Allah uban giji shi/ kara babbata mishi girma/ Kai Sagalo bamu kaima sarki karya/ Sarki ya ce kur mum kashe/ Mu kai mishi hwata!"

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