

PLATE I



A WOMAN OF THE BOLEWA TRIBE

TRIBAL STUDIES IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

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92. Guinea-corn	Sukungwa	sukungwa
93. Maize	Nggule	nggule
94. Ground nut	Inyen	injen
95. Oil	Mara	mara
Berberi	Uva	uva
Fulani	Pirsana	pirsana
Hausa	Hausa	hausu
Margi	Margi	margi
Kilba	Wuding	wuding
Higi	Hiji	hidzi

THE FALI

A. The Fali of Wuba District

The term Fali is applied to various tribal groups which have no apparent connection with each other. Thus the Fali of the Kiria area in Wuba District differ both in language and in customs from the Fali a few miles further south in the district of Mubi. When Barth visited Adamawa he placed the northern limit of the Fali at Badanijo 25 miles south of Mubi¹ (in the Sorau area) and he records a Fali vocabulary which is totally different from that of either the Fali of Wuba or of Mubi. Elsewhere he speaks of the town of Batema or Baguma, eleven days' journey from Yola (on the Mora road) as being the principal centre of the Fali² and he also applies the name Fali to the Tufuri or Tuburi group.³ Strumpell says that Fali is widely spoken between Dama-Grenze in the south and Gider and Mubi in the north.⁴ Strumpell's vocabulary has a good deal in common with Barth's, though it is not by any means identical. But it has nothing in common with the Fali of Mubi or of Wuba. Barth remarks that his Fali is entirely distinct from Bata, Zani, and Margi, but I find that the Fali spoken in the Wuba and Mubi districts has a very definite connection with Bata, Margi, and Nzangi. The term Fali is also, I believe, applied to certain groups of peoples in Bauchi Province who speak a dialect of Bolewa.

It is possible that the various so-called Fali groups are offshoots of a former homogeneous tribe (centred in French Cameroons), which while retaining the tribal title, lost their language and customs. In this case the word may be a form of Bali =

¹ *Travels*, vol. ii, p. 436.² *Travels*, vol. ii, p. 594.³ *Travels*, vol. ii, p. 611.⁴ *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, III iv, 1910, p. 450.

men or people. On the other hand, the word Fali may have come to be used as a general term for any immigrants irrespective of their tribe. It was possibly a term of contempt meaning "slaves", for among the Nzangi the word for "slave" is "fali".

The following short notes concern the Fali of Wuba district who occupy the villages of Kiria, Kiria Mongo, Mijilu, Kaskufu, Jombula, Manzul, Dugoba, etc. These people are close neighbours of the Higi and Margi, and if the vocabulary of their language, which is attached, is compared with that of the Higi and Margi it will be apparent that there is a close linguistic connection. The language of the Fali of Mubi, on the other hand, shows very much less connection. The Fali of Wuba also display many of the cultural features characteristic of the Higi and southern Margi. Thus they follow the practice of removing the epidermis of those who had died at a ripe age. The body is, in the first instance, given a temporary burial in sand so as to hasten the decomposition which facilitates the removal of the cuticle.¹ It is then placed on a platform and the epidermis is peeled off,² the denuded body being smeared with mahogany oil. A cow is killed and the skin is used to make coverings for the arms, legs, head, and body of the corpse. After being sewn up in these coverings the dead man is further clothed in a gown and trousers. If he had been a person of standing and wealth four red fezes are fastened round his temples, porcupine quills being inserted between the fezes and the temples. Two types of grave are employed, one being flagon-shaped and the other having a recess at the bottom of the shaft. The former is not filled up with earth, the mouth of the grave being sealed with a stone, over which a mound is raised. This type may be re-used, the bones of the former occupant being removed and given a separate, perfunctory burial. In the second type the shaft is filled in with earth which does not touch the body as the body lies protected in the recess. This is the type used for those who have the epidermis removed. There are variations also as regards the position of the body, members of the oldest families being laid so as to face the north, those of the families which came later being faced towards the west.

As among the Kilba, some groups of the Margi and the Pabir,

¹ See the papers on the Kilba, Margi, and Higi.² The epidermis is deposited in a pot and is subsequently buried in a midden. But the eldest son of the deceased keeps the pot, and it is said that he eats his food from this pot in order to obtain his father's blessing.

chiefs or priests are given a special form of burial, the body being interred on the same day as death in a sitting position and covered with charcoal (in a flagon-shaped grave). The hair-lock is cut off and given to the eldest son who, if he becomes chief, has the lock plaited into a patch of his own hair. After burial a dog is killed and dressed-up to represent the chief, and dancing is maintained round this symbol for a period of three days. The body of the dog is then thrown away into the bush. The dog is possibly a substitute for a mummy. Among some Jukun groups a mock body is used in the burial rites.¹

After an interval of a year the chief's successor is chosen by the official known as the Mazu, who ties a turban round the new chief's head and then takes him to his own house for a period of five nights. The sixth night is spent in the house of another official, and the seventh in the house of a third. In the early morning of the eighth day this third official takes the chief out to the bush, where he leaves him. Returning himself to the town he shouts out: "My slave has run away, and is lost in the bush." At this all the male members of the community seize their arms and set off to search the bush. When they find the new chief they bring him back with acclamations.

This custom is paralleled among the Jukun; for at a certain stage of his chieftainship the Jukun king has to undergo rites in the course of which he is lost in the bush and found again by his people, symbolical it would seem of the death and rebirth which chiefs are supposed to undergo both at election and at a later stage when the renewal of their chieftainship is considered necessary (perhaps in consequence of an earlier rule that chiefs could only reign for a fixed period, after which they were put to death).²

Two years after the appointment of a new chief it was customary, in former times, to slay an enemy whose head was paraded before the chief, and then deposited in the skull-hut which stood outside the chief's compound. A festival followed, and it was at this festival that the hair-lock of his father was plaited into that of the chief.

The chief is known as the Nga, a word which appears to be a shortened form of the word "*ingale*" = chief among the Kuka

¹ See *A Sudanese Kingdom*, p. 254 et seq.
² See *A Sudanese Kingdom*, p. 140.

of the Fittri region.¹ It is noteworthy that one group of the Fali of Wuba claim to have come from the east into Bornu, and that it is on account of this traditional connection with Bornu that members of this group are buried facing the north. The other official titles are (in order of precedence) (a) Mazu, (b) Tufu, (c) Riga, and (d) Wunchido.

The social system of these Fali is much the same as that of the Higi, but inheritance is primarily by primogeniture. Younger sons are not, as among the Higi, entitled to inherit on their own account. The marriage customs differ little from those of the Higi. There are puberty rites, but these last only for one day (and not for three days as among the Higi). The boy is smeared with ochre, and, as among some groups of the Margi, the puberty rites are a form of betrothal ceremony. The boy thereby becomes affianced to a girl, to whose parents or guardians he becomes an agricultural bondsman for a period of four years. Gifts of corn and other articles are made at regular intervals to the girl's guardians, and the marriage is finally concluded by a feast, for which a cow is killed by the boy's father who sends the beef to the girl's guardians. Children born to a girl before she had gone to her husband's home or before she had her final marks incised (immediately after marriage), were until recently put to death, being regarded as bastards. It is customary for a husband to make a gift of a gown to his wife's guardian on the birth of the first child. This gift is said to be in the nature of a bribe to the father to permit his daughter to remain with her husband. For the birth of one child cancels the bride-price and the mother is then free to choose a different husband, without placing the new husband under any financial obligation to the old. If a woman has borne more than one child to her first husband she can take the excess children to the home of her second husband, who is permitted to adopt them, in accordance with the system indicated in my notes on the Higi.

B. *The Fali of Mubi District*

The Fali of Mubi district fall roughly into two groups, viz. those of Uvin and the vicinity,² and those of Jilbu. There are definite dialectical differences between the two groups. Both

¹ See Barth's *Travels*, iii, pp. 427, 451, and 543.
² I.e. of the villages of Mazarin, Gbwa, Hule (Ha), and Vintim.

languages are closely related to those of the Jirai and Gudu, and may be considered dialects of Bata. There is little difference between the Uvin dialect and that of the so-called "Cheke" of Mubi. But both dialects differ considerably from the Fali of Wuba district, which has been influenced by Higi and Margi. In customs also the Fali of Mubi district differ in certain important respects from the Fali of Wuba. Thus the former do not remove the epidermis from the dead bodies of the aged, nor is it permissible for children to be adopted by their mother's second husband (as among the Fali of Wuba and the Higi). All children belong to the legal father.

On the other hand, the customs of the Fali of Mubi district are almost identical with those of their so-called "Cheke" neighbours, with the exception that the Fali do not practise circumcision, whereas the Cheke do. The Fali men, also, wear leather loin-coverings, whereas the Cheke wear garments of cloth. The Fali men pierce their ears and lips and wear facial marks,¹ but the Cheke do not. But the marriage system, the rules of inheritance, the relationship terms, the official ranks, and the religious practices of the Fali are the same as those of the Cheke.

There is no strict form of family exogamy, as all second cousins are permitted to inter-marry. There is no totemism; but certain kindreds abstain from eating certain animals or groups of animals on the ground that those animals are sacred to the cults. The grave-digging kindreds, who are also the blacksmiths, do not intermarry with members of other kindreds. This is a general rule throughout a large part of Adamawa Province.

The Fali are strictly patrilineal. A man's property descends to his sons. Formerly primogeniture was the invariable rule, the eldest son taking complete charge of the property and using it as he thought fit on behalf of all his brothers. But nowadays, as sons are able to go and settle where they please, it has become customary to give each grown-up son control of his own share of his father's property. Brothers only inherit as administrators on behalf of immature sons. A sister's son has no definite share in property, but he is permitted to retain any article of property which he is able to secure by his own adroitness. Widows are

¹ The marks consist of three parallel rows of punch marks on the forehead. Pieces of guinea-corn stalk of cassava are inserted in the ear lobes.

heritable by brothers (senior or junior) and by sons according to their age and wishes.

The relationship terms are given in the notes on the Cheke.

There is a form of puberty rite for boys, but details were not obtained. The boys are segregated for four days in an enclosure and on being released they are given a new loin-covering. There are no corresponding puberty rites for girls; but the Fali have a custom by which an affianced girl spends a period of one month in the home of her fiancé, during which she is smeared with ochre each day by a girl friend. Her betrothed has to give her a gift when she enters his home for this purpose, and other gifts when she partakes of her first meal, and retires for the night. If he wishes to converse with her he must also give her a gift. At the end of the period a cow is killed and the beef is sent to the girl's father. The youth may then have sexual relations with the girl, but the girl does not remain in his home. She returns to her own home for a period of two or three years (being still young) and is there visited at night by her betrothed who is now regarded as her husband. If she conceives a child she must remain in her own home until the child is weaned. As these rites are carried out soon after puberty they may be regarded as puberty rites, but they are intimately bound up with marriage. The Cheke have no puberty rites for boys, but in the case of girls they follow the Fali custom described above.

Old men are buried in the Muslim fashion (rectangular graves), but young men, women, and children are buried in large flagon-shaped graves, which are used over and over again, the grave being cleared periodically of the remains of the former occupants.

Short vocabularies of both dialects are attached.

FALI (OF KIRIA) VOCABULARY

1. Head	Khin	xin
2. Hair	Chinchi	tʃintʃi
3. Eye	Nchi	ntʃi
Two eyes	Nchi bak	ntʃi bək
4. Ear	Hlim	ɬim
Two ears	Hlim baka	ɬim bəkə
5. Nose	Nchin	ntʃim
6. One tooth	Hlai gutan	ɬai gutan
Five teeth	Hlai nchif	ɬai ntʃil

7. Tongue	Nggana	nganə
8. Neck	Wuri	wuri
9. Breast (woman's)	Uwa	uwa ^s
10. Heart	Naffa	nəffə
11. Belly	Kur	kur
12. Back	Mbul	mbul
13. Arm	Pilla	pilla
14. Hand	Mbila pilla	mbila pilla
Two hands	Mbila pilla baka	mbila pilla bəkə
15. Finger	Eska pilla	eskə pilla
Five fingers	Eska pilla nchif	eskə pilla ntʃɪf
16. Finger nail	Getin	gətɪn
17. Leg	Silla	silla
18. Knee	Kumaishin	kumaiʃɪn
19. Foot	Mbila silla	mbila silla
Two feet	Mbila silla baka	mbila silla bəkə
20. Man (person)	Mde	mde
Ten people	Mbiri gum	mbiri gum
21. Man (not woman)	Zal	zal
Two men	Zal baka	zal bəkə
22. Woman	Malka	malkə
Two women	Malka baka	malkə bəkə
23. Child	Uzga	uzgə
24. Father	Ita	ita
25. Mother	Mma	mma
26. Slave	Mava	məvə
27. Chief	Nga	ngə
28. Friend	Ntuva	ntuva
29. Smith	Inje	indʒe
30. Doctor	Ulla	ullə
31. One finger	Eska pilla tan	eskə pilla tan
32. Two fingers	Eska pilla baka	eskə pilla bəkə
33. Three fingers	Eska pilla makin	eskə pilla makin
34. Four fingers	Eska pilla nfwɔr	eskə pilla nfwɔr
35. Five fingers	Eska pilla nchifa	eskə pilla ntʃɪfə
36. Six fingers	Eska pilla nkwang	eskə pilla nkwaŋ
37. Seven fingers	Eska pilla birfung	eskə pilla birfuŋ
38. Eight fingers	Eska pilla tikhis	eskə pilla tɪkɪs
39. Nine fingers	Eska pilla mti	eskə pilla mti
40. Ten fingers	Eska pilla gum	eskə pilla gum
41. Eleven fingers	Eska pilla gum na tang	eskə pilla gum na taŋ
42. Twelve fingers	Eska pilla gum na mabaka	eskə pilla gum na mabəkə
Thirteen fingers	Eska pilla gum na makin	eskə pilla gum na makin
43. Twenty fingers	Eska pilla sillamsaka	eskə pilla sillamsəkə
44. A hundred fingers	Eska pilla gumsak	eskə pilla gumsək
45. Two hundred fingers	Eska pilla gumsaka baka	eskə pilla gumsəkə bəkə
46. Four hundred fingers	Eska pilla gumsaka fwɔr	eskə pilla gumsəkə fwɔr

47. Sun	Vachi	vətʃi
God	Yatagum	jatəgum
48. Moon	Tirri	tɪrri
Full moon	Tirri a biriva	tɪrri a bɪrɪvə
New moon	Tirri tarkha	tɪrri tarxa
49. Day	Vachi	vətʃi
Night	Ville	vɪlɛ
Morning	Pillim	pɪlɪm
50. Rain	Van	van
51. Water	Yiami	jiami
52. Blood	Mimi	mimi
53. Fat	Mavira	mavɪrə
54. Salt	Piri	pɪri
55. Stone	Ghum	gum
Iron	Iring	irɪŋ
56. Hill	—	—
57. River	Tala	tala
58. Road	Ngkwai	ŋkwai
59. House	Chiki (compound = khe)	tʃɪki (compound = xɛ)
Two houses	Chiki bak	tʃɪki bək
Many houses	Chiki bwe	tʃɪki bwɛ
All the houses	Chiki kyikya	tʃɪki kjɪkja
60. Roof	Chiki	tʃɪki
61. Door	Midiga	mɪdɪga
62. Mat	Nshir	nʃɪr
63. Basket	Ngwan	ngwan
64. Drum	Dang	daŋ
65. Pot	Dagum	dəgum
66. Knife	Nggilla	ngɪlla
67. Spear	Ngwassa	ngwassa
68. Bow	Ngin	ngɪn
69. Arrow	Hava	havə
Five arrows	Havo chif	havə tʃɪf
70. Gun	Vinding	vɪndɪŋ
71. War	Dapwoi	dapwoi
72. Elephant	Chun	tʃun
73. Meat (animal)	Tii	tii
74. Buffalo	Nfun	nfun
75. Leopard	Mvu	mvu
76. Monkey	Luku	luku
77. Pig	Girdim	gɪrdɪm
78. Goat	Ku	ku
79. Dog	Kirri	kɪrri
80. Bird	Ika	ikə
Feather	Chinchika	tʃɪntʃɪkə
81. Crocodile	Khilim	xɪlɪm
82. Fowl	Kamtaka	kamtəkə
83. Egg	Ihili	tʃɪli
84. One egg	Ihili gutan	tʃɪli gutan
85. Snake	Shishi	ʃɪʃɪ

86. Frog	Gwambaka	gwambakə
87. Horse	Tuku	tuku
Sheep	Timbaka	timbəkə
Cow	Hla	la ¹
88. Fly	Zhu	zu
89. Bee	Umzoho	umzohə
Honey	Umzoho	umzohə
90. Tree	Otsum	otsum
Ten trees	Otsuma gum	otsuma gum
91. Leaf	Chikafu	tʃikəfu
92. Guinea-corn	Ikha	ixa
93. Maize	Khavwa	xavwa
94. Ground nut	Kanachi	kanatʃi
95. Oil	Yii	jii
96. Beriberi	Uvwa	uvwa
Hausa	Hausa	hausə
Fulani	Baji	badʒi
Margi	Mirki	mirki
Kilba	Khibba	xibba

FALI (OF MUBI) VOCABULARY

Per Kaigama of Yimtin

1. Head	Wənin	wənin
2. Hair	Shimkin	ʃimkin
3. Eye	Gin	gin
Two eyes	Gin bik	gin bik
4. Ear	Limin	limin
Two ears	Limin bik	limin bik
5. Nose	Shinin	ʃinin
6. One tooth	Lingin erun	liŋin erun
Five teeth	Lingin tuf	liŋin tuf
7. Tongue	Genin	ɡenin
8. Neck	Wuran	wuran
9. Breast (woman's)	Wakin	wakin
10. Heart	Inggilarin	ɪŋɡɪlarin
11. Belly	Sikin	sikin
12. Back	Baan	baan
13. Arm	Chiin	tʃiin
14. Hand	Sika chiin	sikə tʃiin
Two hands	Sika chiin bik	sikə tʃiin bik
15. Finger	Uji chiin	udʒi tʃiin
Five fingers	Uji chiin tuf	udʒi tʃiin tuf
16. Finger nail	Gisin	ɡisin
17. Leg	Sidin	sidin
18. Knee	Wəni idin	wəni idin
19. Foot	Sika sidin	sikə sidin
Two feet	Sika sidin bik	sikə sidin bik
20. Man (person)	Imdin	ɪmdin
Ten people	Wonji pu	wondʒi pu

¹ This lateral has an "h" like quality.

21. Man (not woman)	Morin	morin
Two men	Morin bik	morin bik
22. Woman	Imkin	imkin
Two women	Mathyin bik	mathjin bik
23. Child	Uzikin	uzikin
24. Father	Dada	dada
25. Mother	Aya	aja
26. Slave	Mavin	mavin
27. Chief	Məmin	məmin
28. Friend	Guvan	ɡuvan
29. Smith	Kilakin	kilakin
30. Doctor	—	—
31. One finger	Uji chiin erum	udʒi tʃiin erum
32. Two fingers	Uji chiin bik	edʒi tʃiin bik
33. Three fingers	Uji chiin makh	udʒi tʃiin max
34. Four fingers	Uji chiin fwat	udʒi tʃiin fwat
35. Five fingers	Uji chiin tuf	udʒi tʃiin tuf
36. Six fingers	Uji chiin kuwa	udʒi tʃiin kuwa
37. Seven fingers	Uji chiin midif	udʒi tʃiin midif
38. Eight fingers	Uji chiin tikhis	udʒi tʃiin tixis
39. Nine fingers	Uji chiin miling	udʒi tʃiin milin
40. Ten fingers	Uji chiin pu	udʒi tʃiin pu
41. Eleven fingers	Uji chiin pu a katang	udʒi tʃiin pu a katan
42. Twelve fingers	Uji chiin ahiji bik	udʒi tʃiin ahidʒi bik
Thirteen fingers	Uji chiin ahiji makh	adʒi tʃiin ahidʒi max
43. Twenty fingers	Uji chiik pupusir	udʒi tʃiin pupusir
44. A hundred fingers	Uji chiik gya	udʒi tʃiin gja ⁶
45. Two hundred fingers	Uji chiik gya a bik	udʒi tʃiin gja ⁶ a bik
46. Four hundred fingers	Uji chiik gya a fwat	udʒi tʃiin gja ⁶ a fwat
47. Sun	Fetin	fetin
God	Imtaf	imtaf
48. Moon	Ligidin	liɡidin
Full moon	Kiwir ligidin	kɪwɪr liɡidin
New moon	Umza ligidin	umzə liɡidin
49. Day	Fetin	fetin
Night	Vidin	vidin
Morning	Putkin	putkin
50. Rain	Vonin	vonin
51. Water	Main	main
52. Blood	Idinin	idinin
53. Fat	Mavin	mavin
54. Salt	Jetanin	dʒetanin
55. Stone	Farin	farin
Iron	Tibisin	tibisin
56. Hill	Gimin	ɡimin
57. River	Mirin	mirin
60. Road	Rugwɔn	rugwɔn
60. House	Kivin	kivin
Two houses	Kivin bik	kivin bik