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## **Etymological Sources of Address Terms in Dongolawi Nubian**

**Abstract.** A fascinating characteristic of Dongolawi Nubian, a Nilo-Saharan language variety spoken in Sudan, involves its complex system of address terms and their sources.

Etymologically, the terms are classified into native Nubian forms and borrowed ones; the latter includes forms of Arabic, Turkish, and English origins. Native forms are primarily kinship terms, personal pronouns, nicknames, and some honorifics, whereas borrowed ones are largely titles associated with occupations, administrative/official ranks, and other socio-cultural honorifics.

The analysis offered here reflects not only the linguistic outcome of contact with other languages and cultures, but also the variety, richness, and relative degree of flexibility of address forms in the language.

**Keywords:** Nubian; kinship terms; address terms; honorifics

**1. Background.** Dongolawi Nubian (henceforth DN), a Nilo-Saharan language variety used in an area extending for about 160 miles along the River Nile between Eddaba/Korti and Abu Fatima near the third cataract; the other Nubian variety, Mahasi, is spoken from Abu Fatima to the Egyptian border in the north. Furthermore, other Nubian varieties are also used hundreds of miles away from the Nile in Kordofan (Nuba mountain area) and in Darfur region in the far west of the country (Armbruster, 1960; Thelwall, 1982; Ethnologue, 2004). These Nubian Varieties, like scores of other Sudanese vernacular languages, are threatened. Fortunately, Armbruster's work (1960, 1965), though carried out a century ago, has documented the Dongolawi variety.

Historically, the Nubian region, both in Egypt and in the Sudan, has been accurately described as a “corridor to Africa” (Williams, 1977). Due to its geographical location along the Nile in southern Egypt and northern Sudan, it has always been exposed to a wide variety of foreign influences and interactions with its neighbors and with other powers. That influence goes back to the Pharaonic times. Later on, Christianity came through its northern neighbor, Egypt, and the Christian Kingdoms flourished in the area from 580 until they were overrun by the Muslim Arab armies in 1317 A. D. Furthermore, the region was subjected to Turkish rule (1821-1885) as Sudan became under the Turco-Egyptian administration. Thirteen years later (1898) the British re-conquered the Sudan (the Mahadist regime), and the country became known as the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan until it gained its political independence in 1956 and became the Republic of Sudan (Abdel-Rahim, 1970; Holt and Daly, 2000).

Linguistically, these different influences and forces have left their impact on the Nubian language varieties spoken in southern Egypt and in Sudan, among other Sudanese vernacular languages. The scope and extent of linguistic influence varies, depending on the duration of contact and the degree of interaction or lack of it between the Nubians and the various administrative powers. One thing is clear, though, and that is linguistic borrowings from Arabic, Turkish, and English, among other varieties. However, the linguistic influence of Arabic on Nubian is by far the greatest due, in part, to the socio-historical and cultural processes of Islamization and, to a lesser degree, what historians refer to as the arabization of the people of northern Sudan in general. The impact of these forces and, in particular, the long standing linguistic contact between Arabic and the Nubian varieties is reflected in the extensive borrowing of Arabic words. One field in which this borrowing is manifested is in the area of terms of address and social honorifics.

**2. Address terms.** The use of address forms, such as kinship forms, titles, nicknames, and social honorifics in communication is a complex and multi-faceted process. As Levinson (2004) has noted, “systems of address of any kind-pronouns, titles, kin-terms- are guided by the social deictic contrasts made by alternate forms” (p. 121). Hence, relationships among participants in conversation could often be encoded in language through the employment of a variety of terms that can, for example, reflect the social status of an interlocutor such as Sir, Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., etc. The ways in which different forms of address are used or not used in different cultures vary considerably. In some languages such as Japanese, honorifics are used to indicate various degrees of politeness and courtesy for the individual addressed or referred to (see Dunn, 2005, for the use of humble terms). In many other languages, the relative status of the speaker, addressee, or a third person referred to is expressed via the use of the appropriate pronoun. The use of the second person pronoun (you) in French is often cited as an example of this case, where the form *tu* ‘singular you’ is described as the “familiar” and *vous* ‘plural you’ as the “polite” form (Wardhaugh, 1999, p. 255). In such cases, language users are following what Clark (2004) has referred to as the pragmatic principle of “conventionality” (p. 567). However, the use of the second person pronoun itself may not always be obligatory as in the case of imperative structures in English and many languages, including DN, for instance.

Examining address terms involves consideration of a variety of sociolinguistic and sociocultural factors. These factors may include such variables as sex, age, degree of relationship (i.e. blood relation, intimate, distant, etc.), degree of formality/informality, power/solidarity issues, social status/education, and the general attitudes of the speakers involved (addresser/addressee) among other considerations (Wardhaugh, 1999; Braun, 1988). Therefore, whether an individual addresses another person by their last name, by a first/personal name, by a

nickname, by a particular honorific title, by a combination of two forms, or even by no title at all is a complex matter.

**3. The study.** This paper examines the nature and origins of the most common types of address terms used by members of a Nubian community speaking Dongolawi Nubian and analyzes the origins and the sociocultural and sociolinguistic constraints governing the uses of the most common address terms in DN. Depending on their origins, four sources of address terms are identified: (1) Native Nubian; (2) Arabic/Islamic; (3) Turkish; and (4) English.

### **3.1. Native Nubian address terms**

**3.1.1. Kinship terms.** Kinships, according to Romaine, “reveal how the categories which are distinguished reflect the social construction of reality for a particular culture speaking a particular language” (2000, p. 27). In DN, kinship terms are probably the most widely used forms of address, for they constitute an integral part of the address system and reference in the language. These forms, according to their part of speech, are nouns that reflect blood relations among family members (mother, father, brother, sister, etc.) as well as in-laws. Among non-family members and even strangers, they can also be used as social honorifics that reflect varying degrees of politeness and respect. Thus, they create an atmosphere of solidarity and enhance interaction among participants in conversations. This particular use of a kinship form in addressing a non-relative is often called “a fictive” (Braun, 1988).

The choice of kinship terms available to the users vary depends on the context in which they are used, among other factors. In some cultures, their use may “involve not only the selection of the appropriate noun stem but also the selection of appropriate possessive pronouns and derivative suffixes” (Tyler 1986, p. 263). Kinship terms are used extensively in DN, and they are somewhat more elaborate when compared to some other languages. This is particularly

the case in the differentiation between maternal sister/brother and paternal sister/brother, for which English, for example, has no equivalent (i.e. English uses only *uncle/aunt*). Dongolawi Nubian has virtually the same basic kinship terms used in English (i.e. *aaba* ‘for father’, *yo* ‘for mother’, *ambes* ‘my brother’, *anaysi* ‘my sister’, *aanu* ‘my grandfather’, *aanow* ‘my grandmother’, *assi* ‘grand-son’, etc). However, unlike the case in English where the term *uncle* could refer to either father’s brother or sister, in DN there are two separate terms: one for a father’s brother (*ambayna* ‘paternal uncle’) and another for mother’s brother (*angi* ‘maternal uncle’). The same goes for mother’s sister (*anaynkaygid* ‘aunt’) and father’s sister (*ambaanaysi* ‘aunt’). In DN, kinship address terms are usually prefixed with the possessive personal pronoun; hence, *an-bab* ‘my father’, *en-bab* ‘your father’, *tin-bab* ‘his/her father’, etc. Examples 1 and 2 below, in which a young adult (male or female) asks an older male, show the uses of such kinship terms among the Dongolawi Nubians:

- (1) *Er esambu, angi?*  
 2sg where go PROG (my) maternal uncle  
 Where are you going, maternal uncle?
- (2) *Ambayna, ai- akonon bi-nogiri.*  
 (my) Paternal uncle 1<sup>st</sup> sg – 2sg with – will- go  
 Paternal uncle, I will go with you.

In addition to using kinship terms in reference to blood relatives, Dongolawi Nubians use them in addressing non-relatives and even strangers. In fact many Nubians use kinship terms (e.g. brother, uncle) intentionally or unintentionally to add a friendly atmosphere of solidarity in interacting with non-blood relatives even on first encounters. And since age in Nubian society is highly regarded, people tend to signal deference and respect to older people through the choice of the appropriate address term. For example, it is very common for a young adult (male or

female) to draw the attention of an adult stranger (old male, for instance) by using *Ambayna* ‘my uncle/ father’s brother’:

- (3) *Ambayna, er en tagiagi arkoskoun?*  
 (my) Paternal uncle 2sg      POSS   cap   drop  
 Paternal uncle, you have dropped your cap.

An old man would say to the young adults (not necessarily blood relatives), who came to help him harvest his wheat crop:

- (4) *Ambesi, ashai aajugrani, asalgi adayway.*  
 (my) brothers   day   get-PROG hot tomorrow finish  
 Brothers, it is getting hot, let us finish tomorrow.

The uses of uncle and brothers in these examples indicate courtesy, respect, solidarity, and friendliness. In fact the use of brother with reference to non-blood relatives seems to be common in other cultures. Indeed, here in the US, I have observed the uses of ‘brother’, ‘sister’, ‘uncle’, for example, in a similar manner among some of my own African American students, where it is fairly common to use these address terms to signal solidarity and respect, among other pragmatic functions.

Another feature of DN address behavior is the use of address inversion or “the use of a nominal variant which, in its lexical content, implies features suiting the person of the speaker rather than the addressee” (Braun, 1988, p. 265). Hence, in DN, it is common for a grandfather to address (or even refer to) his grandson as *aaba doul*, literally “elder father”. Pragmatically, the use of this form signals intimacy and probably differences in status (age, authority, for example). *Aaba doul* is also sometimes used as a nickname for the oldest son. On the other hand, the son of the youngest of, say, three brothers is often nicknamed *kinan toud* or ‘the son of the youngest’. Furthermore, sometimes it is common for an elderly man/woman to use a kinship term not only

in addressing others, but also in reference to him/herself, as shown in the following example (a sixty years old man to a boy/girl):

- (5) *Innu-gi essi orofalgi atta-tir.*  
 2sg GEN grandfather water cold bring 2or3 sg: IMP  
 Bring your grandfather some cold water.

**3.1.2. Proper nouns (personal names) and personal pronouns.** As Levinson (2004) has noted, “the grammatical category of person reflects the different roles that individuals play in the speech event: speaker, addressee, and other” (p.112). With the Islamization of the Nubians, following the downfall of the Christian Nubian Kingdoms in 1317 A.D., the Nubians, as did many (non-Arab) Muslims in Sudan, adopted Arabic/Islamic names. Therefore, Nubian males are given names such as *Mohamed, Ibrahim, Fageer* and common compound names like *Abdulahi (Abd-Alla), Abdulgadir (Abd- Algader)*, etc. Equally, female names including *Fatima, Mariam, Nafeesa*, etc, have become traditional. However, within the Sudanese context there are certain names that are very common (at least traditionally) among the Nubians, such as *Satti, Salih, Dahab, Daoud*, etc. This is also the case with other names that are common among other ethnolinguistic groups in the country. For example, the names *Adaroub* and *Ohaj* are widely used among the *Beja* of eastern Sudan. Other tribes have the same tendency. The Christians who live in the area have names such as Joseph, John, Mary, etc.

Although Dongolawi Nubians, particularly relatives and close friends, address each other primarily by first name (birth name), not the last name or family name, there are other numerous combinations that are also used to refer to the addressor, the addressee, as well as any third party in everyday interactions. The basic forms may include the following: FN/first name, T+FN/ title+first name, FN+T, N/nickname, FN+N, KT/kinship term, PP/personal pronoun, HT/ honorific title, T+*toud/buru* ‘son/daughter’, N+ *toud/buru*, father’s first name +*toud/buru*,

mother's first name +*toud/buru*, vocative, and hand gestures. (Note that some examples reflect combinations of DN and borrowed forms; see the sections on Arabic, Turkish, and English terms below).

<u>Address forms</u>	<u>Examples</u>
a. FN (only)	Satti, Salih, Omer, etc
b. T+FN	<i>Haaj</i> 'pilgrim' Sati; <i>Shayh</i> Omer, etc
c. FN+T	Salih <i>effendi</i> 'esquire, sir, Mr.'
d. N	<i>Tabid</i> 'blacksmith'
e. FN+N	Ali <i>Tabid</i> 'Ali, the blacksmith'
f. KT	<i>Ambes</i> 'brother', <i>Aaba</i> 'father'
g. PP	' <i>er</i> , 'you', <i>t'ir</i> , 'they', etc
h. HT	<i>ur</i> 'king'
i. T+ <i>toud or buru</i>	<i>Effendin toud/buru</i> 'son/daughter of the <i>effendi</i> '
j. N+ <i>toud/buru</i>	<i>Tabin toud</i> 'son of the blacksmith'
k. Father's/Mother's FN + <i>toud/buru</i>	( <i>Hamintoud</i> 'son of Hamid', <i>Ashantoud</i> 'son of Asha')
l. <i>Boub</i>	Usually used by old people to call upon a 'young adult male' to help do something.
m. Vocative	<i>Hay</i> 'hey'
n. <i>Shafa</i> (pl. <i>shafari</i> )	<i>hay shafa</i> 'hey kid'

In addition to the use of proper names, DNs use personal pronouns in addressing each other and in referring to third parties. DN has six basic personal pronouns:

<u>Subjective</u>	<u>Objective</u>
1. ' <i>ai</i> I -- first person singular	<i>aigi</i>
2. ' <i>ar</i> We -- first person plural	' <i>argi</i>
3. ' <i>er</i> You -- second person singular	' <i>ekki</i>
4. <i>ir</i> You -- second person plural	' <i>irgi</i>
5. <i>t'er</i> He/She/It -- third person/thing singular (1)	<i>t'ekki</i>
6. <i>t'ir</i> They -- third person plural	<i>tirgi</i>

Personal pronouns are usually used as address terms depending on the nature and social context of the conversation, among other factors. In general, they are used denotatively — in a neutral sense — though they can also reflect status (age, authority, emphasis, for instance) as in a mother to her daughter who slipped on the floor:

(6a) *'Er ayn nogolki nalmen? 'Er dongray?*

2sg POSS front see NEG 2sg blind

Can't you see your (what is in your) front? Are you blind?

(6b) Teacher-student: *Indo ta, 'er.*

Here come (2sg)

Come here, you.

In imperative/command structures, the subject may be implicit (i.e., omitted) depending on situational factors such as relationships between participants, emphasis, distance, etc.

Personal pronouns are also routinely employed in phatic communion, particularly greetings and farewells:

(6c) *'er minay bu?*

2sg how do

How are you doing?

(6d) *ir masaan baykomondo?*

2pl good/well morning

Good morning.

One of the gradually disappearing forms of address among the DNs is the use of the third person pronoun singular (*'ter*, here 'third person, singular, masculine') by some older women in reference to their husbands; Although traditionally, many Nubian women rarely referred to their husbands by their first/personal names — this practice has also been common in other cultures

(see Wardhaugh, 1999, for example) — it has changed with the current generation. For example, two women in their fifties talking about arranging a visit to someone in the hospital might say:

- (7) W1. *Asalgi er be-eski nugna?*  
 tomorrow 2sg will be able to go  
 Would you be able to go tomorrow?
- W2. *aayi, 'ter asalgi artir be-nogi.*  
 yes 3sg tomorrow island will go  
 Yes, he [husband] will go to the island tomorrow.

In addition, depending on factors such as age, a social honorific like *haaj* 'pilgrim' and its feminine form, *haajah*, could also be used reciprocally by a husband and his wife in addressing each other.

**3.1.3. Nicknames.** The nature, uses, and functions of nicknames vary across languages and cultures. In general, they tend to be shortened forms or substitutes for a person's or an object's actual name. They could be used for a wide variety of purposes; for example, they could be used as emblems of close affinity, endearment, and acceptance. Nicknames could also be used as derogatory or sarcastic forms. Nicknames in DN are primarily of native Nubian origin, although there are a few combinations of FN+occupation (Arabic word). In reference to people, they are mainly used in five ways: 1) as a substitute for the person's personal name (first name/birth name); 2) in reference to one's place of birth/origin (often the name of the village, town, where the individual was born/raised); 3) in reference to the person's tribe; 4) to one's job/traditional craft; and 5) sometimes to refer to a person's physical condition, used particularly by some naughty children. Examples 8-11 show these different uses:

- (8) Father to daughter: *Seesa kalgi atta.*  
 NN food bring : IMP  
*Nafeesa*, bring the food.

Pragmatically, the father's use of the *Seesa* signals his close relationship with his daughter and the ease in using her nickname.

(9) Adult to Adult: *Hamed agadawi indotaa*.

PN+NN here come : IMP

Hamed the guy from *agaday* come here.

(*agaday* is a name of a small village on the east bank of the Nile in the Nubian region)

Nicknames in DN are also used in reference to a particular family's traditional craft, job, or career. These traditional jobs include *tananabi* 'fisherman', *tabid* 'blacksmith', mechanics, butchers, vegetable sellers, mill workers, *bugdori* 'clay pot makers', etc. Overall, these kinds of nicknames in DN are used, pragmatically, in a neutral sense, unlike some specific titles used among the Nubians that reflect a clear positive aura (see 3.2 below). Hence, the following examples:

(10) Adult male/female-Adult male:

*Ali batonjan er isambo?*

PN+NN (tomato) 2sg where go PROG

Ali tomato, where are you going?

(11) Teenager-Old male:

*Salim abu-okaz aigi benti dayn.*

PN+NN (with a cane) 1st sg OBJ date give

Salim, the cane user (man), give me some dates.

Nicknames are also sometimes used in reference to place names. For example, a deserted and partially destroyed house that was abandoned for years in the village is referred to as *Janinchin ka* 'the haunted/devil house'. A grandmother will, therefore, advise her grandson,

(12) *Tokon janinchin ka natir nugmay!*

Do NEG devil GEN house near go

Don't go near the devil house!

Another example of using nicknames in reference to place names is the case of a very small island that was once considered a refuge for crocodiles, where a grand-father would warn the neighborhood children not to approach that island whenever they went swimming in the river:

- (13) *Tokon elum narti natir nugway!*  
 Do NEG crocodile island GEN near go : IMP  
 Don't go as far as the crocodile island!

**3.2. Titles and social honorifics.** In DN, two types of address titles are generally used depending on their origins (source) or nature: Nubian terms and borrowed terms. Borrowed terms, in turn, can be divided into three (from Arabic, Turkish, and English). Some of the terms are used in general by monolingual DN speakers as well as bilingual/multilingual speakers, regardless of their degree of fluency in one or the other language(s).

**3.2.1. Titles of DN origin.** DN titles include occupational (i.e. traditional jobs associated with agriculture, for example) and/or social titles such as *samil* 'a man in charge of collecting taxes, mediating in local disputes, delivering court orders, etc'; *saamed* 'the chief of the laborers in the farm land, or person in charge of the distribution of responsibilities in agricultural work'.

Another example is *Erwas* 'the captain/person in charge of a sailing boat'. Usually these forms follow the first name; however, depending on the conversational context they can also be used alone (examples 14-16):

- (14) Son-Father: *Samil ekki tarykon.*  
 T (chief) 2sg OBJ come  
 The chief is asking you to see him.
- (15) *Osman samil er mahkamar tay nugbon?*  
 PN+T 2sg court go PROG  
 Osman, the samil, are you heading to the court?

Sometimes the title is extended to address the son of the *Samil*, particularly after he passes away, as in (16):

- (16) *Samil-toud er isambun?*  
 T-son 2sg go PROG  
 Son of the samil, where are you going?

Other DN address titles include *ur* or *urbab* (literally king), usually used by itself:

- (17) *Ur, er minay bo?*  
 T (king) 2sg how doing  
 King, how are you?

The son of the king, particularly after he dies, is addressed by *ur toud* ‘son of the king’. The first name of the king’s son usually precedes the title (e.g. Ali *ur toud* ‘Ali the son of the king’. And sometimes the entire family to which the king belongs is dubbed *Urwi* (plural of *ur/king*).

The use of affectionate forms of address in DN is usually limited to relatives and family members (cf. Barun, 1988, p. 26, where male speakers with low social position address a female with forms like love, sweet-heart, honey, etc.). In parts of the US, particularly the South, these kinds of endearment address terms are very common, even with strangers (males and females). However, in DN such terms are limited to addressing little girls, largely, among family members. For example, a mother may call her little daughter *sukar* ‘sugar’ or *masod* (pretty), but it would be unconventional to DN speakers to use such forms with boys. However, adults talking to children (boys and girls, relatives, non-relatives, and even strangers), generally use the term *faalla* ‘literally smart’. Hence, a stranger passing through the village may ask a child (not knowing his/her name) to go and bring him/her some water: *Faalla asigi atta* or ‘smart, bring me some water’. The use of *faalla* is normally restricted to addressing children; using it to address adults would be a violation of the norms, unless it is used sarcastically or ironically.

**3.2.2. Address terms of Arabic origins.** As a result of centuries of contact, DN and for that matter all other Nubian varieties, have borrowed extensively from Arabic. These borrowings are among the linguistic outcomes that characterize all situations of languages in contact (cf. the Celtic languages/English in Britain, the Native Indian languages/English in the US; Baugh and Cable, 2004). Nubian/Arabic contact is part of the socio-historical process of the Islamization of the people of North Africa and other parts where Islam spread since its advent in the seventh century. Therefore, some of the address terms used among the Nubians are also used with varying degrees of adaptations in other Islamic societies. The titles are mainly social, cultural/religious, and occupational. They have been in use for centuries, so even monolingual DN speakers would consider them to be part of the native vocabulary. Some of the most widely used terms in this category include such words as *shaykh* or *sheikh* (pronounced as *shayh* in DN), *Fageer* ‘literally poor, humble, but also used for a religious/Quranic teacher’, *Imam* ‘religious man who normally leads prayers, particularly Friday prayers’, *muwalana* ‘Islamic title for a learned man, and occasionally for any elderly man’, *Haaj/Haajah* ‘title for man/woman who went on pilgrimage to Mecca’, *Ustaz* ‘literally teacher, enlightened person’, *Hakeem* ‘literally a wise man, used in the traditional Islamic sense of doctor; also used as a proper name’, *Omda* ‘administrative title for village chief, higher in rank than *Samil*’, *Mudir* ‘director/manager’, *Mufettish* ‘inspector’, *Baseer* ‘craftsman/carpenter’ (2) etc. These terms are used, particularly by elderly people, to signal courtesy, respect, honor, and sometimes to elevate the person’s status; generally, however, the higher the status of the addressee (in terms of social position and/or age), the more likely he/she will be addressed with these titles or social honorifics.

*Shaykh* is a very common term of address in Muslim societies around the world, including the Middle-East, south East Asia, and Africa. In fact, the address term is also used in

parts of the Arab world by Christian Arabs for an elderly man of status (Farghal and Shakir, 1995). In Sudan, *shaykh* is sometimes used as a personal name. Generally, in Islamic culture it is used to refer to any old man as a sign of respect. More specifically, it could refer to a leader/elder of a tribe. The term is also used in political Islamic discourse, particularly recently, to refer to the leader of an Islamic party, front, or organization regardless of the qualifications of the person in religious/Islamic studies. In this sense, it seems to be preferred over other titles such as *doctor* (i.e., Ph.D.), particularly by the supporters of the party or organization. Therefore, many Sudanese would use *shaykh* in addressing, for example, a party leader in preference to that person's professional Ph.D. title (Dr.).

*Shaykh* is also used as an administrative title for the person elected and/or appointed to collect taxes in rural areas (the equivalent of *Samil* in DN). As an honorific title, it usually precedes the personal name (first name). The word, particularly in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other Emirates, has often been socially associated with the elite and ruling classes. The feminine equivalent *Shaykhah*, though very common in some Arab countries such as the Gulf Emirates, is not often used in Sudan. The masculine term is sometimes used in addressing any man with a relatively longer beard, regardless of his age. In DN, it could also be used interchangeably with *Imam* (example18):

(18) *Shayh Basheir, er minay bo in-nawigi?*

T + PN            2sg how doing today

Shaykh Basheir, how are you doing today?

*Haaj* and the feminine form *Haajah* is commonly used among the Dongolawi Nubians as a title of respect for those who have made the pilgrimage trip to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, to fulfill the last (fifth) pillar of Islam. In Nubian culture, it generally precedes the first name (e.g. *Haaj Ali*; *Haajah Nafeesa*, etc.) unless it is used as a proper name (e.g. Ali Haaj). Although strictly

speaking it should apply only to those who have actually taken the trip, the term is often used by some to, for example, greet any elderly man or woman, or pay them attention, to elevate, without regard for whether the person actually went on a pilgrimage to Mecca. In that sense, its use is not limited to relatives, close friends, and/or others known to both addressor and addressee, but also to address/greet any older person, as in (19), where a farmer telling an old man that the road ahead is closed:

(19) *Haaj, in darib ayn nogollo kobun, mangay noug.*

T DEM road POSS in front of close DEM g0

Haaj, this road ahead is closed, follow that one.

In DN, the title/social honorific *Ustaz* or teacher is normally used by parents, pupils, and other people who actually know the person (the teacher), as a respect title to address/greet him, or even to refer to him as third party. Traditionally, it has a secular connotation related to education, unlike *Shayhk*, which may carry religious connotation. It usually precedes the person's first name

(20) *En fadolotuon Ustaz Kamal aigi en juwabki bajdayan.*

Please T+PN Ist sg OBJ DEM letter write

Please write to me this letter, teacher (Kamal).

Occasionally, the term is also used by some people to address someone who appears to be educated, well-mannered, enlightened, well-dressed (particularly in western clothes), etc.

(21) *Ya ustaz, sutay noug kubki dur.*

VOC T quick/hurry up boat catch

Teacher, hurry up the boat is leaving.

**3.2.3. Address terms/honorifics of Turkish origin.** Under this category, Turkish terms such as *effendi* 'sir, esquire', *basha* 'sir, your honor', *bayh* 'sir', and *janabu* 'military title of respect' are traditionally used by DN speakers, particularly older people. These titles apparently came

through the Turco-Egyptian rule of Sudan (1821-1885) when there were Egyptian, Turkish, and other European administrators in Sudan. In fact these terms are more widely used in Egypt than in Sudan. Some of these terms are also used with slight variations in form and meaning in other African languages (e.g. Ki-Swahili, Arabic, etc) (cf. Farghal & Shakir, 1995). Originally, some of them (e.g., *Janabu, effendi*) were used in military and administrative circles as titles of address. *Janabu* was used as a form of respect /seniority military honorific, usually among people who know the military personnel (friends, compatriots, neighbors, etc). It is also used sometimes by civilians to address anyone in a military uniform (cf. *officer* in American English). Usually it is used by itself and/or only with a pronoun, as opposed to say *effendi*, to primarily address a military person. For example, a retired officer (military, police, prison guard, or firefighter) would greet a peer or someone still in service in the following manner:

(22) *'Er minay bun, janabu?*

2sg how do T

How are you doing, officer?

It is also used by civilians to address/greet military personnel in general:

(23) *Janabu, indo fadilay*

T(sir / officer) here sit

Sir / officer, please sit here.

*Effendi* was apparently used as a title for officers in the military; it was also used by the ruling foreign administrators as a title for non-European personnel in civil administration. During that time, it used to denote 'gentleman, official, officer (but not said of Europeans)' (Armbruster, 1965, p. 63). The title usually follows the first name (e.g. Ali *effendi*). Later the title was applied to government officials, particularly in a secular sense (e.g. high school, college graduates who later joined the white work collar force/civil service). In that sense it was employed as a

respect/courtesy title. In the seventies and later, sometimes the plural (*afandiya* in Sudanese Arabic) was used with negative connotations to refer to government bureaucrats. Furthermore, it is occasionally used as a proper name (i.e., family name) for one who is well-off, educated, etc.

(24) *Ali effendi, ayn fadolotoun en jawabki aigi garay dayn.*

PN+T            please    DEM        letter Isg read

Ali effendi, could you please read this letter to me?

In addition to its uses as a title of respect, *effendi* occasionally occurs among the Nubians as a family name. In this particular case, it also follows the person's first name:

(25) *Badri elaffandi; Jalal elaffandi, etc.*

Furthermore, it is sometimes used to refer to the son or daughter of the original person carrying the title. This is usually the case when that person passes away. *Toud* 'son' or *Buru* 'daughter' follows the title/name: *Effendyn toud* 'son of the effendi' or *effendyn buru* 'daughter of the effendi'. *Bayh* (roughly, sir) and *basha* (pasha) are not very common today; their use is somewhat limited to elders, particularly those who served in the Egyptian army.

**3.2.4. Address terms of English origin.** In addition to the Nubian, Arabic, and Turkish titles, Nubians also use a few English terms as social honorifics. Titles and honorifics of English origin are somewhat limited. They are mainly occupational titles that include *doktour* 'doctor/physician or Ph.D. holder', *kabtin* 'captain — in the sense of airline pilot/soccer team leader', *profeser* 'professor', and rarely *sheef* 'chief, mainly used by some educated individuals' (3). And since soccer is a popular sport in the country (a British legacy), *captain* is often used in reference to a football team captain. In soccer discourse, students and other young adults frequently use words like *goun* 'goalkeeper', *wing* 'wing' to refer to team members who play these positions. The title *Doctor*, in the sense of 'physician', is used by all Dongolawi Nubians. Its use is not limited to patient-doctor encounters, but also in all forms of social gatherings where a doctor is present.

(26) *Endo fadilay doktour Hassan.*

Here please (sit) T+PN

Please sit here, doctor Hassan.

Interestingly, some older people, males and females, in the area of this study refer to the only medical assistant in charge of the local health center by using the term *doctor*; this is usually done to elevate the social status of the medical assistant to that of a physician. And because he is the person in charge of the medical center in the area, he receives the title as a sign of respect.

(27) *Doktour Ali ambaab ekki tarykon*

T+PN (my) father 2sg OBJ come

Doctor Ali, my father wants you to come and see him.

In its academic sense, the title is of course widely used by college students, college staff, and other doctors. But beyond college life, people generally use it in reference to or in addressing a person with a Ph.D.

**4. Conclusion.** This paper represents the first preliminary examination of the nature, origins, and use of address terms and social honorifics used in a Dongolawi Nubian community in the Sudan. Although it is often difficult to neatly classify linguistic behavior into social variables such as sex, age, status, etc., this paper has shown that these variables still play a major role, among other factors, in the uses of specific terms of address in specific contexts. We also discover, as Braun (1988, p. 66) notes, “the factors governing address behavior are so varied and, partly, so culture-specific, that it is hard to fit them into a general theoretical frame. Not all of them can easily be traced back to the more abstract notions of superiority/inferiority, distance/intimacy, formality/informality, etc.”

In addition to kinship terms, personal names, and pronouns, Dongolawi Nubians use indigenous nicknames, mostly associated with the person’s job, place of birth, etc, and foreign

borrowed terms, mostly from Arabic, Turkish, and English, for communicative and social interactive purposes. The complexity of the terms used in the community reflects the socio-cultural structure, beliefs, and attitudes of the people, and the socio-historical circumstances through which the terms originated. The imprints that different political and cultural forces have left on the speech community over the years is reflected in the uses of a variety of indigenous Nubian, Arabic, Turkish, and English terms in intriguing ways.

### Notes

1. Dongolawi Nubian, like many other language varieties, is characterized by the absence of gender, i.e., it has no grammatical forms that distinguish gender. However, words such as *ondi* and *kari* are used to refer to male/female distinctions respectively, for example, in animals, whereas other distinctions (e.g. *ogij/ayan* ‘man/woman’ *toud/buru* ‘boy/son, girl/daughter’ are used for humans.

2. Many Arabic loanwords into DN have undergone changes as they were adapted into DN. This is particularly the case with emphatic Arabic phonemes, many of which are not part of the Nubian sound system. Therefore, the following Arabic words, for example, are pronounced differently from their original pronunciation in Arabic:

- a. The ‘*ayn* sound in Arabic (laryngeal, fricative, voiced) as in ‘*ameed* ‘dean’ is produced in DN as *aameed*.
- b. The velar, fricative, voiceless consonant /X/ or *Kh* is replaced by /h/; hence, Shaykh or sheikh is rendered as shayh.
- c. The Arabic velar, alveolar, voiced phoneme (D) is pronounced as /d/.

3. DN, like colloquial Arabic varieties and other African languages, includes hundreds of words of English origin. The words are borrowed directly or via Sudanese Arabic into DN. Many of them have undergone phonological adaptations and slight changes.

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