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Dialect Mixing and Dialect Levelling in Kordofanian Baggara Arabic (Western Sudan)

Stefano MANFREDI*

1. Introduction

In the course of her intense research activity in Arabic dialectology, Dominique Caubet remarkably contributed to some major questions related to the decline of structural dissimilarity in modern Arabic dialects as a result of the integration of peripheral groups into wider socio-economic networks (Caubet 1993). With regard to this, it is generally assumed that when distinct varieties of the same language come into contact, some kind of linguistic accommodation necessarily occurs (Trudgill 1986). As far as Arabic is concerned, the linguistic results of such contact-induced change have been differently analyzed in the light of koineization, accommodation, litteralization or dialect levelling according to the diverse approaches adopted by the specialists (Rosenhouse 1982; Cadora 1992; Versteegh 1993; Holes 1995a, 1995b; De Jong 1996; Miller 2005; Watson 2007; Bassiouney 2008).

The purpose of this article is to describe two different patterns of contact-induced change in a bedouin dialect spoken in western Sudan. More to the point, the study describes the social grounds and structural outcomes of dialect mixing and dialect levelling in the Baggara dialect of Kordofan. In my perspective, the notion of “dialect mixing” refers to the concurrence of structural traits of different dialects in contact and to the affirmation of new mixed features among speakers of a given dialect. On the other hand, the process of “dialect levelling” describes a synchronic change in which the most striking traits of socially marginal dialects are variably eliminated because of the influence of a local prestigious norm. As I will argue, both

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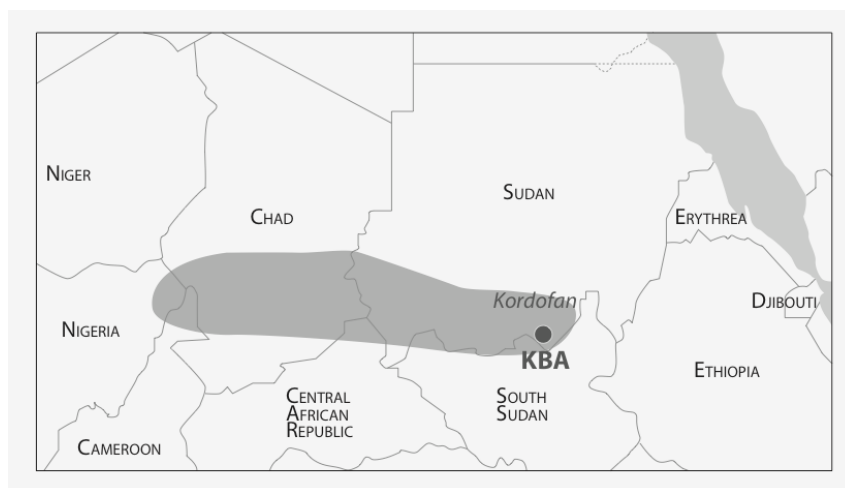
dialect mixing and dialect levelling play a decisive role in the structural development of Kordofanian Baggara Arabic.

2. Dialect Mixing

Following Kerswill and Trudgill (2005: 197) “mixing defines to the coexistence of features originated from different input dialects within a new community, usually because speakers have different dialect origins”. Starting from this assumption, I first outline the general socio-historical conditions that induced mixing in the Baggara dialect of Kordofan, to then point out its structural evidences.

2.1. Socio-historical background

Unlike other studies that adopt a tribal label for the bedouin dialects they are concerned with (as in the case of the *Dialekt der Šukriyya* - Reichmuth 1981 or *Le parler des Ulād Eli* - Zeltner and Tourneux 1986), I have chosen a socio-geographic definition for the dialect described in this article, that is Kordofanian Baggara Arabic (henceforth KBA).



Map#1: KBA within the Baggara Belt

The designation Kordofanian makes reference to the Kordofan region where the dialect is spoken. More in particular, the area covered by the study falls in the southern-western part of the Nuba Mountains, which are administratively included into the Southern Kordofan state. As regards the

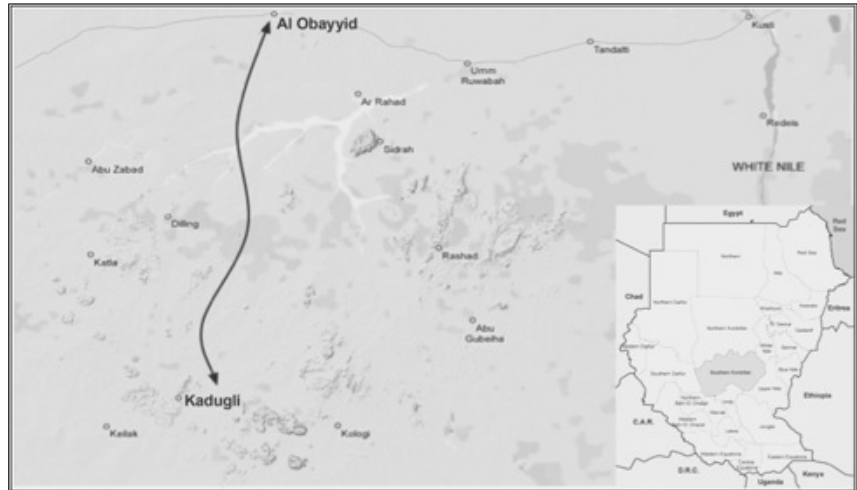
definition Baggara (*baggāra* “cattlemen”), it has neither ethnic nor genealogical pertinence, but it rather stresses the specificity of a production system (Casciarri and Manfredi 2009). Adopting the label “Baggara” for the dialect in question, I point to its inclusion into a dialect type characteristic of Arab semi-nomadic cattle herders living scattered through a vast area running from lake Chad to the White Nile (Braukämper 1993: 18; Owens 2003: 723). More in detail, I am concerned with the Baggara dialect spoken by the Rawāwga subsection of the Ḥawāzma tribe. The Ḥawāzma, together with the Bani Salim inhabiting the western banks of the Nile, occupy the easternmost part of the so-called Baggara Belt. It is commonly argued that the Baggara semi-nomadic culture originated in consequence of a political clash between two Arab groups that occurred in Wadai (eastern Chad) around 1635 (Braukämper 1993: 20). According to this historical interpretation, the losing Arab tribes were forced to move southwards and, subsequent to their contact with Fulani pastoral groups, they gradually abandoned camels in favour of cows¹. The arrival of Baggara Arabs in western Kordofan can be dated around 1765-1775 (MacMicheal 1912: 140; Braukämper 1993: 29). With regard to the Ḥawāzma, they were formerly part of the Missiriye tribe and they constituted themselves as an independent tribe only in the second half of the 18th century (MacMicheal 1912: 142).

For the purposes of this article, it is important to remark that, after they separated from the Missiriye, the Ḥawāzma started to absorb different Arab and non-Arab groups inhabiting northern Kordofan and the Nuba Mountains. The name Ḥawāzma itself (the plural of *ḥāzmi* “gatherer”) makes reference to the assimilation of people of different origins. In this regard, Uthman (1995: 6) stated that the “Ḥawāzma are generally mixed with extraneous elements. The Halafa (a Ḥawāzma subsection) are little more than a league of families of Takarir (West-African origin), Jallaba (Northern Sudanese Arabs), Hawwara (the arabized Berber tribe), Zinnara (originally connected with the North African Berbers), Jawamaʿ (camel herder Arabs) and Nuba. [...] These tribes were disciplined by a pact in the days of the Funj to pasture their cattle under the name Ḥawāzma”. The formation of this heterogeneous community embracing people with different dialect origins presumably furnished a favourable social setting for dialect mixing.

As a further matter, it should be reminded that the Baggara production system is based on a transhumance cycle regulated by local ecological factors. As far as Ḥawāzma nomads are concerned, as the first rains begin in

¹ On the contrary, Owens (2003: 723), making use of both historical and linguistic evidences, argues that the formation of the Baggara culture began in the 14th century in the Baguirmi region (western Chad). It is not my intention to investigate this historical issue since it does not pertain to the aims of this study. Here it is enough to say that ‘baggarization’ was, and in certain areas still is, a complex process of socio-economic integration that involved both Arab and non-Arab communities.

June, they start to move northwards with their livestock and they reach al-Obayyid, the largest urban centre of Kordofan. In October, immediately after the end of the rains, they move back to their homelands in the Nuba Mountains. Approximately from November to June, Baggara nomads are based in their southern dwelling areas where they also practice rain-fed agriculture.



Map 2#: A Hawāzma (Rawāwga) transhumance trek

What is interesting in terms of dialectal contact is that, during their seasonal stay in northern Kordofan, Baggara Arabs have been historically exposed to the influence of the sedentary dialects of the region because of their intense market activities in al-Obayyid. Besides, Hawāzma nomads have always shared their northern dwelling areas with local Arab camel-herders (the so called *ʔAbbāla*) who speak an eastern Sudanic dialect. It is thus plausible to state that the rainy season spent by Baggara nomads in northern Kordofan represented a much more prominent cause for dialect contact than their longer residence in the rural areas of the Nuba Mountains.

2.2. KBA within Sudanic Arabic

As already stated, contact between speakers of different dialects always leads to long-term changes in their speech. On that account, I will try to show that, subsequent to the integration of different Arabic-speaking groups into the production system of the Baggara Arabs of Kordofan, KBA bears more resemblance to eastern Sudanic varieties than any other Baggara dialect.

Generally speaking, KBA displays an important number of “Pan-Sudanic” features; these are isoglosses characterizing the whole Sudanic area (Owens 1993b: 169). For example, we can observe that, parallel to huge majority of Arabic dialects spoken in Chad and in Sudan, also in KBA:

- the dental emphatic *ḍ* is the reflex of the OA interdental **ḍ*, ex. **kaḍḍāb* > *kaḍḍāb* “liar”;
- the velar *g* is the reflex of the OA uvular **q*, ex. **baqiya* > *biga* “become”;
- *č* [tš] is a phoneme, ex. *čakčāka* “drizzle”;
- final obstruent devoicing is very pervasive, ex. *žīb* [dʒi:p] “bring (it)”;
- doubled verbs always present a final *-a*, ex. *gahḥa* “he coughed”;
- imperative forms are always preceded by a pre-formative vowel, ex. *a-gīf* “stop!”;
- collective nouns have a F.PL agreement, ex. *al=bagar šabšān-āt* “the cows are sated”;
- ideophones constitute an independent word class, ex. *abyaḍ taḥ* “shining white”.

Here I am not directly concerned with these Pan-Sudanic features since I aim at understanding the position of KBA within Sudanic Arabic itself. In this regard, a substantial agreement has been reached on the individuation of two main dialectal sub-types within the Sudanic area. These are: Western Sudanic Arabic (henceforth WSA) which includes the Arabic dialects of Nigeria, Cameroon, and Chad, and Eastern Sudanic Arabic (henceforth ESA) which embraces the majority of dialects spoken in the nowadays Republic of Sudan (see Kaye 1972; Owens 1993a; Roth-Laly 1994; Owens and Jidda 2008). The Baggara dialects, for their part, are commonly included into the WSA sub-type. In spite of this, if we take a look at the following comparative chart, we can note that it is not so easy to blend KBA into the usual opposition between western and eastern Sudanic dialects.

<i>FEATURE</i>	<i>WSA</i>	<i>KBA</i>	<i>ESA</i>
OA *ḏ, *ḏ̣, *ṭ	<i>d, t</i> (sedentary) <i>ḏ, ḏ'</i> (bedouin)	<i>d, t</i> [dʰ]	<i>d, z, t</i> (sedentary) <i>ḏ, ṭ</i> (bedouin)
OA *ǧ	<i>x</i> (sedentary) <i>q, ǧ'</i> (bedouin)	<i>q</i> [ǧʰ]	<i>ǧ</i>
OA *ḥ, *ʕ	<i>h, ʔ</i> (sedentary) <i>ḥ, ʕ</i> (bedouin)	<i>h, ʕ</i>	<i>ḥ, ʕ</i>
Vowel harmony	<i>lō = ku</i>	<i>lō = ku</i>	<i>lē = kum</i>
*i > u in initial syllables	<i>filān</i>	<i>fulān</i>	<i>filān</i> (sedentary) <i>fulān</i> (bedouin)
<i>Gahawa</i> syndrome	<i>aḥamar</i>	<i>aḥmar</i>	<i>aḥmar</i>
<i>Bukara</i> syndrome	<i>ta-žiri</i>	<i>ta-žri</i>	<i>ta-žri</i>
1SG/1PL marking	1SG <i>ni-ktib</i> 1PL <i>ni-ktib-u</i>	1SG <i>a-/ni-ktib</i> 1PL <i>ni-ktib(-u)</i>	1SG <i>a-ktib</i> 1PL <i>na-ktib</i>
Preverbal <i>b(i) =</i>	indicative 3 rd persons marker	indicative	imperfective
Prefix <i>al-</i>	<i>al-kallam</i>	<i>al-kallam</i>	<i>it-kallam</i>
<i>-j</i> in C ₃ = <i>y</i> verbs	<i>ta-miš</i>	<i>ta-miš</i>	<i>ta-mšī</i>
Possessive marker	<i>hana</i>	<i>hān, hūl</i>	<i>ḥagg</i> (sedentary) <i>hūl</i> (bedouin)
11 – 19 numerals	<i>ʔašara wāhid</i>	<i>waḥḏašar</i>	<i>ḥiḏāšar</i>

Generally speaking, there is an unmistakable evidence of the western origins of KBA. Similar to Baggara dialects of Chad, the phonology of KBA is

branded by the uvular realization of the OA voiced velar fricative *ǧ (Decobert 1985: 45; Zeltner and Tourneux 1986: 16; Owens 1993a: 20) and by the presence of vowel harmony (Owens 1993a: 159; Roth-Laly 1994: 79). Besides, we can note that, alike other bedouin varieties included into WSA, KBA still retains pharyngeal consonants that are instead lost among the sedentary communities of Nigeria, Chad and western Sudan (Decobert 1985: 40; Owens 1993b: 161; Roth-Laly 1994: 77; Manfredi 2010: 18). Looking at verbal morphology, KBA also conforms to the WSA sub-type with regard to the elision of *-i* in $C_3=y$ verbs and to the presence of the prefix *al-* for the derivation of reciprocal verbal forms. On the contrary, KBA seems to align to bedouin dialects spoken in eastern Sudan for the absence of *Gahawa* and *Bukara* syndromes and for the development **i > u* in initial syllables (Reichmuth 1983: 42-43, 63). Moreover, KBA and eastern Sudanic dialects are pulled together by the common numeral order $1s + 10s^2$.

More interestingly, the Baggara dialect of Kordofan is characterized by the concurrence of structural traits of both western and eastern Sudanic dialects. For instance, in KBA the particle used for expressing analytic possession has at least two forms: these are *hān*, that is commonly found in Chadian and Nigerian dialects (Zeltner and Tourneux 1986: 45; Owens 1993a: 64-66) and *hūl*, which is characteristic of bedouin dialects of eastern Sudan (Reichmuth 1983: 111-112). In view of that, it is plausible that when the Baggara entered in Kordofan they still possessed *hān* as basic possessive particle and that, only after the beginning of their contacts with the *ʔAbbāla* camel-herders coming from eastern Sudan, they integrated *hūl* as optional particle for analytic possessive constructions (see also 3.4.3.). In the same manner, we can note that in KBA the 1PL independent pronoun is characterized by the variation between the two forms *aniḥna* and *anīna*, which are respectively found in ESA and in WSA dialects (Owens 1993b: 108, 161).

As further matter, KBA displays a number of mixed features. From a phonological point of view, it is interesting to note that in KBA the dental emphatic implosive [d̥] is a minor allophone of the dental emphatic *ḍ*, while in Chadian and Nigerian Baggara dialects the implosive *ḍ* is the very phonemic reflex of the OA **ḍ* (Zeltner and Tourneux 1986:16- 17, 23; Owens 1993b: 115; Roth-Laly 1994: 76). In this case, it seems that contact between Baggara Arabic and eastern-like dialects spoken in Kordofan caused a steady reduction of the emphatic dental implosive from contrastive phoneme to minor allophone occurring only before open vowels, ex. *ṭaršān*

² Note that the order $10s + 1s$ is found only in the dialect of the Ulad 'Ali (a Baggara tribe located in western Chad) and thus it is generally seen as an instance of substratum interference from the Sara-Baguirmi languages (Zeltner and Tourneux 1986: 53; Owens 1993b: 145).

[dʕaʕrʕiʕn] “deaf”. The same analysis is applicable to the velar implosive [G] that in KBA is a minor allophone of *q*, ex. *qazāl* [ʕʕazæ:l] “gazelle” (see also 3.3.1).

Looking at the morpho-syntax, an important instance of structural mixing in KBA concerns the well-known issue of 1SG and 1PL markers in prefixed conjugation. Actually, KBA presents a mixed paradigm in which the prefixes *a-* and *n-* are in free variation in marking 1SG and the prefix *n-*... marks 1PL in optional combination with the suffix *-u*. The occurrence of the suffix *-u* for marking 1PL is determined by phono-morphological factors. More in detail, *-u* regularly occurs after two consonantal and vowel-initial verbs and it is optionally used after three-consonantal roots. On the contrary, *-u* never follows doubled, hollow and quadrilateral verbs.

Examples of 1SG and 1PL marking in prefixed conjugation:

<i>a-/na-mši</i>	1SG-go	/	<i>na-mš-u</i>	1PL-go-PL
<i>a-/na-kul</i>	1SG-eat	/	<i>na-kl-u</i>	1PL-eat-PL
<i>a-/na-srig</i>	1SG-steal	/	<i>na-srug(-u)</i>	1PL-steal(-PL)
<i>a-/na-dugg</i>	1SG-beat	/	<i>na-dugg</i>	1PL-beat
<i>a-/na-šil</i>	1SG-arrive	/	<i>na-šil</i>	1PL-arrive
<i>a-/na-sangir</i>	1SG-seat	/	<i>na-sangir</i>	1PL-seat

As well known, the first person verbal affixes *n-*... 1SG, *n-*...-*u* 1PL are seen as of North-African origin. Notwithstanding, they are also found in the western Egyptian and Chadian dialects (Owens 2003: 719). On the contrary, the *a-*...1SG, *nv-*... 1PL paradigm predominates in Levantine dialects as well as in northern and eastern Sudan. In this regard, it is important to remark that the mixed *a-/n-*... 1SG vs. *nv-*...(-*u*) 1PL paradigm characterizing KBA is of restricted geographical distribution being limited to the dialects of Upper Egypt between Asyut and Luxor (Woidich 1996: 334; Owens 2003: 717) and to urban Nigerian Arabic (Owens 1993b: 105). So, if we exclude the hypothesis of a direct structural influx from the mixed dialects of Upper Egypt, the person verbal affixes found in the Baggara dialect of Kordofan evidently reflect a structural buffering between the WSA and the ESA prefixed conjugations.

All things considered, the coexistence of structural features from both eastern and western Sudanic Arabic, together with the affirmation of new mixed features due to the attrition between different dialectal sub-types, renders KBA a good example of mixed dialect within the Sudanic area. Even though, I will argue that this structural characterization of KBA is gradually decreasing because of the ongoing process of dialect levelling towards Sudanese Standard Arabic.

3. Dialect levelling

In keeping with the model of dialect convergence proposed by Kerswill and Trudgill (2005: 198), dialect levelling is defined as “a selection of forms found in the previous dialect mix”. In negative terms, dialect levelling can be also defined as the elimination of stigmatizing features of a minority dialect in consequence of the increasing influence of a prestigious variety (Bassiouney 2008: 8). In the case of KBA, the local prestigious linguistic norm is represented by Sudanese Standard Arabic, an eastern Sudanic variety that is normally affected by little diatopic variation. In this section, I analyze the main social factors inducing dialect levelling in KBA and I then exemplify its phonological, morpho-syntactic and lexical effects.

3.1. Social causes of dialect levelling in KBA

Baggara have been highly affected by the wide, all-encompassing process of socio-economic integration concerning post-independence Sudan. In first instance, the Baggara nomads of Kordofan have been interested by various transformations of their pastoral way of life. The encroachment of agriculture on grazing lands, the pressures for settling nomads and the ecological disruption due to the civil war in the Nuba Mountains eventually lead to mobility reduction and to forced urbanization. As a consequence, many nomads gradually settled in the urban circle of Kadugli, where they started to work for wage. This notwithstanding, the ownership of cattle and its management according to traditional division of labour are still important among urbanized people and that cases of renomadization of formerly settled groups are a common phenomenon (Casciarri and Manfredi 2009). As I will show, this state of affairs causes a bidirectional movement of the speakers along the socio-linguistic continuum related to KBA (see 3.2).

Secondly, the spread of formal education in Arab countries is often seen as an important factor inducing dialect levelling in modern Arabic dialects (Rosenhouse 1982: 36; Holes 1995b: 272). As far as KBA is concerned, the involvement of Baggara nomads in formal education is higher than what is generally held. In a survey conducted on a sample of 284 Ḥawāzma respondents, Casciarri and Manfredi (2009) report a 61% ratio relating to the education enrolment rate. This figure does not only refer to sedentarized Baggara Arabs, but also to nomads who were not excluded from the process of education spreading thanks to the presence of nomadic schools established by local development programmes. As a consequence, the employ of Standard Arabic in the education system of northern Sudan and the acquisition of its written medium plays an important role in dialect levelling.

A third factor that contributes to the process of dialect levelling in KBA is the return of migrants who moved abroad in the first half of the '80s. According to Michael (1991: 58), many Ḥawāzma nomads affected by the ecological crisis of Kordofan were forced to move to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states in search of job opportunities. Part of these migrant workers came back to Sudan after the end of the civil war and, because of their long exposition to the Arabic dialects of the Peninsula; they inevitably show instances of levelling in their speech. In this case, the levelling process has been enacted independently from the degree of education of the migrants.

3.2. The sociolinguistic continuum of KBA

Given that urbanization represents the most important factor inducing dialect levelling in Sudan, I decided to adopt the sociolinguistic standpoint of the rural-urban continuum in order to describe the ongoing process of dialect levelling in KBA. More in detail, I will refer to the model proposed by Casciarri and Manfredi (2009) who drew a socio-economic continuum describing different degree of mobility for the Ḥawāzma Arabs of Kordofan. This continuum, originally elaborated to elucidate the strategies of economic adaptation of the Baggara nomads, has some explanatory power also for the evaluation of the dialectal exposure affecting KBA speakers. Nevertheless, given that I am concerned with linguistic variation, I defer from the original approach in applying the different socio-economic labels on the individual level, rather than referring to the larger dimension of the domestic unit. The sociolinguistic continuum of KBA consists of the following four junctures:

- *Rural-pastoral*

In this category are represented people with a mobile pattern of residence living in the rural areas around Kadugli during the dry season. The nomadic people in question, although engaging in seasonal farming, more fundamentally rely on pastoral production. Apart for trade activities in al-Obeyyid during the rainy season, the great majority of rural-pastoral informants have few interactions with the urban environment. Rural pastoral speakers, together with rural sedentary people, claim to be the very repositories of the Baggara dialect, hence they usually refer to it as *kalām-na* “our speech”.

- *Rural-sedentary*

This category includes former nomads who settled in small rural settlements in consequence of their increasing engagement in agriculture. Alike nomads, rural-sedentary people use KBA in the majority of their linguistic interactions. Though, they are generally more influenced by Sudanese Standard Arabic because of their higher degree of literacy.

- *Urban-pastoral*

This category is composed by people who, although residing in the urban area of Kadugli, continue to practice transhumance during the rainy season. Besides, I also include nomads who habitually spend the dry season on the fringes of the Kadugli urban circle. Urban-pastoral people widely speak KBA. This notwithstanding, being settled most of the year in Kadugli, they show a high degree of dialect accommodation toward the Sudanese urban norm. As a consequence, urban-pastoral speakers remark a spatial distance in referring to the “very” Baggara dialect, which they usually call *al-ṣarabi al-baṛra* “the rural Arabic”.

- *Urban*

This category basically includes sedentary informants settled in peripheral neighbourhoods of Kadugli. The urban category generally frames educated wage labourers who have limited interactions with nomads. Urban informants speak a kind of Sudanese Standard Arabic in their daily life. Nonetheless, they still keep a positive attitude toward the Baggara dialect which they commonly refer to as *al-ṣarabi al-gadīm* “the old Arabic”, stressing a temporal distance from this variety. Urban informants only make a cultural use of the Baggara dialect in a limited number of linguistic interactions.

A characteristic aspect of the KBA continuum as compared to similar situations in other Arab countries is the bidirectional correlation tying the four socio-linguistic junctures. In fact, the tendency toward renomadization and the long periods spent also by urban people in pastoral and agricultural activities cause the speaker to occupy different socio-economic positions along the rural-urban continuum during his/her life. As a consequence, the Baggara dialect as spoken by nomads and sedentary people in the rural areas has also a tangible impact on part of their urbanized kin. On the other side, certain urban features also spread among non-educated nomads. In this overall situation, the extremes of the continuum, these are the rural-pastoral and the urban junctures, can be generally defined according to the occurrence of specific structural features. On the contrary, rural-sedentary and urban-pastoral speakers are characterized by a fuzzy variation in the adoption of urban and pastoral features.

The analysis of the structural effects of dialect levelling in KBA is based on a corpus of almost fifteen hours of recordings embodying spontaneous and semi-spontaneous texts. This material is representative of thirty-four speakers differentiated by age, sex, literacy and position along the Baggara socio-economic continuum. Here I resume the quantitative information about my informants: Sex: men (25, 74%), women (9, 26%). Age (4 classes): <25 (3, 9%), 26-45 (16, 47%), 46-65 (10, 29%), 65 > (5, 15%). Literacy: literate (13, 38%), illiterate (21, 62%). Socio-economic position (see 4): rural-

pastoral (13, 38%), rural-sedentary (5, 15%), urban-pastoral (11, 32%), urban (5, 15%).

3.3. Phonological levelling

In this paragraph I deal with several phonological features affected by dialect levelling. More in particular, I focus on the different reflexes of the OA consonants *ǧ and *ǧ̣, and on the presence of non-etymological emphatic segments *m*, *r*, *l* which distinguish sedentary and nomadic dialects in many arabophone areas (Rosenhouse 1982:15). Besides, I also take into account the reduction of phono-tactic changes such as consonant devoicing. As far as vowels are concerned, I illustrate the effects of dialect levelling on vowel harmony, on the reflexes of the OA *i in initial syllables and on those of the OA *a in pre-pausal position. Lastly, I also point up the loosing of syllable internal clusters as a consequence of dialect levelling.

3.3.1. OA *ǧ

As already stated (see 2.2), the OA voiced velar fricative *ǧ corresponds to a voiceless uvular plosive *q* in KBA. If the development *ǧ > *q* is generally considered a common feature of Levantine bedouin dialects (Rosenhouse 2006: 200), it is also true that the uvular realization *q* is characteristic of the Baggara dialects of Nigeria (Owens 1993a: 20). Among the Baggara nomads of Kordofan the phoneme *q* is realized as a voiced implosive [G̃] when occurring word-initially. As in the case of *t* [d̥] (see 2.2.), the minor allophone [G̃] corresponds to a distinctive phonemic reflex in western rural Chadian dialects (Decobert 1985: 45-47). On that account, the limited occurrences of the voiced implosive [G̃] in KBA can be analyzed in the light of the previous process of dialect mixing. In this case, the present-day process of phonological levelling induces the abandonment of allophone [G̃] among rural-sedentary and urban-pastoral speakers and the definite affirmation of the velar fricative *ǧ* in the urban environment of Kadugli.

- rural-pastoral: *šoqol* “matter”, *bāqa* “vessel”, *qāli* [G̃a:li] “expensive”;
- rural-sedentary and urban-pastoral: *šaqqāl* “working”, *qassal* “clean”, *qādi* “over there”;
- urban: *īštaǧal* “work”, *itǧassal* “do the washing”, *ǧada* “dinner”.

3.3.2. OA *ǧ̣

In KBA, like in other Baggara dialects of Chad and Nigeria, the OA emphatic dental fricative *ǧ̣ corresponds to the emphatic dental plosive *ǧ*. By and large, *ǧ* represents the most common reflex for *ǧ̣ both in WSA and ESA rural dialects. On the contrary, urban dialects of Sudan present the emphatic

alveolar fricative *z*. At the present time *ɖ* still does not give way to *z* in KBA, but urban speakers show a considerable degree of variation *ɖ*~*z*. The levelling progression **ɖ* > *z* is quite common in Sudan since and as such it has been equally described by Reichmuth (1983: 44) with reference to the bedouin dialect of the Šukriyya in the Butana region.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary), urban-pastoral: *ḥafāḍ* “preserve”, *ḍull* “shadow”;
- urban: *ḥafāḍ*~*ḥafāz* “preserve”, *ḍull*~*zull* “shadow”, *mazlūm* “oppressed”.

3.3.3. Emphatic consonants *ḥ, ṡ, ʕ, ʔ*

KBA possesses four non-etymological emphatic consonants: these are *ḥ*, *ṡ*, *ʕ*, and *ʔ*. These sounds are considered to be a common feature of rural Arabic dialects, but if we limit our attention to the Sudanic area, *ḥ*, *ṡ*, *ʕ*, *ʔ* are characteristic of Nigerian and Chadian Baggara dialects (Owens 1993a: 20; Decobert 1985: 41-43). Actually, the dialect of the Šukriyya in Sudan possesses only *ʕ* and *ʔ* (Reichmuth 1983: 38), while all the urban Sudanic dialects display a rare occurrence of *ʕ*. In this case, the phonological levelling brings about the total loss of the phonemes *ḥ*, *ṡ*, *ʕ* among urban speakers.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary), urban-pastoral: *aṡṡ-í* “my mother”, *ṙās-í* “my head”, *ka/ṡ!* “pot”;
- urban: *umm-í* “my mother”, *rās-í* “my head” *ā!!a* “God”.

3.3.4. Consonant devoicing

In KBA final obstruent devoicing occurs on a regular basis and, in fact, it is one of its most striking features in perceptibly terms. In addition, voiced occlusive are always devoiced when occurring before voiceless consonants. Even if consonant devoicing is not limited to the Baggara dialects, in ESA the final bilabial *b* is never devoiced. Actually, final *-b#* [p] is often stigmatized as a Baggara feature by other Arabic speakers of Kordofan. From a general point of view, only urban speakers limit the effects of devoicing on the final obstruent. Nevertheless, it is not rare that also urban-pastoral speakers realize voiced consonant in final position.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary), urban-pastoral: *bi-ta-ž* [bi'tətš] “you come”, *žīb* [ʕi:p] “bring IMP.SG.M”, *balad* [bə'lət] “country”, *kabš* [kəpš] “ram”, *ḥurāb-ku* [hu'rə:pku] “your PL.M spears”;
- urban: *bi-ta-ži* “you come”, *žīb* “bring”, *balad* [bə'lət] “country”.

3.3.5. Vowel harmony

Backness harmony is the main phonological factor determining vowel quality in KBA. In compliance with backness harmony, we can distinguish three classes of vowels: Front vowels *i, ī, e, ē*, Back vowels *u, ū, o, ō*, Neutral

vowels *a*, *ā*. As a general rule, a given vowel can only occur along with vowels of the same class. Neutral vowels *a*, *ā* indifferently appear together with front and back vowels. Vowel harmony can be either phonologically or morphologically determined, although this has a limited effect on borrowings from Nuba languages. Backness harmony is a common feature of WSA and in particular of Baggara dialects (Owens 1993b: 159; Roth-Laly 1994: 79). For its part, the urban norm of Kadugli does not possess vowel harmony but it shows different degrees of vowel assimilation. In this case, rural-sedentary and urban-pastoral speakers are pooled together by a high degree of variation affecting the application of harmonic rules. Apart from urban speakers though, morphologically determined epenthesis in monosyllabic prepositions tends to persist.

- rural-pastoral: *uttu* “you PL.M” *kudugli* “Kadugli”, *b-u-gūm* “he stands up”, *b-u-ž-u* “they come”, *lō-ku* “to you PL.M”;
- rural-sedentary, urban-pastoral: *uttu* ~ *intu* “you PL.M”, *b-u-gūm* ~ *b-i-gūm* “he stands up”, *b-i-ž-u* ~ *b-u-ž-u* “they come”, *lō-kum* “to you PL.M”;
- urban: *intu* “you PL.M” *kadugli* “Kadugli”, *b-i-gūm* “he stands up”, *b-i-ž-u* “they come”, *lē-kum* “to you PL.M”.

3.3.6. OA **i* in initial syllables

In KBA the OA close front **i* in initial syllables regularly corresponds to a close back *u*. In some cases, the effects of vowel harmony cause also the following vowels to have a back realization as in **simsim* > *sumsum* “sesame”. From a comparative point of view, the backing of initial *i* is a characteristic trait that KBA shares with the bedouin dialect of the Šukriyya in eastern Sudan (Reichmuth 1983: 63), hence it can be taken as another proof of dialect mixing due to the contact between the Baggara and the camel herders located in Kordofan. In KBA, the reflex **u* gives way to **i* only among urban speakers.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary), urban-pastoral: *huluw* “beautiful”, *zubb* “penis”;
- urban: *hiluw* “sweet”, *zibb* “penis”.

3.3.7. Final *-e*

Similarly to other Baggara dialects of Chad and Nigeria (Owens 1993b: 93), also in KBA the vowel suffix marking feminine singular presents the two forms *-a* and *-e*. The occurrence of *-e* is exclusively due to the presence of front vowels before the feminine suffix, while *-a* appears after back and neutral vowels. With regard to the levelling process, rural (pastoral and sedentary) speakers always display *-e* after front vowels, while urban-pastoral

speakers sometimes have *-a*. Among urban speakers the allomorph *-e* has completely disappeared.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary): *ʕasīde* “porridge”, *zarībe* “cattle enclosure”, *kabīr-e* “big-SG.F”, *fātme* “Fatima”, *ḥāž-a* “thing matter”, *ḥuluw-a* “sweet-SG.F”;
- urban-pastoral: *ʕasīd-e ~ ʕasīd-a* “porridge”, *ḥill-a ~ ḥill-e* “village”, *kabīr-e ~ kabīr-a* “big-SG.F”;
- urban: *ʕasīd-a* “porridge”, *ḥill-a* “village”, *kabīr-a* “big-SG.F”.

3.3.8. OA scheme $C_1VC_2C_3$

Here I am concerned with the presence of the OA scheme $C_1VC_2C_3$. In KBA, $C_1VC_2C_3$ items are not modified if C_2 is a liquid, or exceptionally a bilabial. Otherwise, the final cluster is lost as a consequence of the insertion of an epenthetic vowel. In the Sudanic area, the retention of syllable internal cluster in the OA scheme $C_1VC_2C_3$ is to be considered a conservative feature characterizing nomadic varieties. Actually, in urban Sudanic dialects C_2C_3 sequences are always lost due to epenthesis (Roth-Laly 1994: 84). At the present time, in KBA syllable internal clusters gradually tend to disappear among urban-pastoral and urban speakers.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary): *kalb* “dog”, *gaḥb* “heart”, *qabš* “ram”;
- urban-pastoral: *kalb ~ kalib* “dog”, *gaḥb ~ galib* “heart”, *qarb ~ ġarib* “west”;
- urban: *kalib* “dog”, *gaḥib* “heart”, *ġarib* “west”.

3.4. Morpho-syntactic levelling

In this section I describe the effects of dialect levelling both on nominal and verbal morpho-syntax. At first, I explain the decreasing of contrastive oppositions in the pronominal paradigm, to then analyze the morphological variation affecting personal bound pronouns. Besides, I also take into account the variation affecting the forms of the possessive particle. As regards verb morphology, I focus my attention mainly on suffixed and prefixed conjugations.

3.4.1. F.PL as morphological category

KBA habitually presents a maximally contrastive paradigm distinguishing feminine plural as independent morphological category in pronouns and verbs. From a general point of view, the permanence of the feminine plural is considered a conservative feature of rural Arabic dialects. All the Baggara dialects mark feminine plural (Zeltner and Tourneux 1986: 45; Owens 1993b: 141) and in KBA it is retained by the majority of speakers. Only urban speakers tend to generalize the masculine plural for marking also feminine

plural. This notwithstanding, it is interesting to note that urban female speakers still exhibit a considerable use of feminine plural markers.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary), urban-pastoral: *ittan gāʕd-āt fi bēt-kin* “you PL.F are sitting in your house”, *al-ʕawīn b-i-bn-an al-bēt* “the women build the house”;
- urban: *hum gāʕd-āt fi bēt-hum* “they are sitting in their house”, *al-banāt b-i-gr-u fi l-mádrasa* “the girl study at school”.

3.4.2. Bound pronouns

Here I focus on the forms used for the 2SG.F, 3SG.M and 2PL.M bound pronouns. With regard to the 2.SG.F person, KBA is characterized by the consonant-initial form *-ki* which occurs regardless of the nature of the previous segment. For its part, the 3M.SG person presents the form *-a*, while the 2PL.M pronoun is *-ku*. The three pronominal forms as a whole constitute a common feature of Baggara dialects of Chad and Nigeria. On the contrary, urban Sudanese dialects have the standard forms *-ik*, *-u(h)* and *-kum*. I found instances of levelling with reference to bound pronouns only among urban speakers of KBA and many of them often mix urban and rural forms. On that account, bound pronouns constitute a characterizing feature that is hard to be levelled as compared to other phono-morphological aspects.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary), urban-pastoral: *bēt-ki* “your SG.F house”, *lē-ki* “to you SG.F”, *bitt-a* “his daughter”, *maʕ-a* “with him”, *lō-ku* “to you PL.M”, *furūg-ku* “their M camp”;
- urban: *bēt-ik* “your SG.F house”, *lē-ki* “to you SG.F”, *ʕamm-u* “his uncle”, *fōg-u* “on him”, *lē-kum* “to you PL.M”, *farīg-kum* “their camp”.

3.4.3. Possessive particle

As already showed in 2.2, one of the most significant characteristics of KBA in mixing terms is the concurrence of the possessive particles *hān* (SG.F *hint*, PL *hinē*) and *hūl* (SG.F *hīl*, PL *hilēl*). Besides, I also showed that the basic exponent for analytic possession in urban Sudanese dialects is *hagg* (*haggit* SG.F, PL.F). If we look at the present distribution of the possessive items in KBA, we can note that the forms *hān* and *hūl* co-occur only among rural (pastoral and sedentary) speakers. Urban-pastoral speakers, for their part, are defined by the disappearance of the borrowed form *hūl* and by an increasing use of *hagg*. If urban speakers basically use *hagg*, they sometimes use the Egyptian form *bitāʕ* whose use is steadily spreading in Sudanese urban centres.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary): *hān / hint / hinē, hūl / hīl / hilēl*;
- urban-pastoral: *hagg / hagg-at, hān / hint / hinē*;
- urban: *hagg / hagg-at, bitāʕ / bitāʕ-t*.

3.4.4. Suffixed conjugation

In KBA the morpheme *-t* marking 1SG and 2SG.M pronominal subjects in suffixed conjugation is normally elided. As a consequence, 1SG and 2SG.M are distinguished from the 3SG.M person only by the stress displacement induced by the final consonant elision: *katáb* “I, you M wrote” vs. *kátab* “he wrote”. In truth, the morpheme *-t* always appears after two-consonantal and doubled verbs and before bound pronouns and lexical objects: *mašē-t* “I, you went”, *ḍarab-t-a* “I, you beaten him”. Besides, KBA also presents the allomorph *-ta* which occurs before consonant-initial objects: *wišil-ta kudugli* “I arrived in Kadugli”. From a comparative point of view, the elision of *-t* is considered a characterizing feature of Levantine bedouin dialects (Rosenhouse 2006: 261), but it is also common in Baggara dialects of western Chad and Nigeria (Zeltner and Tourneux 1986: 72; Owens 1993a: 111). The form *-ta*, for its part, is characteristic of urban dialects of Sudan and Chad (Owens 1993b: 131; Dickins 2008: 553). In levelling terms, *-t* is regularly elided by pastoral speakers while urban people habitually use the prestigious form *-ta*. Urban-pastoral speakers, for their part, still display a high degree of variation between *-t* elision and *-ta*.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary): *ḍaráb(-t)*, “I, you beat” *akál(-t)* “I, you ate”;
- urban-pastoral: *ḍaráb(-t) ~ ḍarb-ta* “I, you beat”, *akál(-t) ~ akal-ta* “I, you ate”;
- urban: *ḍarab-ta* “I, you beat”, *akal-ta* “I, you ate”.

3.4.5. Prefixed conjugation

As showed in 2.2, KBA presents a mixed paradigm in which *a-* and *n-* co-occur in marking the 1SG person and *n-* marks plural in optional combination with the plural suffix *-u*. More in particular, the permanence of the WSA *n-* for 1SG person marking is characteristic of rural-pastoral speakers only. Actually, at the present time the large majority of KBA speakers adopted the more common opposition *a-* 1SG vs. *n-* 1PL, consequently the suffix *-u* became a redundant marker of plurality.

- rural-pastoral: *a-/n-aktib* 1SG, *na-ktib(-u)* 1PL;
- rural-sedentary, urban-pastoral and urban: *a-ktib* 1SG, *na-ktib(-u)* 1PL.

3.4.6. Final *-i* elision in verbs with $C_3=y$

In KBA verbal roots with $C_3 = y$ elide the final vowel of the prefixed conjugation stem (see 2.2). The elision of final *-i* induces the insertion of an epenthetic vowel between C_1 and C_2 . In these conditions, a contrast exists between 2SG.M and 3SG.F: *ta-miš* vs. *ta-mšī*. Generally speaking, the elision of final *-i* is a typical feature of eastern bedouin dialects (Rosenhouse 2006:

254), but *-i* is commonly elided also in WSA dialects (Owens and Jidda 2006: 710). In KBA, only pastoral speakers still have a certain degree of variation with regard to *-i* elision, the rest of KBA speakers normally do not elide the final vowel as in Sudanese Standard Arabic.

- rural-pastoral: *ta-miš* “you go”, *ta-mš-i* “you F. go”;
- rural-sedentary, urban-pastoral and urban: *ta-mši* “you go M.SG”, *ta-mš-i* “you go F.SG”.

3.4.7. Reciprocal marker *al-*

The prefix marking reciprocal derived verbs in KBA is *al-*. In the Sudanic area (see. 2.2.), the morpheme *al-* is generally considered a characterizing isogloss of WSA dialects even if it originates in Southern Egypt (Owens 1993b: 160). On the contrary, all the ESA dialects present the more common prefix *it-* for the OA **ta-*. In levelling terms, rural speakers of KBA usually have *al-*, while urban ones adopted the Sudanese standard form *it-*. The urban-pastoral juncture is the only one displaying an appreciable degree of variation between the two prefixes.

- rural (pastoral and sedentary): *al-kallam* “speak”, *al-kayyaf* “be happy”, *al-manna* “hope”;
- urban-pastoral: *it-kātal* ~ *al-kātal* “kill each other”, *al-qadda* ~ *it-ḡadda* “have a dinner”, *it-lāga* ~ *al-lāga* “meet”;
- urban: *it-kallam* “speak”, *it-kayyaf* “be happy”, *it-manna* “hope”, *it-lāga* “meet”.

As a further remark, we can observe that the verb *albarrad* “have a wash” rather than substituting *al-* with *it-* is itself replaced by the Sudanese standard verb *istaḥamma*.

3.5. Lexical levelling

Lexicon undoubtedly represents one of the most characterizing aspects of rural dialects when they come into contact with an urban prestigious norm. Thus, a common effect of dialect levelling in bedouin dialects is the gradual substitution of stigmatizing lexical items with more standardized ones (Rosenhouse 1982: 25). In the majority of cases, rural and urban dialects have etymologically differentiated items expressing the same semantic reference. In other cases, the levelling process induces a phonological adaptation of the same lexical form. The following chart summarizes the most common instances of lexical levelling in KBA.

<i>Semantic reference</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>
“two”	<i>tittēn</i>	<i>itnēn</i>
“water”	<i>elmi</i>	<i>mōya</i>
“women”	<i>ʕawīn</i>	<i>nuswān</i>
“children”	<i>ʕiyāl</i>	<i>awlād</i>
“mother’s mother”	<i>amḡamḡtī</i>	<i>ḡabōba</i>
“thief”	<i>sarrāḡ</i>	<i>ḡarāmi</i>
“mouth”	<i>gaddūm</i>	<i>xašum</i>
“fish”	<i>ḡūt</i>	<i>samak</i>
“tomato”	<i>banadōra</i>	<i>tomātim</i>
“cat”	<i>hirra</i>	<i>nyāwa, kadīs</i>
“government”	<i>atturuk</i>	<i>ḡukūma</i>
“hospital”	<i>isbidalīa</i>	<i>mustašfa</i>
“north”	<i>rīḡ</i>	<i>šimāl</i>
“south”	<i>šaʕīd</i>	<i>ḡanūb</i>
“now”	<i>ḡāla, towwa</i>	<i>ḡassa</i>
“well, good”	<i>zēn</i>	<i>kweyyis</i>
“bad”	<i>šēn</i>	<i>kāʕb</i>
“quickly”	<i>towwa~towwa</i>	<i>ḡawāli</i>
“straight on”	<i>bōča</i>	<i>ḡawāli</i>
“like this”	<i>ke</i>	<i>keda</i>
“few, a little”	<i>šē</i>	<i>šwēya</i>
“very”	<i>ḡār</i>	<i>šedid</i>
“to see”	<i>rīʕa, šīf</i>	<i>šāf</i>
“to hit”	<i>katal</i>	<i>dagga</i>
“to hunt”	<i>ganaš</i>	<i>šayyad</i>

4. Conclusions

In this study I have tried to analyze Kordofanian Baggara Arabic in the light of dialect mixing and dialect levelling. Generally speaking, it is clear that KBA has many structural features in common with western Sudanic dialects. This linguistic fact is actually in line with the displacement history of the Ḥawāzma who penetrated in Kordofan from Dar Fur around 1765-1775. This notwithstanding, the integration of Arab groups speaking eastern-like dialects gradually reduced the western characterization of KBA because of the assimilation of ESA features and the affirmation of new mixed forms. In a more recent period, the process of forced urbanization caused KBA to be highly affected by dialect levelling towards Sudanese Standard Arabic. This process furthered the structural change of Baggara Arabic through the eli-

mination of stigmatizing features in favour of more standard ones. In some cases, levelling induced the simplification of conservative morpho-syntax traits as showed by the lost of plural feminine as morphological category among Baggara Arabs living in Kadugli. On the other hand, urbanized Baggara do not completely align their dialect to the urban norm of Kadugli that is mainly spoken by Nuba groups. For example, if in Kadugli Arabic pharyngeal consonants are generally lost alike in other sedentary varieties of western Sudan, I showed that Baggara speakers always retain pharyngeal sounds as contrastive phonemes. In this overall situation, the close-knit networks and traditional labour division act as powerful norm-enforcement mechanism that limits the effects of the ongoing process of dialect levelling. If we also consider the important number of speakers of the Baggara dialect in Kordofan and their positive attitude towards their speech, it is possible that KBA will not definitely vanish as a distinct dialect, but it is undoubtful that if it will be increasingly influenced by the dominant linguistic norm of Sudan.

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