

# **Linguistic and cultural background to the North Bauchi region and the Wiihə people**

**CHAPTER PREPARED FOR MONOGRAPH ON KARIYA WURO by PHILIP ALLSWORTH-JONES**

Roger Blench  
Kay Williamson Educational Foundation  
8, Guest Road  
Cambridge CB1 2AL  
United Kingdom  
Voice/ Ans 0044-(0)1223-560687  
Mobile worldwide (00-44)-(0)7847-495590  
E-mail rogerblench@yahoo.co.uk  
<http://www.rogerblench.info/RBOP.htm>

This printout: November 8, 2012

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>MAPS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>TABLES.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PHOTOS.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. OVERVIEW OF NORTH BAUCHI LANGUAGES.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3. LINGUISTIC HYPOTHESES CONCERNING THE CULTURE OF NORTH BAUCHI SPEAKERS.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. THE WIIHƏ AND THEIR HISTORY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. WIIHƏ SOCIAL ORGANISATION.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6. WIIHƏ CULTURE AND RELIGION .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>7. CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>15</b>

### MAPS

Map 1. The North Bauchi languages.....	2
Map 2. The Wiihə-speaking area .....	7
Map 3. Schematic arrangement of Wiihə clans.....	9

### TABLES

Table 1. Speakers of North Bauchi languages .....	1
Table 2. North Bauchi tree name reconstructions .....	3
Table 3. North Bauchi antelope name reconstructions.....	3
Table 4. North Bauchi livestock name reconstructions.....	3
Table 5. Words for ‘horse’ in North Bauchi languages .....	4
Table 6. North Bauchi crop name reconstructions .....	4
Table 7. North Bauchi liquids .....	4
Table 8. Words for ‘hoe’ in North Bauchi languages .....	5
Table 9. Words for ‘iron’ in North Bauchi languages.....	5
Table 10. Wiihə clans, founders and shrines.....	8
Table 11. The Wiihə ritual calendar.....	10
Table 12. Wiihə masquerades and their attributes .....	11

## PHOTOS

Photo 1. Players of the <i>busakun</i> , or chest-harp .....	6
Photo 2. Drums used for the <i>sár</i> ceremony, stored in the rock shelter.....	9
Photo 3. Objects recording the completion of the <i>sár</i> ceremonies.....	10
Photo 4. House of the Fyendã ceremony.....	11
Photo 5. The Buzuwan masquerade, 1983 .....	13
Photo 6. The Daṅgilo masquerade, 1983 .....	13
Photo 7. The Rauya masquerade, 1983 .....	14

## ACRONYMS

ISO	International Standards Organisation
LGA	Local Government Area

## 1. Introduction

The main village adjacent to the site of Kariya Wuro is Kariya Gyada itself, where the Kariya, or Wiihə, people live. Their language, Vinà Hə, is a North Bauchi language. North Bauchi is a subgroup of West Chadic first defined in Hoffmann (1971), and thus distantly related to Hausa and Chadic languages are in turn related to Afroasiatic (Newman 1977). The name ‘Kariya’ is likely to derive from Ghariya, the self-name of the people of Tulu, a village close to Kariya Gyada speaking essentially the same language. Wiihə<sup>1</sup> speakers have a strong cultural association with the site today and there is every reason to think that they have been resident in the region for some considerable time. This chapter begins with an overview of the North Bauchi language group<sup>2</sup>, and discusses the sort of hypotheses that can be derived from linguistic reconstruction. It then focuses on the Wiihə people themselves, summarising the limited literature on their traditions and ethnography, partly reprising the material first presented in Blench (1994).

Reference material on these populations is very sparse. Temple (1922:465) refers to the ‘Kauyawa’, presumably the same group. Gunn (1956) describes the Wiihə under the name ‘Lipkawa’ and he refers to the name ‘Kediya’ in district intelligence reports. Linguistic studies of other North Bauchi populations exist (e.g. M.G. Skinner 1977; Schuh 1998, ined.) but no detailed dictionaries have yet been published<sup>3</sup>. Following the archaeological surveys described in this volume, anthropological, historical and ethnobotanical fieldwork is summarised in Blench (1994). Since that date, the only significant new publication is CAPRO (1995: 220-229). This contains some striking new ethnographic data but also an oral history at variance with those recorded in the fieldwork described here; an evaluation of the material is in §4.

## 2. Overview of North Bauchi languages

The North Bauchi group consists of some nine living languages with one, Ajanci, which went extinct in the 1920s (Skinner 1977; Takács 2002, 2007). Table 1 shows information about alternate ethnonyms, recent estimates of numbers of speakers, and approximate locations by modern administrative boundaries.

**Table 1. Speakers of North Bauchi languages**

Name	Language	Also	ISO	No. speakers <sup>4</sup>	Location
Ajawa	?		[ajw]	Extinct	Formerly spoken east of Zumbun, Darazo LGA
Ciwogai	Ciwogai	Tsagu	[tgd]	2000	Ganjuwa LGA, Tsagu village. North of Mburku
Diri	Diri	Diriya	[dwa]	7200	Ningi and Darazo LGAs
Kariya	Vinahə	Wiihə	[kil]	2000	Ganjuwa LGA, Kariya and Tulu villages near Miya town
Mburku	Və Mvəran	Wudufu	[bbt]	12,000	Darazo LGA
Miya	Vəne Mi		[mkf]	30,000	Ganjuwa LGA, Miya town
Pa'a	Fucaka	Afa	[pqa]	8000	Ningi and Bauchi LGAs
Siri	Siri		[sir]	3800	Ningi LGA
Warji	Sərzakwai	Sar	[wji]	77,700	Ningi LGA; Birnin Kudu LGA, Jigawa state
Zumbun	Vina Zumbun	Jimbin	[jmb]	2000	Darazo LGA, Jimbim settlement

Source: Lewis (2009)

As the table shows, numbers are generally small, with only Miya and Warji having viable numbers of speakers. It is hard to gauge the extent to which this reflects past demography; it is likely that, until the

<sup>1</sup> Tone-marks will not be given on all further citations of the name

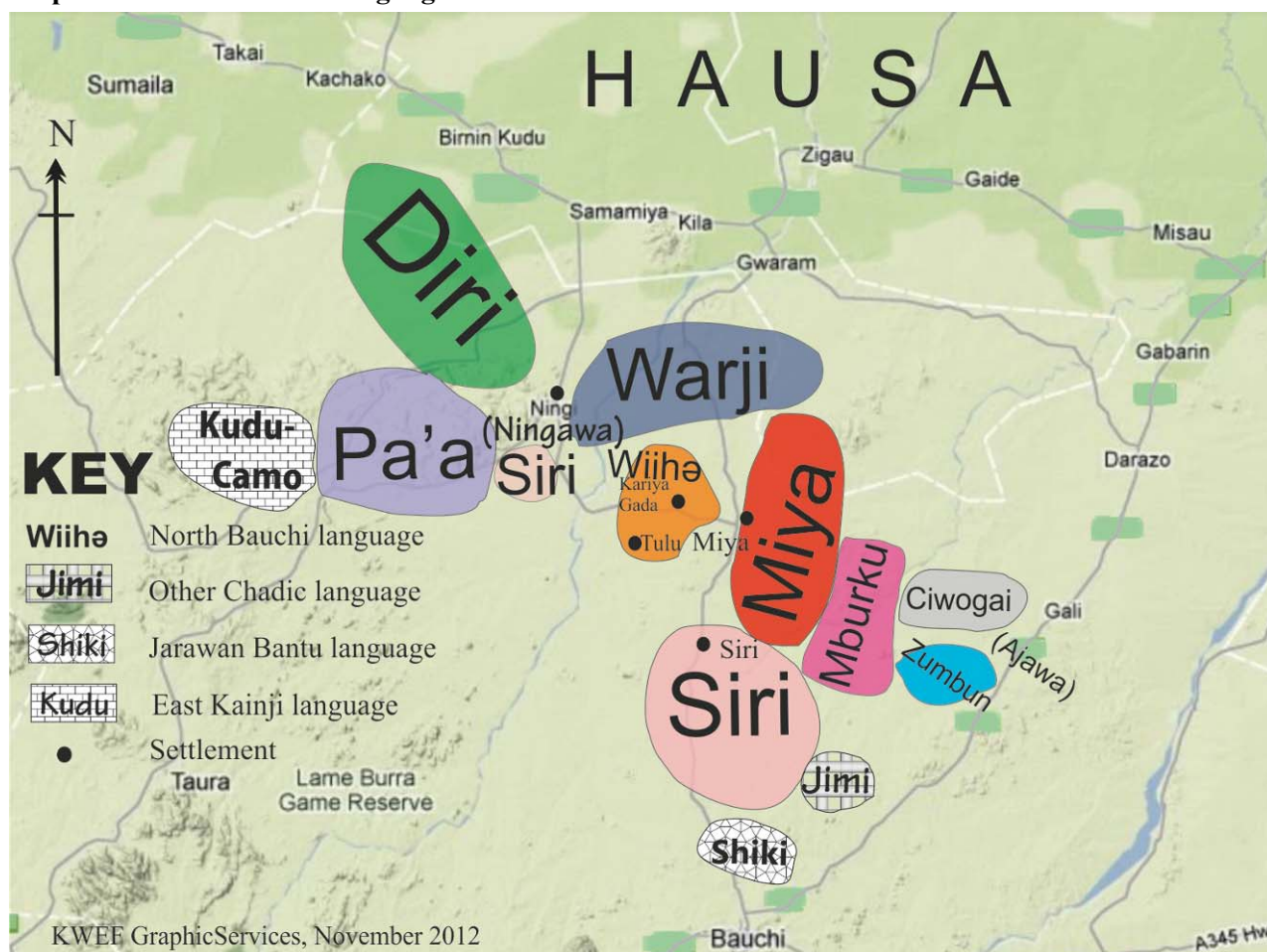
<sup>2</sup> I am grateful to Neil Skinner for his unpublished data on the North Bauchi languages.

<sup>3</sup> Preliminary dictionaries can be accessed on the author's West Chadic webpage. URL: <http://www.rogerblench.info/Language/Afroasiatic/Chadic/West/WCOP.htm>

<sup>4</sup> These figures are from the Ethnologue (Lewis 2009) and some are inconsistent with those in Skinner (1977). The Ethnologue does not clearly state if they are based on recent field assessments.

present century, all groups were fairly small. Map 1 shows the locations of speakers of North Bauchi languages, as well as some neighbouring populations with which they are intertwined.

**Map 1. The North Bauchi languages**



Most striking are the remnant speakers of East Kainji languages such as Kuda-Camo and the Ningawa. Kuda-Camo is nearly extinct and the language of the Ningawa is no longer spoken. The relatives of East Kainji are mostly spoken north of Jos (Blench in press) and East Kainji is in turn related to the other branches of Kainji, which is spoken around the lake of that name. There is little doubt that there were once many more small Kainji languages in the region north of Bauchi whose speakers have turned to Hausa<sup>5</sup>. The Jimi language is related to the South Bauchi languages, also Chadice, but quite different from North Bauchi. Jimi represents the northernmost relative of this group (Lewis 2009). Shiki [Shiki] is a Jarawan Bantu language, related to the languages of southern Cameroun and a representative of an unexplained and as yet undated migration to Central Nigeria (Gerhardt 1982; Shimizu 1983). This complex ethnolinguistic mosaic reflects periods of fragmentation and migration, resulting from both low population densities and the impact of the Hausa slave raids in the nineteenth century.

Skinner (1977) considers briefly the internal relationships of the North Bauchi languages. He notes that Vina Hə and Warji are relatively close to one another while the others are more remote and quotes lexicostatistical percentages for various language pairs but not for the group as a whole. These figures are surprisingly low, between the high 20s to the 40s. This cannot be easily checked, since he does not give complete comparative lists. However, if these figures are approximately correct, North Bauchi can be compared with dated language dispersals such as Polynesian or Bantu (see more extensive discussion in Blench 2006). North Bauchi languages are more diverse than Polynesian, which points to an original date of the break-up of the

<sup>5</sup> For a summary of the impact of nineteenth century warfare on patterns of ethnicity in this region, see Patton (1975).

group at around 3000 BP. Given the unambiguous evidence for agriculture it is not likely to be earlier than this.

### 3. Linguistic hypotheses concerning the culture of North Bauchi speakers

Neil Skinner (1977) gives a selective comparative wordlist of North Bauchi languages, which makes it possible to establish the lexical items that reconstruct in a putative proto-North Bauchi proto-language and thus a relative chronology in relation to the domestication of plants and animals. Skinner is not an entirely satisfactory source, since he only lists items he considers to be cognate. Nonetheless, it is usually possible to establish whether a proto-form can be posited. If there is an apparently related form in most of the languages then, assuming ‘fossil’ morphology can be identified and stripped away, a likely proto-form which gives rise to surface forms in daughter languages can be given. The following tables show my ‘quasi-reconstructions’, marked with #, i.e. which could account for the surface forms of words. However, these are definitely *not* regular reconstructions and should be treated as first order hypotheses, awaiting improved transcriptions.

We can be sure the North Bauchi languages diversified within their present ecological zone. A number of plant and animal species testify to a dry savanna vegetation. Trees that seem to be present include (Table 2);

**Table 2. North Bauchi tree name reconstructions**

Latin	English	North Bauchi
<i>Faidherbia albida</i>	whitethorn	#atasay
<i>Acacia sieberiana</i>		#malaliya
<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	mahogany	#kwamay
<i>Zizyphus sp.</i>	jujube	#akwaya
<i>Ficus sp.</i>	fig	#tirini
<i>Bombax buonoponense</i>	silk-cotton	#zəŋgwa

all of which are characteristic of the regional ecology. Similarly, the following antelope names can be reconstructed (Table 3);

**Table 3. North Bauchi antelope name reconstructions**

Latin	English	North Bauchi
<i>Tragelaphus scriptus</i>	bushbuck	#badakəla
<i>Gazella rufifrons</i>	red-fronted gazelle	#tambəra
<i>Alcelaphus buselaphus</i>	hartebeest	#zəmakwara
<i>Ourebia ourebi</i>	oribi	#ndagway
<i>Redunca redunca</i>	reedbuck	#gəlafɪ

all of which fall into the same zone. There is evidence that North Bauchi speakers were agriculturalists, with both livestock and crops. Table 4 shows the terms for livestock species that can be reconstructed.

**Table 4. North Bauchi livestock name reconstructions**

English	Proto-North Bauchi
chicken	#lərkəyi
cow	#yəruwa
he-goat	#aŋfɪkyə
sheep	#tumakway

The terms for ‘horse’ are shown in Table 5. They are clearly all related and yet do not show regular correspondences. The similarity to Hausa (and indeed many other Chadic languages) points to borrowing subsequent to the diversification of North Bauchi languages. A proto-form should therefore not be reconstructed for North Bauchi languages. There is some archaeological evidence for the presence of early equids in this region, which can be identified with the ‘Plateau pony’ (summarised in Blench 1993). Since

ponies were kept throughout this region into modern times, it is likely that this term originally referred to the pony and was later adapted to the larger horse.

**Table 5. Words for ‘horse’ in North Bauchi languages**

Language	Term
Ciwogai	daakən
Diri	aʒaʒa
Mburku	daaku
Miya	dùwakə
Pa'a	ɖgiki
Siri	dukwi
Warji	duhuna m. dakway f.
Wiihə	duhu
Zumbun	daakwa
Hausa	dookii pl. dawaakii

Source: Skinner (1977) and ms. sources

add cross-reference to your text

Table 6 shows the names of crops that can be reconstructed for proto-North Bauchi.

**Table 6. North Bauchi crop name reconstructions**

English	Latin	Proto-North Bauchi
Bambara groundnuts	<i>Vigna subterranea</i>	#azuwey
guinea-corn	<i>Sorghum bicolor</i>	#ʒuna
millet ( <i>gero</i> )	<i>Pennisetum typhoideum</i>	#gyəla
millet ( <i>maiwa</i> )	<i>Pennisetum typhoideum</i>	#marday
okra	<i>Abelmoschus esculentus</i>	#tagway
garden egg	<i>Solanum spp.</i>	#akintə

Table 7 shows what may be called anthropic liquids, i.e. those created by humans. This is an indirect confirmation of a settled agricultural society.

**Table 7. North Bauchi liquids**

English	Proto-North Bauchi
beer	#təlaɲa
honey	#sukwana
oil	#fivəna

A noun for a physical hoe cannot be reconstructed for proto-North Bauchi. Table 8 shows the variety of words for hoe, which fall into a large number of different sets.

**Table 8. Words for ‘hoe’ in North Bauchi languages**

Language	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Ciwogai						ƙaadige		kaase		
Diri	dufa						ɟura			
Mburku				tiyi						
Miya		təlpə	mágirbiy	tiyiy						
Pa'a		təmpá				kaagədə <sup>6</sup>			táári	
Siri					dulumi				ta'ari	
Warji	dawfana				ɗgiir			kasay		balalena
Wiihə		tumpə			dil					
Zumbun					tīla	kəyanga				

Sources: Skinner (1977), Schuh (ined.), M. Skinner (1979)

None of these roots are widespread or show external cognates. Although a general verb for ‘to cultivate’, with the form #*ɓad-* is proto-North Bauchi, the iron hoe does not reconstruct to this level. This almost certainly implies that the iron hoe was introduced subsequent to the diversification of North Bauchi. ‘Iron’ is not attested across the group, and is only found as *mir-a* in four languages (Table 9);

**Table 9. Words for ‘iron’ in North Bauchi languages**

Language	Term
Miya	mìr
Pa'a	gárnà
Warji	mira-na
Wiihə	mìr
Zumbun	mira

Source: Skinner (1977) and ms. sources

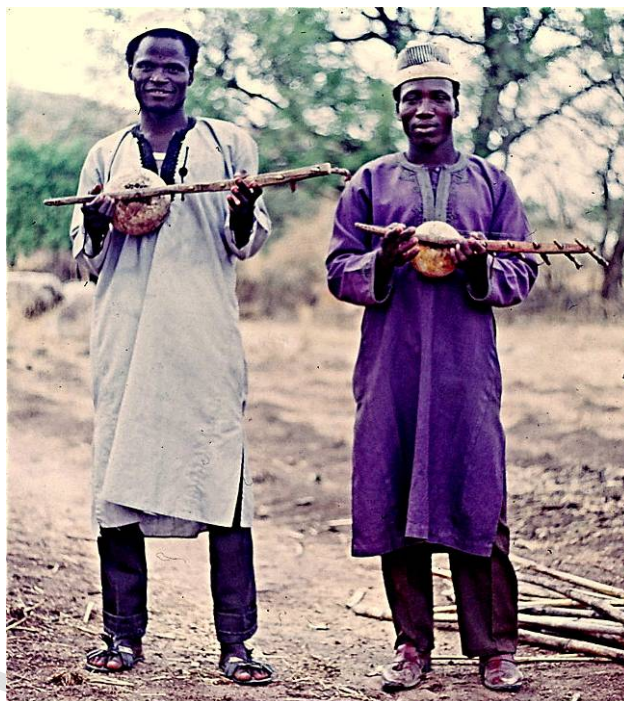
Without further data we cannot clearly assess whether ‘iron’ is proto-North Bauchi or was subsequently introduced into the region.

<sup>6</sup> Not found in M. Skinner (1979)



Finally, we can begin to approach more intangible culture. This is less well represented in the linguistic data, but Photo 1 shows a unique musical instrument which characterises the North Bauchi peoples. The chest-harp is an instrument which combines features from the arched harp and the chest-bow, apparently unique, not only within Africa, but globally. It is reported for all the North Bauchi cultures for which there is data, and this suggests it was innovated at the level of proto-North Bauchi.

**Photo 1. Players of the *busakun*, or chest-harp**



#### **4. The Wiihə and their history**

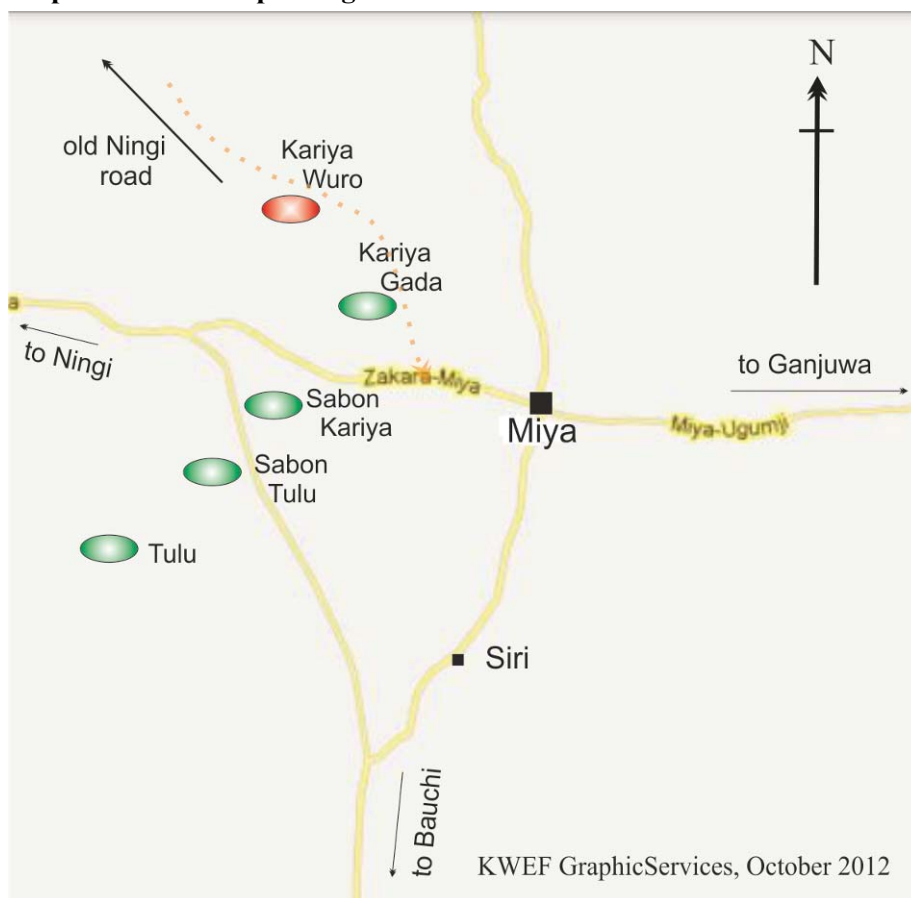
A basic survey of the ethnography of the Wiihə people was conducted in 1986, and this section summarises the information gathered during this visit<sup>7</sup>. Additional material was collected by Philip Allsworth-Jones as an adjunct to the excavations and all photographs in this paper are from his visits in 1981, 1983 and 1986. The Wiihə people live in two main settlements, Kariya Gyada and Tulu, off the roads going west from Miya to Ningi in Bauchi State. In both cases, a new settlement on the most recent of the roads has been established. N.A. Skinner (1977) estimated their population at 3000, but Lewis (2009) gives just 2000. Map 2 shows the Vina Hə-speaking area as well as the archaeological site of Kariya Wuro. A third village, Dutsen Giwa, was said to be formerly speak Vina Hə, but today has completely switched to Hausa. The Wiihə have quite an elaborate account of their historical traditions, which was recorded at length in Hausa but is here given in summary form<sup>8</sup>.

The first man to settle at Kariya was Gidda, who came from the East, Karekare country. He was followed by another man, also from the East, named Tsamburat. They were both Karekare. Then another man came from Jangu, named Jangala. Jangala came with many followers, so they decided to make him the chief and he was the first chief of Kariya. He reigned for a long period and eventually died a natural death. During the time he was chief, someone named Bawa came from Dutse in the Kano region. At that time there was living in the town a man named Funti who bought a slave named Balma from Bawa. There were three [slaves] altogether: a man who was sold at Farin Dutse and a woman at Miya. When Jangala died, the elders in the town held a meeting and they decided to give the slave [Balma] the title of chief. Their reason for doing this was that they did not understand Hausa and so they gave him the post. At that time, a message came from Sarkin Bauchi and he acted as interpreter between Sarkin Bauchi and the people of the town. So they made him chief and he accepted, despite being a slave. Balma was intelligent and courageous.

<sup>7</sup> I was invited to visit the Wiihə people by Philip Allsworth-Jones, whose photographs accompany this paper. Most of the data in this section, with more limited analysis, appears in Blench (1994). I would like to thank Professor Russell Schuh, UCLA, for the transcription of Vina Hə terms. While in Kariya Gyada, for showing hospitality and for assisting in the collection of ethnographic and historical data, I would like to thank Mohammed Sanusi, chief of Kariya Gyada, Mohammed Tulu, chief of Tulu, Sarkin Baka and Haruna Adamu Yari, who acted as interpreter throughout. Insecurity in the region in recent years has made a return visit problematic, but we hope to make this material available to the community in due course.

<sup>8</sup> This was compiled and written down by Haruna Adamu Yari, at that time a school teacher at Kariya Gyada, who also assisted me with the interlinear translation. I hope to eventually publish the full text and transliteration.

**Map 2. The Wiihə-speaking area**



However, Kano people are soon corrupted and Balma began to rule them very harshly. If people offended him he would kill them or sell them into slavery. When they recognised what was happening, they sent to Dan Maje, the Sarkin Ningi. They sent greetings to Dan Maje and told him Balma was mistreating them. So Dan Maje directed a few of his brave men to come to Kariya, kill Balma and bring back his head. It is the custom of the Kariya, when strangers come, to hold a meeting outside the town. So Dan Maje's men sent to Balma and asked him to meet them outside the town so they could greet one another. When Balma arrived, they began to attack him, trying to wound him with swords and spears. But they failed, as he had a charm that prevented iron objects from wounding him. After they failed, they held onto him until he fell down. Then they brought small rocks and threw them at him until he was unconscious. They killed him, cut off his head and took it to Dan Maje.

Before Balma died, he had seven male children, Kimai, Abdullahi, Tunari, Barde, Mana, Hamman and Dula, as well as girls. The chieftaincy went to Markuba, the son of Jangala, who reigned for a long time. After his death, the chieftaincy went to Gwada, son of Markuba, and then to Kalwa, son of Gwada. It was during the reign of Kalwa that white men came. Kalwa was captured and taken away to Lokoja because he continued selling slaves after the prohibition of the slave trade. The chieftaincy then reverted to the family of Balma and his son, Hamman, who was made chief. When he died, his son, Mu'alla Layidi, was made chief in 1918. In the time of Mu'alla Layidi, things began to progress and he started to send his sons to school. He reigned for thirty-eight years, dying on 14 February 1956. Mohammed Sanusi was installed as chief on 17 March, 1956.

This account does not entirely match other accounts, for example, that given to Philip Allworth-Jones in 1983. In this version, two men came from Birnin Tsauri in the east; one became the ancestor of the Wiihə, the other settled at Kariya Wudufa and originated the Mburku people. The first chief of the Wiihə was Cààdà, who was accompanied by Kyángàlwà; the two rock pools on top of the inselberg at Kariya Gyada were named after them. This version then continued much along the lines of the written account. The

account in CAPRO (1995) and may represent the view from Tulu. This states that the two found fathers of the Wiihə, Caada and Nzulla, migrated together with the Pa'a from 'the East'. They first reached Tulu and then went on to Kariya. Reference is made to a treacherous chief, Buha, who was killed with his family, which seems to correspond to Balma in the Kariya account. This version also records the burning of Ningi at the time when the British troops arrived.

There are several interesting aspects to the written version, the first of which is the purported connection with the Karekare, a Chadic-speaking group in Borno northeast of the Wiihə. Linguistically, Vina Hə has almost no links with Karekare, and the assertion of a connection is likely to be a later accretion, based on the similarity of names. The earliest chiefs cannot be dated, but the narrative intersects with recorded history when slavery and the Sarkin Bauchi are mentioned. This is almost certainly Yakubu, the first Emir of Bauchi, 1763-1845. He conducted extensive wars after receiving a banner from Usman dan Fodio in 1807 (cf. Morrison 1982 for an account of these wars). The main purpose of these wars was essentially slaving, and a large area around Bauchi was brought under his control. The story of Balma likely reflects a Yakubu appointee who indeed probably was an ex-slave. Such an appointment would be presumably in the 1820s. However, there is clearly some time compression here, as according to Patton (1975), Dan Maje was Sarkin Ningi from ca. 1855-1870. The Ningi (and the related Butawa) were non-Chadic speakers who formed a significant resistance to Bauchi. After the assassination of Balma, the Wiihə seem to have taken control of their chieftaincy, but at the same time become slavers themselves, as the exile of Kalwa suggests. The process whereby the British took charge of this region was evidently painful for both sides. Langa Langa (1922) records a journey to settle a tax palaver at Kariya Wudufa (i.e. the Mburku people) in February 1909, which ended in him calling in soldiers, who burnt down the town and set fire to the grain reserves.

One rather evident conclusion from the above narrative is that the oral traditions of the Wiihə have a rather shallow time-depth, apparently going back only to the early nineteenth century. However, their genesis must lay much deeper in time. According to Skinner (1977) it shares only 44% cognacy with its nearest relative, Warji, which points to a long period of separation.

## 5. Wiihə social organisation

The Wiihə, like most of their neighbours, had no strong central authority, although this began to develop through contact with Islam. The underlying system of opposed clans with ritual leaders, was a classic segmentary lineage system, which held together the society in the pre-colonial era. Wiihə society is organised into exogamous patrilineal clans, which are in turn linked to individual shrines, *gàḡà*, and their masquerades. Table 10 shows these clans, together with their founders and associated shrines.

**Table 10. Wiihə clans, founders and shrines**

Clan	Founder	Shrine
Vàràyá	Tákúshiyà	Uses the Kùlkùl shrine
Kùlkùl	Yàkàù	Jambula
Njálǵá	Zàmàni	Incorporated into Kàryà
Kàryà	Ààyà	Faduwan
Wèèmà	Gwàlàbà	Dunguzun
Iirwá	Jàngalá	Incorporated into Vàyà

For the Wiihə, day to day and ritual existence are kept quite distinct. The Njálǵá and Iirwá clans no longer exist socially, in that they are irrelevant for marital purposes. However, their masquerades are still separate and continue to appear. The shrine of the Kàryà, the Faduwan, is also the name of another former clan now incorporated into the Kàryà. Three of these are mentioned in Gunn (1956) whose 'Waima' must correspond to Wèèmà. These clans are assigned various zones in the inselberg and the surrounding land (Map 3). Even the merged or absorbed clans still have their specifically demarcated ritual area. A fourth shrine, Fadənzənhən, may originally have been the shrine of the Varaya clan, but by 1986—it was managed by a single person, and was likely to disappear. The overall religious leader, the Sarkin Dutse or Aaya, was chosen from the Kàryà clan. Somewhat surprisingly, the central inselberg at Kariya Wuro, known as Gàḡà Kàrdō, is not regarded as a Wiihə shrine at all, but as belonging to a group who moved away to Dubu and



now speak the Diri language. The situation in Tulu is only slightly less complex. There are two inselbergs, Mòkwàyà and Ghàriyà, and three clans, Terabo, Dezəkin and Garba. The Terabo shrine is on Mòkwàyà, the Dezəkin shrine on Ghàriyà and Garba is assigned the land between the two rocks.

Traditional marital practice seems to have emphasised female choice and the high importance attached to fertility and clearly has some link with the polygynous systems of the Jos area (Muller 1982). Girls are permitted multiple lovers until they become pregnant, as first-born children belong to the parents. After this, she can marry freely a husband of her choice. However, the suitor then has to perform brideservice in the form of manual labour on the farm of the girl's family. When this is complete, the marriage can be celebrated. Ritual capture of the bride was apparently formerly practised but has now nearly died out.

## 6. Wiihə culture and religion

The Wiihə people have a complex ritual cycle which has many features in common with other peoples in the Nigerian Middle Belt. The central ritual is the *sár* or circumcision ceremony, referred to by Gunn (1956) and CAPRO (1995). In this, the boys are sent to live in the bush for several days and nights and taught the secrets of adulthood. Their return is celebrated by several nights of music and feasting. The drums used for this festival are usually stored in the rock-shelter on the southern face of the inselberg Màràw. Photo 2 shows a demonstration of a performance on these drums, with two priests, Dúucə and Dùngú playing.

Map 3. Schematic arrangement of Wiihə clans

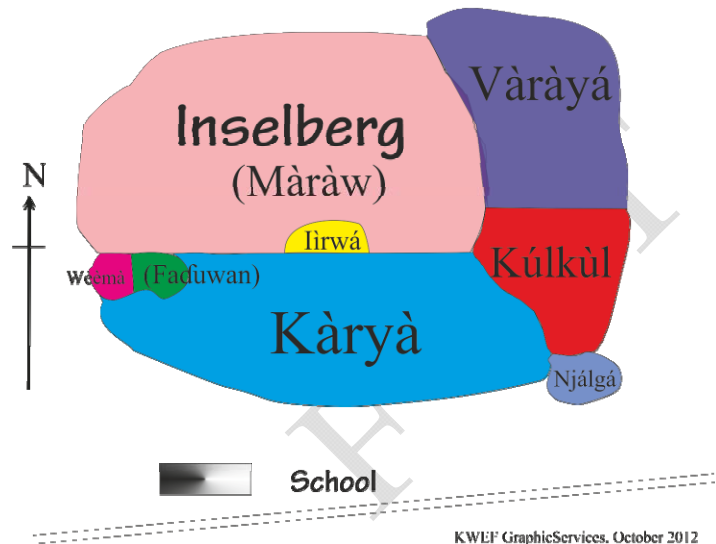


Photo 2. Drums used for the *sár* ceremony, stored in the rock shelter



**Photo 3. Objects recording the completion of the *sár* ceremonies**



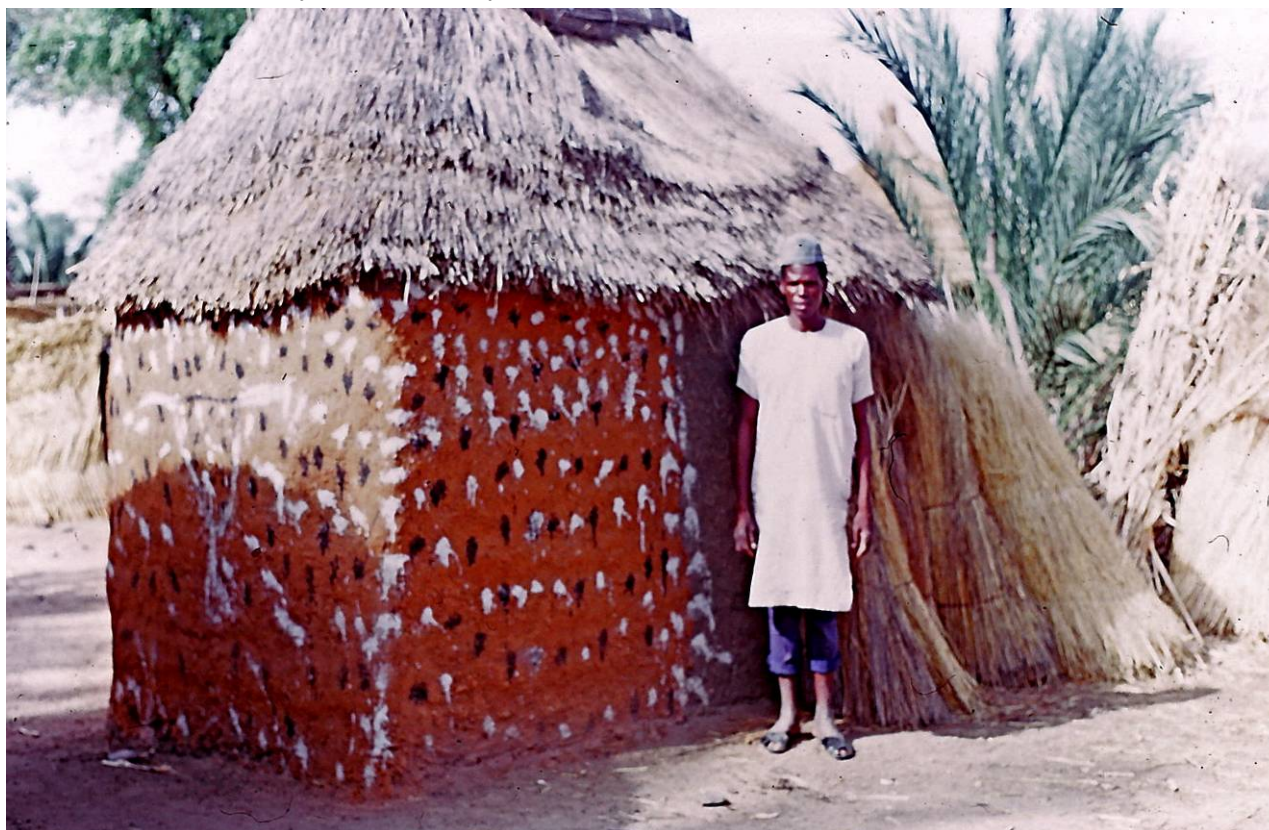
The ritual calendar of the Wiihə is quite intensive and is summarised in Table 11. Rituals described directly during fieldwork are listed first and then festivals only given in CAPRO (1995) are listed

**Table 11. The Wiihə ritual calendar**

Name	Season	Occasion
Bikin Baka	November	A festival and feast for hunters held before the harvest. Each hunter kills a chicken and the blood and feathers are stuck on the doorpost. The Wiyarun masquerade appears during this festival.
Maamaru	January	Held every four years on top of the inselberg following the sorghum harvest. Women are not permitted there and animals are taken and sacrificed. Performances on horns and flutes mark the ceremony.
Fyendə	February	When all the crops have been brought in. It signifies the adulthood of a boy and has an alternate name, <i>Dáhi á dábá</i> which translates as ‘Boy getting to the field’. cf. Photo 4
Kavər	April	approach of the rainy season
Teya ghama erhu	dry season	Correctly performed burial is essential for one who dies to be accepted by the ancestors. At a funeral, a cow is killed and the head is taken to the grave. Three years afterwards another cow is killed at a festival of this name.
Riyahum	year when <i>sár</i> is not conducted	for young boys
From CAPRO (1995)		
Dahi Dubu	Yearly	Parent celebrate their children reaching maturity. Parents kill rams and there are three days of dancing. Youths visit one another and exchange gifts.
Gudalla	Yearly	Annual festival for the shrines behind the village. Blood and meat are



Name	Season	Occasion
Mamangar	Every four years	smearred on a three-forked stick. Sacrifices on the graves of title holders.
Matikyau	Yearly	Girls preparing for marriage dance around the village for three days

**Photo 4. House of the Fyendā ceremony**

Given the small population of the Wiihə, their ritual and cultural life is of remarkable complexity. It is worth underlining the striking importance given to masquerades in a society now almost entirely encapsulated in a matrix of Muslim Hausa culture. Their persistence is almost certainly due to their role in theatricalising the clan system, which continues to permeate all aspects of social life. Each masquerade has both a ‘dress’ or costume and a behaviour, from friendly to aggressive, summarised in Table 12. Tulu also has masquerades, some of which are identical with Kariya, others are innovative.

**Table 12. Wiihə masquerades and their attributes**

Masquerade	Local description	Clan
<b>Kariya Gyada</b>		
Balaŋgana	Covered in flowers that grow on the inselberg	Karya
Bibiya	Similar to Rasambe	Iirwa
Bihibihin	Goes about during the day beating people with a stick	All shrines
Buzhimbuzhir	Hostile to people	Faduwan
Büzùwàn	Wears dyed stringwork costume with a head-dress of marabout stork feathers. cf. Photo 5	Faduwan
Cabaliya	Like Bihibihin but has leaves on its body and chases women	All shrines
Dabadli	Mask of hunters, appears when a large animal is killed	Njalga
Daŋgiló	Wears dyed stringwork costume with a head-dress of marabout stork feathers. cf. Photo 6	Faduwan

Masquerade	Local description	Clan
Éndàwà	Female mask	Iirwa
Galiya wayu	Costume is made from small feathers	Karya
Gamadu	Wears dyed stringwork costume with a head-dress of marabout stork feathers. It sings and dances. It is friendly to women who follow it.	Kulkul
Gambo	Female masquerade. Its body is covered in leaves and it has a basketry headpiece	Kulkul
Gamuṅguna	Like Zagwarna but with a different dancing style	Karya
Gerahunu	Masquerade that guards other masquerades. It holds an axe.	Kulkul
Tereewa		
Girda Bauna	Like Zagwarna but with a different dancing style	Iirwa
Gudaliya	Appears after the harvest of <i>gero</i> millet.	?
Jamma Kalla	Like Zagwarna but with a different dancing style	Karya
Kacan Kenau	A masquerade adopted from the Warji, dressed in leaves. The face of the mask is covered in jumblebeads ( <i>Abrus precatorius</i> [us])	?
Muṅgaruba	Like Gambo but with a different dancing style	Kulkul
Dwaliya	Like Gamadu but with smaller feathers	Kulkul
Rasambe	Stringwork costume	Kulkul, Varaya
Ráúyà	It drives away women and girls. cf. Photo 7	Faduwan
Sabi	It appears in the early morning. Many may appear at once.	?
Shimsha	Female masquerade like Gambo but with a different dancing style	Kulkul
Tamasa	Female masquerade.	Karya
Tàrcùkwà	Male figure which carries two sticks	Karya
Tàshùwè	Masquerade representing the Aaya, or chief priest.	Faduwan
Tukatzuma	Masquerade dressed in the leaves of mahogany, <i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	Weema
Tumfo	A small masquerade. A 'friend' of Tukatzuma	Weema
Zagwarna	The costume is made of feathers	Karya
<b>Tulu</b>		
Girda Bauna	Like Zagwarna but with a different dancing style	Dezəkin
Ndàrzùmà	The costume is made from grass	Garba
Dgàràsh	Masquerade with a costume of leaves and a leather apron	Garba
Rúúm <sup>9</sup>	No description	Tərabo
Sábi	It appears in the early morning. Many may appear at once.	Tərabo, Dezəkin
Sákwáyá	No description	Tərabo
Wùnàlimà	Female masquerade with a costume of leaves	Dezəkin

\*Female masquerades, known collectively as Ndùwàcàn, embodied by men, do not sing or dance.

A number of interesting points emerge from this list, which is far from exhaustive. There is no necessary correlation between the small number of surviving adherents to a shrine, and the masquerades it supports. Larger clans today may have fewer masquerades than an obsolete shrine such as Faduwan. The general features of the masquerades in costume terms, such as the use of feathers, stringwork and jumblebeads resemble very strongly those of the Nigerian Middle Belt. Many masquerades are quite similar to those in the Southern Zaria area (see for example the descriptions of the ritual cycle of Plateau peoples in Gunn 1953 and Muller 1989). The division between male and female masquerades is also typical of the dichotomies observed directly south of the Wihə region. Photo 5, Photo 6 and Photo 7 present a few of the masquerades described in Table 12 photographed in 1983.

<sup>9</sup> The name of both the drum and the initiation cycle in Kariya Gyada



**Photo 5. The Buzuwan masquerade, 1983**



**Photo 6. The Dangilo masquerade, 1983**





**Photo 7. The Rauya masquerade, 1983**



An important feature of the inselberg is the *Aya*, a ritual pool whose water has medicinal properties. The water was used to make charms in times of war, but also to make the drinks used in ordeals for those accused of witchcraft. The accused had to drink it and if he or she vomited, they were forced to pay a fine. The reputation of the water of Aya is widespread in the region and visitors from other ethnic groups come to take samples for ritual purposes.

Wiihə ritual culture is extremely rich and this summary can only give a flavour of it. But one aspect of it should be noted in connection with the interpretation of prehistory, namely that these features are not indigenous to Chadic-speaking cultures and must be the result of interaction with the Benue-Congo speakers of Central Nigeria. The harvest ceremonies, the initiation of youths and the details of the masquerades themselves, must ultimately originate in populations resident when the North Bauchi speakers migrated to this region. The most likely source of the ritual cycle are those characteristic of the Plateau peoples, who were almost certainly to the Such whose adoption is also reported for other Chadic-speaking peoples, for example the Ron, who live around Bokkos, east of Jos (Frank 1981).

## **7. Conclusion**

This chapter presents an overview of the culture of the North Bauchi peoples, and in particular what can be learned about their subsistence strategies at the point when they began to diversify. The potential reconstructions suggest that agriculture was established, but iron hoes were not in widespread use. The linguistic evidence for iron-working itself is defective. Iron is known in Central Nigeria from the Nok excavations at around 2500 BP (Fagg 1965; Tylecote 1975; Rupp 2010). Agriculture in Central Nigeria remains poorly dated at best. Evidence from Nok points to pearl millet, finger millet and cowpeas in the period 800-450 cal BC (Kahlheber et al. 2009). So it seems reasonable to suppose the North Bauchi language began to diversify around 2-3000 years ago, which would be consistent with their approximate level of internal diversity.

Wiihə historical traditions are thus very recent in comparison with this level of chronology. The mythical elements in the migration narrative must certainly be discarded, including the settlement from further east. To understand more about its earlier phases and the extent to which it can be correlated with the excavated site, a fuller understanding of regional ethnohistory is required. In particular, it would be interesting to know much more about their interaction with Benue-Congo speakers in the remote past, as this clearly informs Wiihə ritual culture.

## References

- Blench, R.M. 1993. Ethnographic and linguistic evidence for the prehistory of African ruminant livestock, horses and ponies. In: *The Archaeology of Africa. Food, Metals and Towns*. eds. Shaw, T., Sinclair, P., Andah, B. and Okpoko, A. 71-103. London: Routledge.
- Blench, R.M. 1994. The Ethnography of the Kariya People: a preliminary description. *Nigerian Field*, 59:157-168.
- Blench, R.M. 2006. *Archaeology, Language and the African Past*. Lanham: Altamira Press.
- Blench, R.M. in press. The status of the East Kainji languages of Central Nigeria: recent research. *Papers from the Conference on the retirement of Ludwig Gerhardt, Hamburg 2004*. Theda Schumann & Roland Kiessling eds.
- CAPRO 1995. *Unmask the giant*. Jos: CAPRO Research Office.
- Crozier, D. & Blench, R.M. 1992. *An Index of Nigerian Languages*. Edition 2. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics.
- Fagg, Bernard 1965. Radiocarbon Dating of the Nok Culture, Northern Nigeria. *Nature* 205, 212.
- Frank, Barbara 1981. *Die Kulere. Bauern in Mittelnigeria*. Wiesbaden: Steiner.
- Gerhardt, L. 1982. Jarawan Bantu -The mistaken identity of the Bantu who turned north. *Afrika und Übersee*, LXV, 75-95.
- Gunn, H.D. 1953. *Peoples of the Plateau Area of Northern Nigeria*. London: International Africa Institute.
- Gunn, H.D. 1956. *Pagan peoples of the central area of Northern Nigeria*. London: International Africa Institute.
- Hoffmann, Carl 1971. Provisional checklist of Chadic languages. *Chadic Newsletter*, Special Issue.
- Kahlheber, S., Höhn, A. and Rupp, N. 2009. Archaeobotanical studies at Nok sites: an interim report. *Nyame Akuma*, 71, 2-17.
- Langa Langa 1922. *Up against it in Nigeria*. London: George Allen & Unwin.
- Lewis, M. Paul (ed.) 2009. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Sixteenth edition*. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online
- Morrison, J.H. 1982. Plateau societies' resistance to Jihadist penetration. In: Isichei, E. ed. *Studies in the history of Plateau State, Nigeria*. 136-150. London: Macmillan Press.
- Muller, Jean-Claude 1982. *Du bon usage du sexe et du mariage: structure matrimoniales di plateau haut nigérian*. Paris : L'Harmattan/ Québec : Serge Fleury.
- Muller, Jean-Claude 1989. *La calebasse sacrée*. Montréal : Presses Universitaires de Montréal.
- Newman, Paul 1977. Chadic Classification and Reconstructions. *Afroasiatic Linguistics*, 5/1.
- Patton, Adell 1975. *The Ningi chieftdom and the African frontier: mountaineers and resistance to the Sokoto Caliphate ca. 1800-1908*. Ph.D. University of Wisconsin.
- Rupp, Nicole 2010. Beyond Art. Archaeological studies on the Nok Culture, Central Nigeria. In: *West African Archaeology: New developments, new perspectives*. Philip Allsworth-Jones ed. BAR International Series 2164. 67-78. Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Schuh, Russell G. 1998. *A Grammar of Miya*. University of California Publications in Linguistics 130. Berkeley: University of California.
- Schuh, Russell G. ined. *Miya dictionary*. electronic ms.
- Shimizu, K. 1983. Die Jarawan-Bantusprachen des Bundesstaates Bauchi, Nordnigeria. In: *Sprache Geschichte und Kultur in Afrika*. R. Vossen & Claudi, U. (eds.) 291-301. Hamburg: Buske.
- Skinner, M.G. 1977. *Aspects of Pa'anci Grammar*. Ph.D. African Languages and Literature, University of Wisconsin, Madison.
- Skinner, N.A. 1977. North Bauchi Chadic languages. *Afroasiatic Linguistics*, 4/1:1-49.
- Takács, Gábor 2002. Outline of a North Bauchi historical phonology. *Afrikanische Arbeitspapiere*, 70: 187-202.
- Takács, Gábor 2007. The Afroasiatic background of the North Bauchi consonant system II. In: Topics in Chadic Linguistics III Historical Studies. Papers from the 3rd Biennial International Colloquium on Chadic Languages, Villejuif, November 24-25, 2005. Henry Tourneux ed. 103-131. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe.
- Temple, O. 1922 [repr. 1965] *Notes on the tribes of Northern Nigeria*. Lagos: CMS.
- Tylecote, R. 1975. Iron smelting at Taruga, Nigeria. *Journal of the Historical Metallurgy Society* 9:49-56.