

**Educational and Social Values
expressed by Proverbs in two Culturs:
Knowledge and Use of Proverbs
in Sudan and England**

vorgelegt von

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Summary

This thesis has two aims: to bring to light a rich and previously un-researched cultural heritage of the people of the Sudan, and to compare proverb use in two different nations. Proverbs are considered as expressions that reveal the life-world and values of the people of a given society as well as their attitudes towards their surroundings

The study adopts an ethnographic approach to proverbs, their provenance and use, based on intensive fieldwork in England and the Sudan. A large corpus of proverbs, many not recorded before, was gathered in settings of everyday usage over many years in rural and urban locations in Northern Sudan. In England extensive research through questionnaires and interviews elicited comparative information on proverbs used or known by the general English public. Meanings and usages of proverbs are examined to point out similarities or differences between Sudanese and English proverbs in relation to situations in which they are used.

The study examines major issues in people's daily lives as revealed in proverbs, including educational principles, God and religious life, family relationships, friendship, neighbourhood relationships, marriage and women, experience and wisdom, contentment and patience, silence and speech, solidarity, poverty and wealth, casteism, class polarization and social injustice. In these categories proverbs are seen to reflect cultural values.

It was observed that both societies stress the importance of education, keeping good company and respect for neighbours; both depict women as inferior and mentally deficient. The research indicated that Sudanese proverbs particularly stress fidelity to parents and extended family, teach children that care and protection of the elderly is their eventual responsibility, and encourage family and community consultation even in private matters.

Although many Sudanese proverbs call for social solidarity and unity, others show class polarization and racism among Sudanese themselves. This phenomenon appears absent in English proverbs; racism towards outsiders, regardless of its presence or absence in society, was not discovered by the researcher in their proverbs.

Generally, despite great differences between the two societies in their culture and language characteristics, the research found striking similarities in the way their proverbs express ideas, attitudes and reactions in similar situations.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Aims and focus

This study examines the meaning, use, and purpose of Sudanese Arabic proverbs in their natural context and compares them with English proverbs as a means of expressing cultural and social values. It is intended to show how proverbs that differ completely in their culture and their wording can be used in the same situations to express similar or opposite ideas.

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What functions do proverbs play in Sudanese society?
2. How do people in Sudan use their proverbs, and why?
3. How are proverbs used in British society?
4. What are people's attitudes towards proverbs in Sudanese and British societies?
5. What are the similarities and differences between English and Sudanese proverbs?
6. What suggestions can be drawn from this study?

In the first part of the study I will present Sudanese proverbs in as much depth as possible to reflect Sudanese culture and to provide a framework for understanding the proverbs.

As I myself come from the area of the study, I share the experiences and understand in depth the culture of this society, knowing well how and when people of the Sudan use their proverbs and what the proverbs mean to them. Therefore, in the first part, where I present proverbs in Sudanese culture in natural situations, I have partially applied the ethnography of speaking approach suggested by Dell Hymes (1962: 13-53), avoiding a detailed narrative of situations in which proverbs occurred, for reasons of space. Instead I recorded the proverbs in their context in living conversations, then translated each into English, and discussed their meaning with my informants in order to classify my data under subject matter. Raymond Firth explained this approach as follows:

The essential thing about a proverb is its meaning... and by this is to be understood not merely a bald and literal translation into the accustomed tongue, nor even a free version of what the words are intended to convey. The meaning of a proverb is made clear only when side by side with the translation is given a full account of the accompanying social situation... the reason for its use, its effect, and its significance in speech (1926:134)

E. Ojo Arewa and Alan Dundes have confirmed this point:

In order to study ethnography of speaking texts in their contexts one needs to ask not only for proverbs, and for what counts as a proverb, but also for information as to the other components of the situations in which proverbs are used. (1964: 71)

As I also relied on the comments of my informants, I have incorporated the oral literary criticism approach in my field research as well. I recorded not only the texts of the proverbs but also the use of these texts as part of the culture of my community in the words that people utter in the situations where they use them. Where natural situations for a given proverb's use were absent, I asked my informants to construct actual situations and circumstances in which each given proverb might be used. Their comments were also

used to analyse Sudanese proverbs in natural conversations.

I had intended at the beginning to study only Sudanese proverbs in their natural context. Later I decided that comparing them with proverbs from another culture with different values would give a better chance to bring a valuable treasure of my nation to light and help it to be more broadly understood. Therefore the second part of this study compares the concepts, meanings, and uses of Sudanese proverbs with English proverbs as expressions of two different cultures. This part is based on extensive fieldwork in the United Kingdom. To analyse my data in this section, I relied on the comments and judgements of British informants concerning the meaning and usage of English proverbs.

I spent nearly three years in the United Kingdom to investigate English proverbs and to collect my data. It was difficult if not impossible to collect proverbs in the UK in their natural context as they are hardly used. Therefore, I used questionnaires to investigate the meaning and the use of proverbs; I interviewed some individuals, both academic and non-academic and recorded their statements for analysis. I collected a large number of proverbs from educated and uneducated informants, classified my corpus and arranged it by subject matter.

In the third part of this study, I have pointed out the similarities and differences between Arabic Sudanese proverbs and English proverbs in their meaning and usage. The aim is to view the similarities and differences between these two cultures through their proverbs

and to find out how people in different cultures might share or differ in their feelings in similar given circumstances or situations.

1.2 Rationale

Proverbs as traditional wisdom are never absent from Sudanese daily speech. As a member of Sudanese society, a sharer in its values, and a participant as a proverb user, I have been surrounded with proverbs everywhere in my daily life. They are prevalent in daily conversations at home, school, and ceremonies and in all other social events.

Proverbs as spoken expressions in the daily speech of Sudanese people are a main part of Sudanese culture, which reflects all aspects of their lives. People epitomise their way of thinking, their feelings, and their ideas through proverbs. They use them to solve their daily conflicts and support their arguments. It is very rare to hear a discussion to solve a problem without a proverb being used.

Prof Awun El-Sharief Qasim, one of my informants, Professor of Arabic, Africa University, Sudan and an ex-Minister of Religious Affairs, has informed me that proverbs are in use even in Sudanese courts. Carolyn Parker points out that proverbs have been used to relieve the tensions of a conflict situation, to influence behaviour, to justify behaviour, to lend support to arguments, and to reflect the values and philosophy of those who use them (1974:4). Using proverbs as a means to solve problems in courts is also prevalent in other African societies. Finnegan (1970:408) and Arewa and Dundes [1964:70] agree that proverbs are frequently used in dispute and law cases.

Although most Sudanese proverbs are derived from common experiences, it is not claimed that they invariably convey truth and wisdom, as they vary according to the experiences that they come from and some of them contradict each other. Nevertheless, proverbs are important means for transmission of beliefs, culture and values, which reflect much of people's varied attitudes towards their surroundings. They are regarded as a sacred cultural heritage and part of tradition as well as a way of thinking. This confirms Hymes' point that "... language [and its different genres] is [are] not everywhere equivalent in role and value" [1964:39].

Proverbs also play a role of great effectiveness in the educational process. I personally used them in my classroom when I was a teacher in the Sultanate of Oman. They have high frequency of use among both educated and uneducated Sudanese, to the point that some ordinary people mix proverbs and Prophetic sayings. They are highly regarded as a means to control the behaviour of youth and to express Sudanese beliefs and values.

Abdel Rahman describes Sudanese proverbs as:

... germs of wisdom. They are un-masked and un-adulterated images of society. In them one finds people's ideas about life, the ideals and values they hold dear, and the elements they consider supreme in the spiritual as well as material life. (Sudanese Studies Annual Conference, May 1998)

They are also records of the development of Sudanese civilization throughout its history.

I strongly believe that to know people's culture and values, one should study their proverbs. As Ralph Linton says, 'The culture of a society is the way of life of its members; the collection of ideas and habits that they learn, share and transmit from

generation to generation' [1945, in Haralambos & Holborn, 2000: 884]. Sudanese people precisely reflect this comment; they express their beliefs, customs, habits, knowledge, morals and any other capabilities acquired by man in their proverbs.

The Sudanese culture deserves to be studied as other serious issues in Sudanese daily life are. Whereas researchers and writers are busy studying the causes and solutions for wars and conflicts, it is contended that studying proverbs will attract attention to the nation's values, through which people will find a way to solve conflicts with wise words instead of weapons. Sudan is known to the world as one of its problematic countries, with political conflicts and disasters made by man and nature; very little is known about Sudanese as a multicultural nation with significant cultures, where customs and values are the cornerstone of the society. Therefore, there is a great need to reflect the richness of Sudanese culture through studying its proverbs.

The importance of this study also lies in the fact that the researcher is a participant proverb user. Peter Seitel (1969: 143-161) notes that a proverb user needs to observe and understand the situation before him before he can choose a proverb that is relevant for a given problem. Roger D. Abrahams says:

In spite of the tremendous number of texts that have been assembled, we still know little of why and how people use proverbs, or anything of the range of social uses and cultural situations in which they are encountered (1972: 119).

He supports the argument for indigenous study of proverbs, adding:

Proverbs must be studied within groups which use them if we are to understand why so many diverse people have been attracted to such sententious inventions (1972:119).

As proverb users rely heavily on metaphors and similes from their surroundings, it is important for researchers to have knowledge and understanding of the realities of life, customs, mores, social values and traditions of the society that they intend to study. There is no doubt that a researcher from the society under focus is in an ideal position to reflect what is inside to the outside world.

Scholars like Arewa and Dundes (1964), Finnegan (1979), Firth (1926), Ogbalu (1965), Herzog (1936) and Seitel (1969) have made significant studies that reflect the importance of proverbs in given societies. However, there is still a lack of area studies of proverbs in their particular natural situations. Therefore, there is a great necessity for this type of research.

Finnegan (1970: 394) notes that despite the importance of proverbs in African societies, there are no satisfactory investigations dealing with their use. Arewa (1970:430] has argued that proverb texts are intensively recorded but they are not treated in interactional settings. Abrahams comments in this regard:

In spite of the tremendous number of texts that have been assembled, we still know little of why and how people use proverbs, or anything of the range of social uses and cultural situations in which they are encountered (1972: 119).

Scholarly works that have investigated the use of proverbs include Arewa and Dundes' *Ethnography of proverb speaking among the Yoruba* (1964), Herzog and Blooah's *Study*

of *Jabo proverbs in Liberia* (1936), John Messenger's *Study of proverb use in Anang-Ibibio traditional courts* (1959), Joyce Penfield's *Proverb speaking among the Igbo* (1983), and *Proverbs and the structure of metaphor among the Haya of Tanzania* by Peter Seitel (1972). But as Kwesi Yankah mentions,

... proverbs cited in most of these works, are either based on hypothetical contexts, or are instances of recall by scholars or informants, and do not consistently reflect exactness of wording or phraseology in actual life situations. (*De Proverbio*, vol 6, NO 2, 2000: 1)

The present research is significant as it is the first attempt to study and analyse Sudanese proverbs in their natural context. Sudanese proverbs have a remarkable identity among other proverbs in Arabic. In spite of this and the great importance of proverbs in the Sudanese daily conversations and their roles in daily life, little attention has been paid to their formal study. The only steps taken in this regard are the useful collections of Sudanese proverbs by Badri, *Mujama' al-amthal al-shabiya* (*Collection of Traditional Proverbs*, 1963, 1995), and six pages of El-Dhareer's book, *Al-A'rabiya fi Al-Sudan, Arabic in Sudan* (1922), in which he compared Sudanese proverbs with classical Arabic proverbs. (The latter book was not available to the researcher, but information about its contents was recorded in the Sudanese National Records in Khartoum.) More recently, there is a valuable collection of proverbs from the Western and Central Sudan by Adam and Tum (2002). Suleiman Yahya (1999) has also investigated the woman's image in proverbs in Darfur. Most of the proverbs I analyse are in Badri's collection, and the collection of Adam and Tum. Both collections contain proverbs from the Darfur region.

Proverbs from the Bible and the Quran are analysed elsewhere to illustrate the similarities or differences of moral and religious subjects in the spiritual heritage of the two different cultures.¹ Kassis (1994) has already compared the Book of Proverbs and Arabic proverbial wisdom. The present study highlights differences and striking similarities by comparing proverbs of a highly conservative Afro-Arab society with ones of a European culture.

In spite of the importance of these studies, in none of them does a participant proverb user compare concepts and uses of proverbs across different cultures. It is hoped that this study, significant in investigating a large corpus of proverbs in natural contexts, will open a window for further comparative studies.

1.3. Scope of the study

I started to collect the Sudanese Arabic proverbs at an early stage of life as I personally have participated in most of the events where proverbs were used. I also used them in my classroom when I was a teacher. Most proverbs used here were collected in Nyala town in the Western Sudan and in Omdurman, the sister town of Khartoum, the national capital of the Sudan. I have spent most of my life between these two places; as a proverb user I wanted to bring this valuable part of my culture to the world.

Being a member of this society, born into a culture of high proverb frequency, enables me to show the true picture of the reality of experience as it is lived by people who use proverbs in this culture. Reflecting much of its attitudes, values and cultural traditions,

¹ Despite the question raised by Whybrary (1991) about the validity of comparing biblical material with that of different cultures, and al-Dhubaib's (1966) view that it is irrelevant to compare popular Arabic

they are used as lessons in good manners and devices to control people's behaviour, so they deserve to be studied and brought to light.

1.4. The Corpus and sources

What I use as a corpus in this study are 842 proverbs currently in use with high frequency in Sudanese society. I have classified them by subject matter and considered each subject separately in order to compare or contrast English and Sudanese proverbs.

First, collected comments and analysed the corpus of Sudanese Arabic proverbs to show how people value their proverbs. The following main themes have been selected for detailed comparison:

Educational principles; God and religious life; family and blood relationships; company and friendship; neighbourhood relationships; marriage and women; experience and wisdom; contentment and patience; silence and speech; solidarity; poverty and wealth; and casteism, class polarization and social injustice.

Second, I compare and contrast the context, use and function of language of selected Sudanese proverbs with English proverbs. I have based my analysis on viewpoints of members of the two societies. English proverbs that are equivalent to or in contrast with most of these Sudanese proverbs were drawn from informants in the United Kingdom. They were elicited from members of British society, and from textual sources of different kinds: dictionaries, religious texts and the Bible.

1.5 Organisation

The rest of this study will be organised as follows:

Chapter 2 contains a survey of relevant literature on proverbs.

Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology and materials that I used in this study (area of the study, population, primary data collection, context of the questionnaire, secondary data, problems of data collection, analysis techniques).

In Chapter 4, I provide a general description of the social structure of Sudanese society in the area of the study.

Chapter 5 deals in detail with meaning and function of Sudanese proverbs

Chapter 6 covers the role and use of the proverbs.

Chapter 7 compares Sudanese and English proverbs. In this chapter, I will also provide a group of equivalent or opposite proverbs.

In Chapter 8, I will review the result of this study, draw conclusions from them and recommend some directions for coming research on proverbs.

The chapters are followed by appendices containing lists of proverbs, index of keywords, and a bibliography.

Chapter Two

Literature review

1. Definitions and currency of Proverbs

Proverbs exist in all human languages, but they may vary in their importance in each culture. They have high frequency in many Arab and African societies as they are considered as important devices that reflect cultural wisdom. As there is general agreement that proverbs are widely known in all languages, it is very important to define what proverbs are. According to The New Oxford Dictionary (1998), a proverb is “a short pithy saying in general use, stating a general truth or a piece of advice”. This definition is developed in the Oxford English Dictionary (2001, on-line) which defines a proverb as “a short pithy saying in common and recognised use; a concise sentence, often metaphorical or alliterative in form, which is held to express some truth ascertained by experience or observation and familiar to all”.

Some English proverbs in themselves are peoples’ definitions of a proverb, like:

“Proverbs are the wisdom of the streets“, "Proverbs are the children of experience", "All the good sense of the world runs into proverbs“.

Wolfgang Mieder defines a proverb as:

“A concise statement of an apparent truth which has currency among the people” (Simson 1991 on-line). Mieder performed an interesting survey, asking 55 non-academics to write their definitions of a proverb. He found that “from four to twenty times in the collected definitions:

a proverb is “a phrase, saying, truth, morals, experience, lessons, and advice concerning life and which has been handed from generation to generation (*Proverbs Are Never out of Season, 1993*)

Among Arab scholars, Anis Freyha (1974: 1) says,

Mathal (Proverb) is from a common Semitic root signifying simile or comparison. Many definitions of a proverb have been given, none of which holds true of every proverb. The difficulty lies in the nature of proverbs, which contain all manner of ideas that touch upon the whole round of human experience

Many other scholars continue to find their own definitions of proverbs, but it is difficult to give one exact definition. Archer Taylor (1931) defined a proverb in more than 200 pages, and he concluded that it is impossible to give a meaningful definition of it. Taylor noted that ‘... an incommunicable quality tells us this sentence is proverbial and that one is not ‘ (1931: 3).

Defining a proverb is an old problem. Mieder states:

Not only did such great minds as Aristotle and Plato occupy themselves with the question of what constitutes a proverb, but early Greek scholars in particular wrestled with this seemingly insurmountable task as well. (*Popular Views of the Proverbs 1999-DP Journal, V5*).

Many other scholars have tried to define proverbs; no matter what variant definitions these scholars adduced, they are unanimously agreed on what constitutes a proverb

Mieder says:

And yet despite their erudite and important new definitions all must eventually agree with contention of the old master proverb scholar Archer Taylor that, “an incommunicable quality tells us this sentence is proverbial and that one is not” (1999:3).

I assume not only that scholars and academics have this sense, but also that non-academic and ordinary people can recognise the proverbiality of an expression.

Arewa and Dundes support this assumption. They say:

A child knows that the proverb used by a scolding parent was not made up by that parent. It is a proverb from the cultural past whose voice speaks truth in traditional form. It is the "One ", the "Elders ", or the "They "in "They say ", who direct. The parent is but the instrument through which the proverb speaks to the audience (1964:70).

It is clear that there is a universal agreement about what constitutes a proverb. They have existed in all languages, and there is no nation without proverbs. People have used them to express their understanding of their beliefs, values and their surroundings in ordinary daily conversations. Proverbs were transmitted by oral tradition as a result of general experiences before they were put on paper. As part of tradition, they are effective elements that transmit human culture. They are historical measurements of human social development, connecting the past with the present. Proverbs fill an important role in the transmission of beliefs, knowledge, and social values. They express nations' principles and concepts about God and how people should behave towards friends, neighbours, parents, and in all situations in daily life. They are connected with people's identity and roots, showing people's understanding of their language and culture to the point that all nations have considered proverbs as part of their national heritage.

In some cultures proverbs are a rich part of every day life, while in others they are considered as old fashioned. People may unconsciously use them, with no awareness that they are employing proverbs in their speech.

Although in the Sudan proverbs have very high frequency of usage, in the United Kingdom it is uncommon to hear people use them in their daily speech. Some of my British informants considered them as old fashioned and as evidence of primitive thinking and uncivilised attitudes. Some university students told me that uncreative people rely on proverbs as they are ready-made expressions and those who do not want to update themselves with modern civilization use them. Others connected them with values and said only conservative people in the West use them.

However, Mieder's survey of 55 non-academic definitions has shown that proverbs are still seen as useful in technological societies (1999: 6). I support Mieder's finding from my own experience during my stay in the United Kingdom. I can argue that proverbs are still in use in Britain. In the year 2000/1, I used to go to the Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park in London every Sunday. There I talked about proverbs in the thoughts of many people in Sudan and Arab cultures in general. I discussed how people connect them with moral virtues, wisdom and even with religious faith in some societies. I then asked people to tell me what people in the West think about proverbs. Some young informants told me that they do not use proverbs, but they understand them. A young teacher said that he uses them in his class to motivate his students. He also told me "I agree with you, proverbs can be used as social control for our behaviour about many things and I find it is a pity that people do not use them".

An old man, who described himself as an ex-Londoner and a resident in Oxford, described proverbs as timeless values that are relevant to almost any age and any time. In contrast M, a young university student, described proverbs as old-fashioned and people who use them as lazy idiots, who depend on ready-made words or phrases because they

do not have the courage to express their own opinions. Nevertheless, I told M the literal meaning of four Sudanese proverbs and she told me the equivalent English versions of three of them:

‘A man is known by the company he keeps.’

‘When in Rome do as the Romans do.’

‘Many hands make light work.’

M explained to me that she has some other proverbs somewhere in her mind, but she could not remember them for she has never used them.

Although this research will not deal with proverbs in the British media or formal conversations, it is worth mentioning some examples to show that proverbs are still in use the UK.

In November 2001 in a BBC television program, an announcer was talking to the then Foreign Minister Robin Cook about his expectations of Afghani leaders who were meeting in Berlin at that time. He said to him:

‘You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink’

I had also heard my manager at work in London in Marylebone Project using proverbial language in a meeting to describe the difficulties of a staff member in a new position. She said that, ‘R has jumped from the frying pan into the fire’.

Research reveals the love of verbal expressions as one of the main characteristics of Arab culture. Robert A. Barakat notes that:

Of the several genres of oral literature common in the Arab world, none is more pervasive than proverbs. (1980:1)

Using proverbs in Arab society shows the fluency of the speaker or writer and his ability to express himself briefly in an eloquent rhetorical manner. Barakat says: “Arabs take vast pride in being able to invoke proverbs when the need arises and pay great respect to any person who is capable of using these sayings correctly” (1980:7)

I assume that proverbs are like poetry. They are closer to the heart of Arabs than other heritages long before Islam. H.R.P. Dickson (1951:366) wrote that “The Arab is forever quoting proverbs or sayings of some poet or other, and he seems to enjoy this almost as much as story telling”. Abdelkafi (1968) supports the claim that Arabs make more use of proverbs than most other nations. According to Barakat, the wide use and dissemination of Arabic proverbs may be attributed to several factors inherent in Moslem and non-Moslem Arab society and culture. Two of the factors that he mentions are:

The emphasis Arabs place on learning wisdom, not necessarily derived from institutional knowledge, and the respect Moslems have for the *Hadith** of the Prophet Mohamed and the *Sunna** associated with him“ (1980:8).

The general tendency to respect traditions in Arab culture is the main reason that the Quran and *Hadith* confirm its positive side and encourage Muslims to keep it. Although proverbs are not equal in their values and popularity, Arabs consider them as a main part of tradition. It is very common to hear uneducated old people in Sudan mixing the Prophetic sayings and Sudanese proverbs. This mixture between Prophetic sayings and proverbs is another form of the respect and love for proverbs among the people of Sudan.

Proverbs as means of expression in any culture are also employed pragmatically. They are used: to comment on social conflict situations, to criticise people or events in an indirect and metaphorical way, to counsel when a situation requires it, to criticize

unacceptable attitudes, to discipline children and youth, to direct certain human behaviour, or to question old or new values. Proverbs name social conditions and they are used to make people's opinions and feelings known to others and make people effective in their roles.

Sudanese proverbs, like all other traditional proverbs, come from many different sources. Some proverbs are drawn from general facts, like "*al iteh\ad qowah* (Unity is strength). This type of proverb is common in all cultures. Some proverbs are drawn from the reality of life and day-to-day experiences, like this common proverb: "*al wilada ma gasiya, gasiya al tarbiya*" (Giving a birth to a child is not difficult, but the upbringing is). That is to say, it is not difficult to get pregnant and to give birth to a baby, but it is difficult to discipline the child. This proverb is used to emphasize the importance of teaching children good morals and refers to the difficulties of this task.

Proverbs from different cultures may reveal cultural sameness in how people express their ideas under similar circumstances. Yusuf Y. K. (1998:39) supports this claim; in her analysis of rape-related proverbs in Anglo-American and Yoruba culture, she notes that, "proverbs from different cultures may express similar attitudes towards a particular phenomenon."

Seitel has mentioned that:

If folklore is important to the understanding of cultural system in general, we may observe that it is especially significant in Sub-Sahara Africa, where it is reported to play an extreme and highly valued role in communication (1972:3).

Ruth Finnegan (1970:408) supports this view regarding African societies. She argues that in many African societies, proverbs are so important that the lack of knowledge of how to

interpret them causes a low level of comprehension in many interactional events in those societies.

Ryszard Pachocinski has confirmed this, stating of the use of proverbs:

In Black Africa, for all the urgent development, the blood of proverbs still flows swiftly in the veins of a person's daily life. Proverbs enshrine much of the cultural heritage of the people, their traditions, history, wisdom, and ethics. They are viable means for transmission of culture from generation to generation; otherwise norms, values and beliefs would have died [1996:1].

This view may also be applied to Sudanese society. As mentioned before, Sudan, located in the heart of Africa with all-Arab characteristics in the North, has combined African and Arab values to create its significant culture and identity. The historical debate about Sudanese identity is a matter beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning the fact that Sudan population is a mixture of different races and ethnic groups; some are from local regions and others have migrated from neighbouring countries. This mixture has formed the Sudanese population. The Sudanese culture is a mixture of Afro-Arab traditions and customs. A mixture of Arab and African tribes is found in the North, while African groups dominate the South. Although many different languages are spoken in Sudan, Arabic is the official language in the country; it is the main spoken language in the North. That is to say, there are two main groups in Sudan: Arabs and non-Arabs.

This study is concerned with Sudanese-Arabic proverbs. It does not include any other Sudanese proverbs, populations or areas where Arabic is not the first language. The fact that there are many different spoken languages in Sudan will not disprove the Arabic language of proverbs in the society, which are the focus of the study. It is essential to

mention El-Dhareer's work, *Al a'rabeah fi Al Sudan* (1922:24), in which he dealt with Sudanese dialect, garments, proverbs, and traditions in six pages. He compared Arabic Sudanese proverbs with their classical Arabic equivalents to verify that Sudanese proverbs are Arabic ones derived from Arabic language or Arab traditions.

As mentioned before, the Sudanese social structure acquired its culture from the main characteristics of both African and Arab societies. Sudanese, like other Arabs and most Africans, consider proverbs as a sacred social heritage that cannot be divided from their daily life. William Bascom [1965:470] cites proverbs as the most valued type of verbal art among Africans. This fact applies to verbal art among the Sudanese as well. The Sudanese, especially the elderly, tend to use proverbs to display knowledge in their conversations and reflect their status as ones who know more about a given topic.

In the Sudan people tend to express their feelings and to convey educational messages to youngsters and youth through their proverbs. They console, criticize, express their frustration, and even justify their wrong behaviour and judgement by quoting one or another proverb. Sudanese, like their fellows in other Arab societies, are known for their tendency to justify their negative attitudes towards women and authorise their behaviour by relying on proverbs, which of course are created by men themselves. The proverb *al-mara lau bigat fas ma taksir al-ras*, (A woman, even if she is an axe, will never break a head) (241) has its equivalents in all Arab societies to show women as passive and weak creatures. This area needs separate research, but it is worthwhile to mention the study by Hussein Nashwan (2000:127) who believes that proverbs are important weapons in men's hands within "a particular society". He says, "In a society governed by males, man uses

proverbs to justify his deeds..." and points out, "There are proverbs that try to socially legalize domestic violence against women".

Within the past few decades, studying proverbs has become a very attractive and popular field for many scholars. They are concerned with proverb studies in many different ways. Some are concerned with definitions of proverbs, including E. Ojo Arewa (1983); Archer Taylor (1931); Peter Grzybek (1994); and Wolfgang Mieder (1999). Some are concerned with the function of proverbs, like Alan Dundes (1980); E. M. Albert (1972); Roger Abrahams (1972); and William Bascom (1965). Al-Maydani (1913) and Archer Taylor (1962) are among those who are concerned with the origins, content and style of proverbs.

Whatever the field of interest in proverbs, studying them is a matter of great value in understanding the cultures of a wide variety of different societies, for proverbs like other oral traditions reflect people's values, the way they think and their attitudes towards their surroundings. Parker B. Richard (1964b) has used proverbs to analyse central concepts in Zande ideology and S. J. Mohammad (1988) has employed proverbs to show the status of women and attitudes toward them in Arab culture with reference to Iraqi society. Weber (1998) likewise has utilised proverbs to show cultural differences in how Chinese and American citizens view risks and risk taking. She says "Proverbs are part of a nation's culture and reflect the nation's beliefs and values", continuing, "By looking at proverbs, we were able to show that long-standing cultural differences are one reason that the Chinese are more risk-seeking than Americans when it comes to financial issues". She

shows that in the collectivist culture of China, where commitments to family cause people to take greater financial risks; whereas in America, an individualistic culture, people have to be more careful financially because they do not have the “cushion” of a social network to fall back on.

Ziyad (1992) agrees that traditional proverbs reflect social life and human behaviour in a given society. He notes that women are shown by Egyptian proverbs as having an oppressed status in the society. Many similar studies have been undertaken to reflect women’s status and attitudes towards them in other Arab societies. One can say that proverbs reflect the true image of a cultural system for any nation, especially where proverbs are dominant in daily conversation such as Arab and African cultures.

Although little attention has been paid to the study of Sudanese proverbs, other Arabic proverbs were extensively collected and classified even before Islam. One of the well-known collections of classical Arabic proverbs was written in the eighth century: *Kitab al-amthal* (Book of Proverbs), by Mufaddal b. Salama, who died in the second century of the *Hijra*. Nevertheless, in spite of this early effort to collect Arabic proverbs, they have never been analysed or critically studied. ‘A. ‘Abd al-Rahman (1983:13-4) has mentioned that Arabic proverbs were collected and classified both in the past and the present, but they have not become the subject of scholarly studies.

Although traditional behaviour is highly respected by Moslem and non-Moslem Arabs and Islam encourages Moslems to conform to traditional behaviour, this fact has not acquired enough attention to be studied as an important factor in Moslem heritage. Franz Rosenthal (1989:378) says, “Proverbs played a significant role in Muslim civilization and

ought to be more widely and more intensively studied than has so far been the case”.

Barakat (1980:5) and M. A. F. Yassin (1988:59) share the same view in regards to modern Arabic proverbs. However, there are some comparative collections of modern proverbs in different Arab countries. For example, al-Tikriti (1986) compared proverbs of Baghdad with proverbs of eleven Arab countries. Classical and modern *Arabic proverbs* have also been compared with English proverbs and those in other European languages as collections in the same way by scholars including M. Haqqi (1973), Y. al-Bustani and S al Din al-Bustani (1987) and T. Kilani and N. Ashour (1991).

Throughout the Arab world, the study of proverbs has been concerned with content, form, and structural analysis. Only Barakat (1980) has dealt with Arabic proverbs in their context. The only other attempts to study Arabic proverbs in their cultural contexts are by Parker (1958) and Zenner (1970). Both studies are based on Frayah’s collection of Lebanese proverbs, drawn from a small village called Ras el-Metn. The population of this village is partly Christian and partly Druze. (See Frayha’s introduction, vol. 1). It is worth mentioning some attempts to compare Arabic proverbs with biblical materials, like Kassis’ (1997) interesting critical and tradition-historical study of the Book of Proverbs and Arabic proverbial wisdom. There are other similar studies about Biblical proverbs like Popa (1999), Wiebe (1992), and Pan (1987) which are beyond the scope of this study.

As stated by many scholars, there are extensive collections of proverbs in many societies that do not refer to the situations in which they are used. Many studies have relied on textual resources or proverbs drawn from the memory of elderly members of a given culture.

2.2 Sources of traditional proverbs:

Although there is a universal understanding and a shared common sense of what constitutes a proverb, tracing back its origins has proved to be a difficult task and its origins remain ambiguous. Traditional proverbs have stemmed from various sources; often connected with individuals' experiences, observations, or general facts from different surroundings. People then refer to them on similar occasions and transmit them from generation to generation until they become part of their heritage. Many individual authors, poets, politicians or wise people have contributed a great deal to all nations' literatures by creating new proverbs, which add to the national heritage of a given nation. That is to say, a proverb is first uttered by an individual and in time it becomes part of the traditions. Undoubtedly, Christians quote from the Bible and Muslims quote from the Quran when they express their religious beliefs. However, investigating the origins of Arabic or English proverbs is beyond the scope of this study.

The word proverb in English is translated *mathal* in Arabic, pronounced *masal* by many dialects including Sudanese dialect. The word *mathal* means simile in reference to the relation between a given fact *mathal* and the simile. *Mathal* also means example or sameness; therefore, people use it to compare things.

Arabs were fond of using simile in their arguments to strengthen their speech even before Islam. The Quran used simile and the word *mathal* as well on many different occasions to illustrate situations to Arabs, to advise or warn them. For example, *Surah 18, al- kahf*, verse 32 reads:

(واضربْ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا رَجُلَيْنِ)

“And present to them an example of two men: ...”

Surah 39 az-Zumar verse 29 reads:

(ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا)

“Allah presents an example: ...”

And *Surah 43, az-Zukhruf* verse 57 reads:

(وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا)

“And when the son of Mary was presented as an example”.

In Arab culture, the word *mathal* is connected with wisdom: *h'ikma*. However, there is a clear difference between *h'ikma* and *mathal*, as *h'ikma* is always connected with facts, wisdom, and lessons, and this is not always the case with *mathal*. At the same time *mathal* is often related to a local society or a small community while *h'ikma* might concern a universal issue that reveals lessons to all humans regardless of their customs, location or traditions. The Quran and the Prophet's sayings are referred to by Muslims as *h'ikma*. Significant individuals like the Prophet Solomon and Luqman are referred to as wise men. In Sudanese traditional tales some characters like Sheikh Farah wad Taktook and Abu Zaid al Hilali are referred to as wise men as well.

Chapter Three

Methods and Materials

This study consists of three sections. Each section has a different aim and methodology.

Section 1 presents Arabic Sudanese proverbs in their natural contexts in daily conversations with explanations of their meaning and circumstances in which they are used. The ethnography of speaking was the approach that I followed and comments of my informants were intensively used in my analysis.

This section was based on extensive fieldwork in Sudan concentrating on Nyala and Omdurman. I attempted to record large numbers of proverbs when people use them. They understand the meaning of each proverb they use, knowing to whom they quote them and why. The researcher as a member of the society recorded this part of the data collection at an earlier stage of life. I initially collected them, as I was fond of the use of metaphor implied in proverbs. Later I used them in my classes when I was a teacher in the Sultanate of Oman, for educational purposes: to motivate my students and to draw their attention to comparisons between Omani and Sudanese culture.

I also collected a considerable number of proverbs during my fieldwork in Sudan on many different occasions including weddings and memorial gatherings. I collected others during direct interviews with people who are known for their knowledge of proverbs and national heritages. Among them were Dr. Malik Elzaki, Professor Awn Elshareif Qasim, Dr. Ahmed Abdel Qadir Arbab, Dr. Abdullal Ali Ibrahim, Mr. Eltaib Mohammed Eltaib and Mr. Ahmed Ibrahim Direaj. I also discussed with these experts the meaning and use of a large number of proverbs in my *corpus*. Most of these

interviews were tape-recorded.

I was unable to record some of the proverbs that I know are in use, so I asked expert informants about the rules of these proverbs, their usage and their meaning. The data was either tape-recorded during interviewing or recorded in a written form by the researcher while I was interacting with my informants. As the spontaneous nature of proverbs' circulation makes it difficult to tape record them like other traditions, for example poetry or traditional stories, the interviews in the tape-recorded data were based on discussing the use and the meaning of proverbs collected by the researcher from other informants and experts.

As Finnegan notes,

Proverbs are used on particular occasions, by individuals in particular contexts and their wit, their attractiveness, their insights, even their meaning must be seen as arising from the context (1972: 425).

I incorporated this principle in my field method. Ethnographic techniques suggested by Hymes (1962) have been employed and literary criticism is utilized to draw out the significance of proverbs from their natural contexts.

As people of the Sudan, specifically in Darfur, are known for their tendency to use proverbs in daily conversations, it is impossible to minimize the number of situations in which they quote proverbs. Therefore, this study does not in any way attempt to deal with every proverb ever quoted by the Arabic speakers in Sudan. The situations that I have mentioned in this study are just examples to help readers to understand how people in this society use their proverbs.

Local media encourages peoples' positive attitude towards their heritage. My grandfather, an educationist who died in September 1995, broadcast some of the most successful radio programs about Darfur folklore, especially the field of proverbs; other experts also have similar programs. Unfortunately, I could not get access to any of the recorded programs from the archives due to strict bureaucracy in the system and misunderstandings about the intentions of the researcher, who has had to carry out this research outside the country at private expense. During my fieldwork in many different situations, my intentions were viewed as a criticism of social values, specifically when I was discussing the social attitudes towards women expressed in Sudanese proverbs. Unfortunately, there was confusion between comments on social values, traditions and what were considered as beliefs or religious matters.

To fully understand Sudanese proverbs we need to find out from the people how they use their proverbs. To achieve this objective, I obtained the views of some Sudanese who are known in the area for their understanding of this part of Sudanese culture; I therefore present selected interviews I held with some of them. The interviews in this section were carried out in Arabic, I later transcribed the tape-recorded data into a written form to be analysed. Table 1 shows the questions that I used in direct interviews with some Sudanese informants.

Table 1:

1	How do people in the Sudan view their proverbs?
2	What are the origins of Sudanese proverbs?
3	Are proverbs still in use among educated people in the Sudan?
4	What are the roles of proverbs in Sudanese society?
5	When do people use proverbs?
6	Why do people use proverbs instead of direct sentences?
7	Do people accept proverbs that criticize their behaviour?

To make the interviews more effective and allow the informants to express their views informally, these questions were not necessarily presented in the same order or same words.

An interview with Dr. Malik Elzaki (tape-recorded):

This interview was held on 25 February 2002 in Dr. Elzaki's house in Omdurman city. He is a popular figure for his interest in Sudanese culture. He has many radio and TV programs in this area.

Researcher: Do you think that proverbs have an important role in Sudanese culture?

Dr. Malik: Proverbs are the mirrors that reflect human culture. If we want to understand the culture in a given society, we have to study its proverbs as any nation has its own characteristics that reflect their lives and environmental surroundings.

Proverbs reflect the environment in which people live. Using metaphors and similes in Arabic proverbs, for example, shows different characteristics of Arab culture even preceding Islam, such as an Arab's pride in his loyalty to his tribe and descriptions of his people in terms of bravery, generosity and honour. Those customs and traditions came to Sudan with early Arabs who settled and mixed with the original citizens, resulting in many different tribes having a mixture of Afro-Arab blood that is known today as Sudanese society. Therefore, the identity of the people of Sudan is a mixture of African and Arab. From this environment, people drew their proverbs; and the reflection of their environment is very clear in Sudanese proverbs. Herders' environment for example, is clearly reflected in their proverbs. They draw metaphors and similes from their surroundings; to describe a woman as pretty they say a filly and they describe a brave man as a lion. A weak and cowardly man is a hyena, a malicious person is a fox and a patient man is described as a camel. They advise their youth to have big houses, sharp swords, to look after orphans, to honour their guests and to be generous with strangers.

Researcher: Do young generations have the same attitude towards these values?

Dr. Malik: It depends on the environment in which they live; in big towns, they consider it as an extravagance. Examine this saying:

تراه إذا جنته منهلاً كأنك نطلبه الذي أنت سأله

Trahu ida jiatahu mutahlilan, kanaka tat'iyhu aldi anta sailhu

(You find him jubilant when you ask him for a favor, as if you were the giver.) (758)

In our time, we consider this behaviour as ideal; this generation may have the same values, but they express them according to modern life.

Researcher: Apart from the Quran and the Prophetic sayings, what are the origins of Sudanese proverbs?

Dr. Malik: People have drawn their proverbs from ancestors and from their daily experiences. Proverbs are the children of experience. Let us examine these proverbs:

شجره كان مالت بتكي في اخيو

Al- shajara inn malat titaki a'la ukhtah

'If a tree leans, it will rest on its sister' (it will lean on another tree next to it) (642)

This observation is from daily experience; when a person is in need, his people will support him. People vouch for each other as a kind of solidarity; what we call joint liability. They express their solidarity in these eloquent sayings:

مرفعين قتلوا أسد

Marfa'eanean qatalo assad

'Two hyenas killed a lion' (741)

اليد الواحده ما بتصفق

Al yadd al wah'da ma bits'afiq

'One hand will not clap' (you cannot clap using only one hand) (644)

Another interview with Dr. Malik will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 6.

The second part of this study is based on extensive fieldwork by the researcher in the United Kingdom. Data were collected from different kinds of textual sources and elicited from various groups of British citizens. The researcher designed a questionnaire to draw comments from native informants about the currency, meaning and use of proverbs.

Informants were British citizens in London and Brighton, including people from many different towns in the United Kingdom whom I met in London. Most of my informants were visitors to the Speaker's Corner, British Library readers or people in public places

like markets and universities. I also visited three churches in London where informants talked about Biblical proverbs as well as traditional proverbs. I managed to tape-record only three interviews, but there was a larger response from the questionnaires. Comments from some students from Westminster University, London University and Sussex University were taken into account as well. Particularly in the discussions that took place in the Hyde Park at the Speaker's Corner, a great deal of data was collected especially about the currency of proverbs in the United Kingdom, the meaning and use of proverbs. Table 2 shows the questions that I used in direct interviews with informants in the United Kingdom.

Table 2:

1. Are proverbs still in use in British culture?
2. Do English proverbs reflect British values?
3. Do you use proverbs? If so, how often do you use them?
4. In what kinds of situation are proverbs used?
5. What are the roles of proverbs in your society?
6. How do you respond if a person quotes a proverb to you?
7. Do you accept proverbs that criticize your behaviour?

Further data was collected through questionnaires. Questions were constructed to find out if proverbs are still in use in Britain and to draw out similarities and differences between English and Sudanese proverbs. The proverbs were then classified and many different examples and situations were analysed. As the proverbs represent all aspects of human life, it would be difficult if not impossible to limit them to specific subject matters. However, for the purpose of this work, it was obviously necessary to deal with proverbs that represent people's culture and values as much as possible. The analysis of this corpus met the aims of the research.

Population of the study:

Respondents in the U.K. fieldwork were adult members of the culture of the area of the study. At the beginning, I did a pilot survey where I divided my informants into three age groups: 18-30, 31-40 and above 41. I found that there was no significant difference in views between my informants in the first two age groups, so I decided to allocate them to two age groups: 18-40 and above 41 years old. All informants in the United Kingdom were native English speakers. Unlike those in the Sudan, none of them were identified as experts on proverbs, with the exception of those I visited in their churches and a few I met at the Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park, and ones who were related to my work place. The researcher found it difficult to meet with proverbs experts in the United Kingdom.

Chapter Four

The Sudanese and their Society

Since proverbs are derived from the culture of the society in which they are current, it is important to present an outline discussion of Sudanese society, social structure and culture. Although there are many tribal languages in Sudan and they have their own proverbs, this study is limited to Arabic Sudanese proverbs, which will be referred to as Sudanese proverbs. They are used by a large proportion of the population whose first language is Arabic, who will be referred to as Sudanese or the people of Sudan. The study therefore does not refer to the group of Sudanese who do not speak or understand Arabic.

1.4 Land

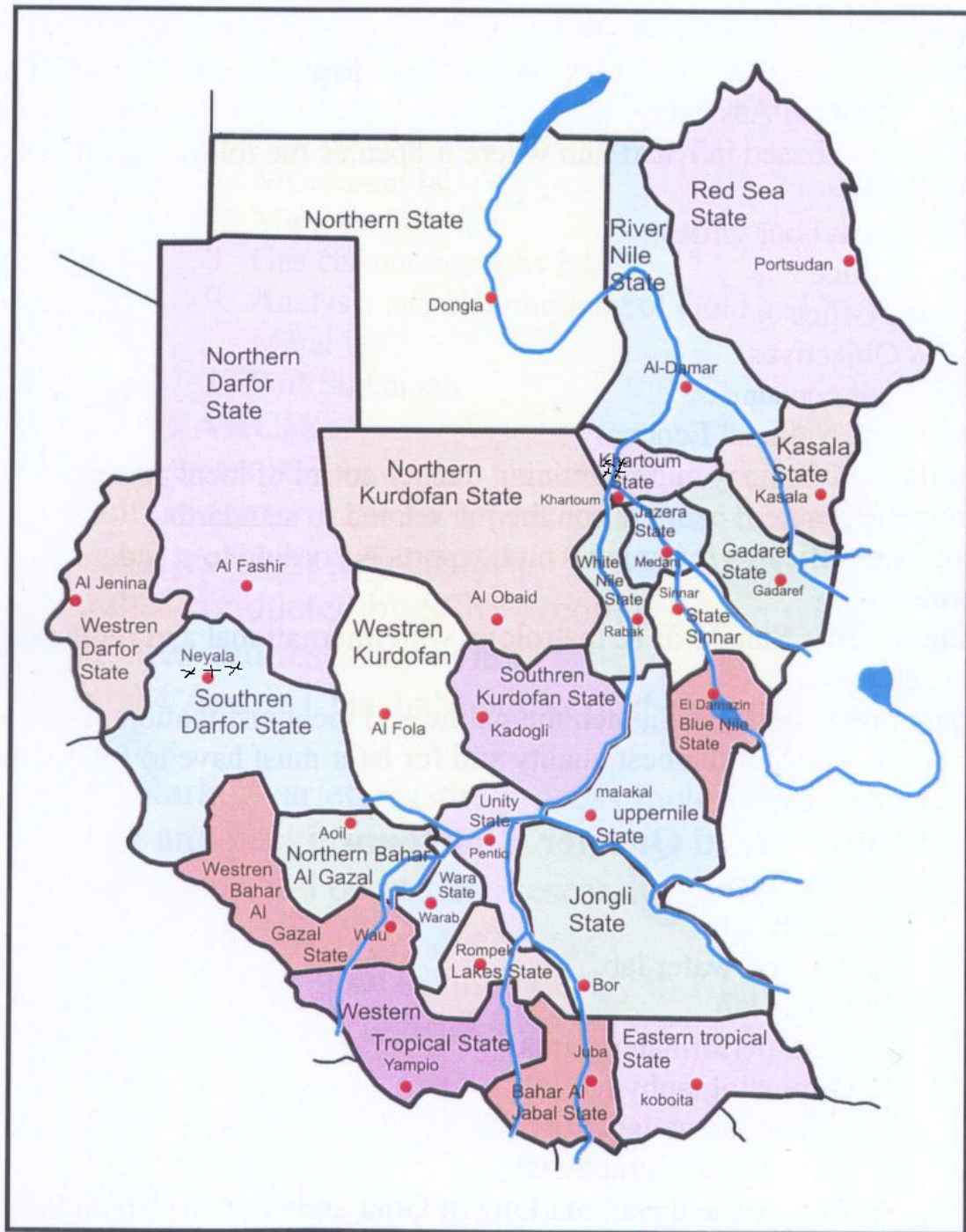
Sudan, located in north-east Africa, is the largest of the African and Arab countries. It is bordered by nine countries, Egypt and Libya in the North; Chad and Central African Republic in the West; Zaire, Uganda and Kenya in the South; Ethiopia and Eritrea in the East. It also neighbours Saudi Arabia across the Red Sea to the East. It lies between latitudes 3 and 22 degrees north of the Equator and 22 and 38 degrees longitude east of Greenwich. With an area of 2.5 million square kilometres, about 8.3% of the total area of the African

continent, Sudan is among the ten largest countries in the world, and one of the most diverse countries in Africa. It is located in the tropical area of the continent and its climate varies between Equatorial in the southern part, Savannah in the middle and

Continental in the northern part. The Red Sea area on the eastern border is characterized by a Mediterranean climate with winter rainfall and similar weather is found in Jabal Mara in the western part of the country.

The following map shows Sudan with its twenty-six states; the areas of the study, Nyala town in the Western Sudan and Omdurman, are indicated on the map.

SUDAN



2.4 People, Languages and Religions

Sudan is a multiethnic nation comprising over six hundred tribes and more than fifty ethnic groups with more than 400 languages and dialects, but Arabic is the primary and official language in the country. English is the common second language in the South and in the North it is associated with the formal school system and economic sector.

However, the current government has adopted an Arabization system in higher schools and universities. Other languages include Bedawiye, used by the Beja and various dialects of Niger-Kordofanian and Nilo-Saharan languages. Dinka language for example is the first language of more than one million people and includes numerous dialects of its own.

As mentioned earlier in this study, the researcher does not intend to deal with Sudanese identity in this work, but it is important to throw some light on Sudanese cultural and social structure to explain how circumstances including geography, ethnicity and culture have formed this nation, the people of Sudan. Sudanese social structure is a mixture of African, Arab and Islamic cultures. Over many centuries, members of ethnic groups or even whole tribes have crossed into the territory of Sudan, culturally mixed with the native population and shared their history with them. Islam has played a vital role in uniting those groups and creating the Sudanese nation with its unique social structure. The majority of the population are Muslims and there are relatively few

Christians, most living in the South in addition to adherents to various indigenous religions.

3.4 The social structure

A brief description of Sudanese social structure might help the reader to understand the cultural background that is relevant to the use of proverbs in Sudanese society. The traditional social structure in Sudan is a hierarchical system based on the nuclear family as well as the extended family. The family has always been regarded as the cornerstone of Sudanese society. All members of the society occupy a number of social roles and statuses regardless of age. These social roles regulate and organize the behaviour of children, husband, wife, parent and grandparent. Children are socialized to accept the nature of the extended family along with other unquestioned social and cultural values. In some families, relatives from different generations live in the same household and are looked after by one person, often the father or the eldest son in the family. Children understand at an early stage of their life that they will be obliged to take care of their parents in old age, as well as other relatives who may not have children. They learn how their parents look after grandparents when they listen to their mothers quoting proverbs to prepare them for their responsibilities in future. A commonly heard one is:

متين تكبر تشيل جملي

Metean takbar tasheel h'imli?

When will you grow up to take my load (responsibilities)? (139)

This proverb is widely used by mothers when they praise their sons.

Another proverb describes a successful and patient son as:

جمال شيل

Jamal sheal

A carrier camel (140)

This means that the son cares for his family and relatives and takes responsibility for solving their problems.

Sudanese whatever their different beliefs and tribes agree that elders must be looked after, protected and treated with great respect. Taking care of the elderly is the responsibility of the entire society. Where a person has no child, his relatives, and sometimes even neighbours, must bear that responsibility. Elders must always be addressed in polite language regardless of kinship.

Priority in caring should be given to the closest relationship as this proverb says:

الأمه عريانه ما بكسي خالته
Al-umo a'ryanah ma biksi khaltu

He whose mother is naked will not clothe his aunt (145)

Sudanese also stress the importance of blood relationships and prefer membership in a kinship group to strength their group or tribe, quoting proverbs such as:

أنا وأخي علي ابن عمي وأنا وابن عمي علي الغريب
Ana wa akhi a'la ibn a'myi wa ana wa ibn a'myi a'la al-ghareeb
I and my brother are against my cousin and I and my cousin are against the stranger. (146)

Or the following proverb for example means that relatives support each other when needed.

الأهل الغابة الضرية
Al-ahal, al-ghaba al-d'rea
Relatives are a dense forest (147)

Proverbs that emphasize the importance of kinship, social groups and their status in the society are mainly dealt with in Chapter 5 in this study.

Solidarity and unity are main characteristics of Sudanese society. Social roles of different members of the family, especially fathers, mothers and elders, are clearly defined among Sudanese families. Because children are expected to be protectors of their parents in their old age, early marriage is encouraged to ensure that one has a secure future when he is old. The following proverb expresses this expectation:

الحمار إن وِلد يِستريح
Al-h'imar inn wilidd yistreah'
Even a donkey will have some rest (in future) if he
has a child (151)

It implies that one of the main duties of children is to protect their parents in old age and to ensure they have a comfortable life.

In Sudanese society, not a single group compromises on the belief that disobedience to parents brings a curse and damages individuals' lives.

غضب الوالد مقرون بغضب الرب
Ghad'ab al-walid maqroon bighad'ab al-rab
Parents' anger is connected to God's anger (156)

Sudanese also believe that children inherit their fathers' behaviour; if a father has good morals the child will follow his social values. Children are expected to imitate their parents' bad behaviour; people remind them later that they are just doing what their parents have done:

الفي والدك بفالدك
Al-fi waldak bigaldak
What is with your father will stick to you. (172)

Despite the rapid changes in Sudanese society and the vital role that women play in Sudan, women are still regarded with a suspicious eye. Although statistically the number

of women in higher academic institutions is higher than that of men, men describe women as ignorant. Even if a man is illiterate, he can describe an educated woman as weak and ignorant (or just a woman). Having a male baby is considered as an important event in family life whereas having many girls in the family causes anxiety, distress and sometimes sorrow, as the following proverbs indicate:

هم البنات للممات
Ham al banat lilmamat
Worries about girls last to death (247)

أم الضكور أضعافها بارده
Um al-d'kooor ad'annah barda
The mother of boys has peace of mind (252)

Women are also described as helpless and having no say in any matter:

المره شعر تابع رقبه
Al-marah sha'ar tabia' raqaba
A woman is like hair that follows the neck (254)

She has no chance for leadership and is not entitled to higher responsibilities:

المره ما بدوها رسن
Al-mara ma badoha rasan
A woman will not be given a leash (256)

Some men think that domestic violence and the stick are preferred disciplinary tools for women especially in the Western Sudan, as this proverb says:

تلاتة ما ترفع منهم عصا، مرة وثقارة وحمارة
Talata ma tarfa' minahum a's's'a mara wa nuqarah wa humara
Do not keep your stick away from these three: a woman, a drum and a female donkey (257)

Ironically, it suggests that even a male donkey should be treated with respect, but not a female donkey.

All females in Sudanese society are supposed to marry and to have children. By customs, some parents and brothers still think they have the right to choose a husband for their daughters or sisters without considering them.

ولـدك خـيره وبتـك إختـار لـيها
Waladak khiyru wa batik ukhtar liyha
Let your son choose his wife by himself but choose a husband for your daughter. (228)

Women play a big role in disciplining their children, who will be the men of their society in future. Therefore, choosing a wife with good morals and values from a good family has a great impact on children's behaviour:

الرجـال قبايل والنسوان نفايل
Al-rijil qabail wa al-niswan nafail
Men are measured by their tribes and women by their deeds. (269)

The status of and attitude toward women as reflected in Sudanese proverbs is dealt with in Chapter 5 in this study.

Good company or friendship is identified as a measurement of people's characters. The good man has good friends and an evil man keeps bad company, and in difficulties and bad times one distinguishes between real friends and frauds. Good neighbours are regarded as closer than relatives; the next proverb urges that one should build his house where he can find good neighbours.

الجـار قـبل الدار
Al-jar qabl al-dar
(Seek) the neighbour before the house (213)

Guilt culture is a method of imposing Sudanese ethics. A person with bad intentions is believed to face internal and external sanctions. He may be punished either by God for his bad deeds or by his own self by twinges of conscience.

يا حافر محافر السوء وسِّعِ مراقدك فيها
Ya h'afir mah'fir al-su was'a' maragdak fiyha
You who dig a hole for evil, make your space wider in it (231)

Other main characteristics of Sudanese society that are reflected in their proverbs are charity, courage, generosity, hospitality, honour, dignity, liberality and self respect. Goodness is connected with popular moral qualities like courtesy, amiability, fortitude and endurance. Proverbs that reflect these values are dealt with in later sections in this work.

Chapter Five

The Meaning and Use of Sudanese Proverbs

In this chapter, I will examine and analyse the meaning and use of Sudanese proverbs.

My task is to attempt to reflect a true image of the values of the Sudanese people as they represent them through their proverbs and to provide facts about their outlook on life.

Proverbs cover almost all parts of Sudanese daily conversation, which makes it difficult to categorize them under specific subject matters. I have classified the corpus that I collected according to the following categories of meaning:

1. Educational and moral principles
2. God and religious life
3. Family, blood relationships and relatives
4. Company and friendship
5. Neighbourhood relationships
6. Marriage and women
7. Experiences and wisdom
8. Contentment and patience
9. Silence and speech
10. Solidarity
11. Poverty and wealth
12. Casteism, class polarization and social injustice

In examining the meaning and use of each proverb, Newmark's (1988) semantic approach to translation is adopted to give the exact contextual meaning of the original texts. Conceptual translation is also used in this study. Riazi (2002: p.2-3) says that:

...proverbs cannot be translated word for word; rather they should be translated into equivalent concepts in TL (Target Language) to convey the same meaning and produce the same effect on the readers.

The uses of the proverbs are also described in passing, employing the following categories: instruction or education; social control through judgement or advice; expression of values; commentary on life's events, sometimes by ridicule or justification; and to counsel or comfort. There is inevitably some overlap between these.

Most of the proverbs were either recorded when people used them in conversation or collected from informants by asking them to repeat any proverb that they remembered together with its meaning and occasions when it is used. Few of them were drawn from textual sources; their meaning and use were discussed with informants.

1.5 Educational and moral principles

In this section, I will examine the meaning and the use of selected proverbs to explain their role as seen by Sudanese as a means to educate and discipline children and youth. Other examples may be found in Appendix B. I collected about 88 proverbs concerning education from many different angles, drawn directly from informants in their natural context. Most of the informants were not aware that the researcher was eliciting proverbs for research purposes.

Educating and disciplining children them are considered by Sudanese parents to be among the most difficult duties that faces any family. They express their worries about

the difficulties of bringing up children in their proverbs, for example:

الولادة ما قاسيه ، قاسية التربية

Al-wilada ma qasiya, qasiya al-tarbiya

It is not difficult to give birth to a baby, but it is difficult to raise him
(to discipline him) (1)

The nature of Sudanese social structure makes the educational process a general responsibility for all members of the society. A neighbour, a friend, or a close or far relative can discipline the child or even punish him without consulting his parents. Although children's training is a collective responsibility in Sudan, sometimes parents might be blamed if their children misbehave. People may use the above proverb to comment that parents failed to discipline their children, or a parent may even use it for social control, to blame his child if he does not appreciate his parents' effort to train him.

ليك اللحم ولينا العضم

Leak al-lah'am wa laina al-a'd'um

His flesh is for you and his bones are for us (2)

Teachers hold great responsibilities for disciplining children. Dr. Malik El-Zaki, the Sudanese folklorist, told me that although physical punishment is considered a criminal offence in the eye of the law nowadays, some parents still advise their children's teacher to punish them when they take them to school, by using this old proverb. They use it to give teachers permission to punish their students without harming them.

العلم في الصغر كالنقش في الحجر

Al-a'ilm fi al-s'ighar kalnaqashi fi al-h'ajar

Learning at young age is like sculpturing a stone (3)

There is unanimous agreement in all cultures that learning at a young age is very important and what a child acquires when he is young he will not forget when he becomes old. The Sudanese have emphasised this matter in many different proverbs. The above proverb comments that what you learn when you were young will remain in your memory like inscriptions on a stone, which last forever. If a child does not behave in an acceptable manner his parent may say the child is too young to understand right and wrong to justify the child's mistake. One may use this proverb to let the parent understand that he should start his duty to train his child at an early age. A parent himself may use the proverb to encourage his child to learn.

مَنْ شَبَّ عَلَى شَيْءٍ شَابَ عَلَيْهِ

Mann shabba a'la shayai shaba a'liyehi

He who grows with a thing, grows old with it (4)

People use this proverb for commentary or social control, to encourage parents to teach their children good manners. They might also use it sarcastically to accuse a person that he grew up with bad habits. This proverb means that what one learns when he is young he will not forget when he becomes old.

وَلَدَكَ شَبِعَهُ وَطَبِعَهُ

Waladak shabia'u wa tabia'u

Feed your son properly and discipline him (5)

This proverb advises that you have to look after your son by supporting him with good food and accommodation, but the most important thing is to teach him good morals and to discipline him. If a parent lets his child behave badly especially when visitors are around, a relative may use this proverb to encourage the parents to educate their children and to teach them good behaviour at an early stage in their life.

إِنْ قَهَّدَ لِمَهُ الْأَدَبَ بَكَذُوعٍ

Dugu inn kaddab wa a'limu al-adab

Punish him if he lies and teach him good manners (11)

People use this proverb to encourage physical punishment in disciplining children.

عَلِّمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَوَرِّثُوهُمْ

A'limoahum wala tawrithohum

Teach them, do not bequeath them (6)

This proverb advises that it is parents' duty to teach their children and to educate them to prepare them to lead a right life. As knowledge is the most important factor to build good character, people prefer it to wealth and money. Parents may be busy securing their children's future by hard work, if they believe that a comfortable house and luxurious life are the most important things. They may neglect their educational role and their children may be denied the main factor for building their personalities. People may use this proverb to encourage people to pay attention to educating their children instead of worrying about the amount of wealth they will bequeath them.

The following proverbs warn against lying and encourage children and the youth to tell the truth:

الصح كان ما خلصك الكذب ما بخلصك
Al-s'ih' kan ma khalls'ak, alkid'ib ma bakhallis'ak
If telling the truth does not save you, lying will not (7)

This judgemental proverb means that it is better to tell the truth even if you will be punished, for telling lies will not save you anyway. A child may do something wrong or make some trouble at school or with his friends. His parents may investigate the matter to understand why he behaved in such manner. If he hesitates to tell the truth, his parents may use this proverb. It warns that lying will not save a person from the consequences of trouble. It also encourages that one should be honest in all cases.

الكذب يقطع الرزق
Al-kidib yagta' al-rizig
Lying stops livelihood (10)

Sudanese believe that the means of living are God's gift, so one should be grateful and avoid sin to keep a good relationship with God, the giver. This and other proverbs on lying give instruction and social control.

حبل الكذب قصير
Habl al-kidib qas'ear
Lying's rope is short (12)

This proverb is used to warn those who lie that people will know the truth in a very short time. Religion and people forbid lying. If one has the habit of lying, eventually people will know about it for no one can hide the truth for a long time. The word 'rope' is used as a metaphor for a period of time.

من حلف بالله كاذب قام جته بلا راس
Mann h'alaf bi Allah kadib gam jita bala rass
He who perjures himself will become a body without a head (on the Day of Judgement) (13)

If one who bears false witness appears on the Day of Resurrection without a head, no one will recognise him. People use this proverb to warn in strong terms against bearing false witness.

أصلك فعلك

as'lak fia'lak

Your origin is your behaviour (14)

Most Sudanese have great loyalty to their tribes and are proud to mention that they belong to one tribe or another. If a person behaves in an unacceptable way this proverb may be used to remind him that his origin will not help if he has a bad character. If a person has a good reputation but people around him do not know much about him, people will probably use this proverb if he tries to explain to them about his origin. That is to say that they learn about his family from his behaviour. The proverb comments that your behaviour shows whether you are from a good family that brought you up with good manners.

الصح نور

As'ah' noor

Truth is light (15)

One of the main values in disciplining children in Sudanese society is to train the child at a very early age that telling the truth is most important thing in life. Parents and grandparents may draw a fearful image about the consequences of lying. The child should understand that a liar is a person hated by God and people. Telling the truth is described in this proverb as light. It means that being a faithful person is a virtue that helps you to lead a right life. This proverb is used to educate by encouraging people to avoid lying.

مَنْ قَالَ لَا أَعْرِفُ فَقَدْ أَفْتَى

Mann qala la a-a'rif faqd afta

He who says I do not know has given a judgement (16)

In some situations people, especially teachers and scholars, might find themselves faced by difficult questions from their students or other people. As they feel that people expect them to answer all their questions, they may find it difficult to admit that they do not have an answer for their question. Therefore, they may try to search for possible answers. One of their colleagues, an old person or one of their own age, may use this proverb to remind them that there is nothing wrong in saying that you do not know. This proverb means that the one who says 'I do not know' has given an accurate answer to the given question. It is used to encourage people to avoid giving wrong answers when they do not know, explaining that it is better to be honest and to say 'I do not know'.

صَدِّقْ الْقَوْلَ بِالْعَمَلِ
S'adiqq al-qaosal bi al-a'mal
Make your words true to your actions (17)

This proverb for social control might be cited in a situation in which a person promised to do something many times, but did not fulfil his promise. For example, a politician promised his people that he would build a school before the beginning of the next year. Time passed, but he did not do anything and at the same time, he expected his people to vote for him in the next election. One of his people, perhaps a friend, might have used this proverb to remind him that he should do what he promised to do. The proverb in general is used to encourage people to turn their words into actions.

اتَّبِعْ طَرِيقَ الْأَمَانِ وَلَوْ بَلَوُ
Atba' tareag al-aman wa lao bilao
Follow a secure road even if it is winding (18)

The metaphorical proverb has two teachings to guarantee a safe ending. The first one concerns a normal road for walking or driving, and the other message is about life's road. According to my informant, one should be careful and think about the endings and consequences of his actions and behaviour, and this also concerns the choice of method.

The following proverb is used to advise people to avoid backbiting by commenting on those who talk negatively about others:

الَّذِي قَالَ لِيكَ قَالَ عَنكَ
Al-ligal leak gal a'nnak
He who tells you about others will tell others about you (19)

مَنْ تَدْخُلُ فِي مَا لَا يُعْنِيهِ سَمِعَ مَا لَا يُرْضِيهِ
Mann tadakhal fi ma la yua'neahi samia' ma la yurd'eahi
He who intervenes in matters that do not concern him hears what does not please him (33)

The above proverb is used to warn people against interfering in others' affairs. Expressed with more humour, another proverb comments:

سَيِّدَ الْحَقِّ رَاضِي شَنْ نَخَسَ الْقَاضِي
Seed al-h'aq rad'I shinn nakhas al-qad'i
The owner is satisfied, what is bothering the Judge! (67)

This proverb means that if the one who is concerned about a given matter is quite happy

with what is going on, why should other people want to argue and make problems? It is used to condemn those who interfere in others' affairs without being asked to do so.

The following proverbs instruct on various moral matters, for example:

اخوك كان بقى ليك عسل ما تبقى ليه متاخ
Akhook kan biga leak a'sal ma tabga liho matakh
If your brother becomes honey for you, do not become greedy (20)

The proverb condemns those who take advantage of their friends and presume on friendship.

أدي الأمانة إلى من إنتمك ولا تخن من خانك
Addi al-amanata ila mun eitamanaka wa la takhon mun khanaka
Return trust to the person who trusts you and do not betray the person who betrays you (22)

This proverb in classical Arabic is used in its standard form without any changes. It expresses values, instructing people to take responsibility for their actions and not build their actions on others' behaviour. You should not commit a crime or misbehave as a reaction to others' mistakes.

ما تسمع كلام البيضحكك أسمع كلام البيبيك
Asmaa' kalam al-bibakeek ma tasmaa; kalam al-bid'h'ikak
Listen to the one whose advice makes you cry, not to the one whose advice makes you laugh (23)

Truth and advice are considered difficult for people to accept. This proverb teaches that it is better to listen to the one whose advice will lead you to the right way even if his words are painful. The one who agrees with all your desires might laugh with you today but in future you may regret that you listened to his advice.

In Sudan the elderly are respected whether they are relatives or not. They are considered as stores of wisdom and it is a social duty for everyone to respect them. It is unacceptable to argue with the elderly or talk to them in a loud voice.

احترم من رأى الشمس قبلك

Ih'tarim mun raa al-shams qablak

Respect the one who saw the sun before you (25)

It is believed that a person who is one day older than you has one year's knowledge more than yours. The instruction of the proverb is that you should respect older people even if there is no big difference between your ages.

مَنْ عَلَّمَنِي حَرْفًا صَرْتُ لَهُ عَبْدًا

Mann a'lamni h'arfan s'irta lahu a'bdan

He who taught me one letter, I became his slave (I am indebted to him) (26)

This proverb is used to urge respect to teachers or anyone you might learn from.

إحذر غضب الحليم

Ih'dar ghad'ab al-h'aleem

Avoid the anger of the tolerant (27)

This proverb instructs that one should avoid provoking the anger of the patient person as he might lose his temper after a long time of tolerance. People use this proverb to emphasise that when patient people get angry no one can blame them for they do not reach that stage easily.

عربا تنزل جنبها إما شيل طبعها أو أرحل خلها

A'arban tanzil janbaha imam sheal taba'ha awo arhal khalaha

When you live with Arabs, either do as they do or move away (28)

This didactic proverb is used to advise people to respect others' culture and not to criticise others' customs and traditions. In some situations, people might use it to advise you to behave like them. One of my informants asked me if I do specific things when I stay abroad, and when she received a negative answer from me she quoted this proverb to me.

لعب الأقدار منك بفك صدرك

Lea'ib al-a geddrak minakk bifik s'addrak

Playing with someone that is not your size hurts your chest (29)

This proverb is commonly quoted to children and young boys to stop them from playing with those who are older or younger than they are. Such companions might hurt or be hurt by them. One of my informants told me that people use this proverb in business matters to warn each other to avoid competition with those who have bigger businesses than they have.

المى حار ولا لعب قعونج
Almay h'ar wala lei'b ga'ong
Hot water is not a playground for frogs (60)

This proverb is of Darfur origin. The metaphor comments that one should not intervene in matters beyond one's ability. Often it is quoted to those who are in low positions and try to criticise people in a higher position or react against them.

اخشوشنوا فان النعمة لا تدوم
Ikshowshanu fa-ina al-nia'mata la tadum
Be accustomed to hardship, for God's endowment never lasts (30)

This is a classical proverb of wise counsel, used without any changes. As Sudan is often targeted either by natural or man-made disasters, it encourages people to prepare themselves for hard times and not to rely on a life of luxury all the time.

أعمل لدنياك كأنك تعيش أبدا واعمل لأخرتك كأنك تموت غدا
A'mal li-doniyaka ka-anaka ta'ieashu abdan
wa a'amal li akhiratika ka-anaka tamootu ghadan
Live your life as though you may live for ever; and be ready for the
Hereafter as though you will die tomorrow (34)

This proverb is from a prophetic speech transmits values of living and instructs humans to be prepared for life as well as the resurrection.

اذكروا محاسن موتاكم
Adekuro mah'asin motakum
Speak about the good qualities of your dead people (31)

People use this proverb in a situation when a person talks negatively about a dead person to advise that his attitude is unacceptable.

لما يستحي يفعل ما يشاء
Al-ma yistahi yafa'l ma yasha
He who is not ashamed does what he wants (35)

This proverb is used for social control, to condemn those who do not care about social or religious rules.

اكلوا اخوان واتحاسبوا تجار
Uklu akhwan wa ith'asbo tujjar
Eat as brothers, but settle your accounts as merchants (36)
'Do not mix your private relations and your business'

This proverb, used to promote good social behaviour, advises people to deal with business and friendship as two different issues.

أدخلوا البيوت من أبوابها
Adkholu al-biyoat minn abwabiha
Enter houses through their doors (37)

The exact meaning of this metaphor is to deal with things directly and openly instead of seeking tricky or unclear ways. This proverb is used to encourage people to use direct means to deal with any matter.

القربة تخر في صفحة الشايله
Al-girrba tukhur fi s'afh'at a-shayilla
The water bag drips on its carrier's flank (waist) (38)

An ordinary Sudanese who carried his water in a bag from a far distance in rural areas noticed that when he used a punctured water bag it dripped on his own head and no one else became wet. He used this simple observation from his daily life to draw his child's attention to the fact that he will bear the consequences of his behaviour.

The rest of this section deals with educational proverbs giving moral advice.

إتق شر من أحسنت إليه
Itaqi shara mann ah'santa ilyeehi
Beware of evil from him to whom you have done a favour (39)

This proverb comments that those you help are likely to harm you more than others are. People quote this proverb when someone that they helped or did a favour to hurts them.

الما تريده خاف الله فيه
Al-ma taridu khaf Allah fiyeh
The one whom you dislike, fear God in your behaviour towards him (40)

As hate might lead a person to harm others, this proverb insists that people should beware that God watches their behaviour, and remember Him in their behaviour even towards those whom they hate.

إذا بليتـم فاسـتتروا

Ida buleetum fastatiru

If you are destined by God to sin, hide it (41)

‘Do not talk publicly about it or take pride in it’

This proverb is derived from the Quran. As religion, habit and customs encourage prudence, it is not acceptable to talk publicly about your sins or shameful events. The message of this proverb is that social ethics should be considered and sin and bad behaviour be avoided.

الظاهر عنوان الباطن

Al-t'ahir a'inwan al-batīn

Appearance is the sign of what is inside (42)

This proverb comments that what appears to us as words or actions reveals what is inside the mind of a person. It is used to advise that one should not seek blemishes or faults in others and encourages people to consider what they see or hear from others as reflections of their characters or intentions.

الشكروا في عينوا نبذوا

Al-shakro fi a'aino nabazoo

Whoever is praised in his presence has been offended (46)

This proverb comments that praise in the presence of the one praised may be hypocritical.

الشماتة للعدو

Al-shamatah lila'do

Mockery is for the enemy (47)

Although this proverb says people should not gloat over each other's grief but save it for their enemies alone, the attitude expressed is often not encouraged by society; it is forbidden by Islam to gloat even towards your enemy.

الصقر كان وقع كتر البتابت عيب

As's'agur kan waga' kutr albtabit a'aib

When the eagle falls, too much fluttering is shameful (48)

The proverb warns that being impatient and reacting in unacceptable ways when you are in difficulties is shameful and ineffective. It is better to face the problem and to try to find solutions.

الضحك بلا عجب قلة أدب
Ad'h'ik bla a'jab gillat adab
Laughter without reason is indecent (49)

As there are many reasons for laughing, such as happiness, sarcasm, surprise or fear, this proverb advises that a person should not laugh without reason.

أبعد عن الشر وغني لو
Aba'id a'an al-sharr wa ghanilo
Keep away from evil and sing to it (51)

This proverb means that one should avoid troubles in order to live safely with others. People use it to warn against bad company and troublemakers.

الطمع فحل العيوب
Al-t'ama' fah'al al-a'uyoob
Greed is the master of shame (52)

Both religion and Sudanese customs encourage contentment and condemn greed. The proverb advises people to avoid it.

العارف عزوا كلام الناس ما بهزو
Al-a'rif izzu, kalam an-nas ma bihzo
He who knows his honour will not be shaken by people's slander (53)

This proverb comments that if you honour yourself you will remain strong if subjected to others' slander. It encourages people to know themselves before being judged by others.

لكل جواد كبوه
Likuli jawad kaboah
Every horse is liable to stumble (63)

This is a classical proverb used without any changes. It reminds that everybody is liable to make some mistakes. It encourages people not to blame each other for slight errors.

العتره بتصلح المشي
Al-a'tra bits'alih' al-masheah
A stumble improves the pace (54)

This proverb teaches that if a walker stumbles, he will pay attention to his walking and his road to avoid any further troubles on his way. The message is also for one who makes any mistake to try to learn from his faults. It is used to encourage people to benefit from their mistakes and to avoid repeating the same fault.

العجلة من الشيطان
Al-a'jala min al-shit'an
Haste is from Satan (55)

The comment of this proverb is that there is safety in slowness and regret in speed.

قول له في وشه ولا تغشه
Gool lu fi washo wa la tghshu
Speak to him to his face and do not deceive him (57)

This proverb urges that you should talk directly to a person with whom you are disagreeing with instead of slandering him. It is used to encourage people to avoid backbiting.

المبذر شيطان
Al-mubadir sheat'an
The prodigal is a devil (58)

This proverb is derived from the Quran, *Sura 17, Al-Isra*, verse 27; which reads:

"إِنَّ الْمُبْدِرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا"

"Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful".

Sudanese culture and customs as well as religion condemn prodigality. However, in reality prodigality is the norm, especially in some ceremonies like weddings and funerals.

المتفح بيها عريان
Al-mutlafih' baih'a a'ryan
Whoever is clothed by earthy gains is naked (59)

The majority of Sudanese believe in life after death and that life is very short. The message of the proverb is that people should not rely on this life without working for the Day of Resurrection, which is considered as the day of judgement. Therefore, the one who works for this life only is considered as a naked person although he thinks he is dressed.

النسى قديمو تاه
Al-nisa gadimo tah
Whoever forgets his past goes astray (61)

It is believed that one who has no past has no future. Sudanese encourage the youth to preserve their customs and traditions as they say a stable society should keep its values in spite of rapid changes in life. The proverb teaches that it is a mistake to forget your past, thinking that you are developing yourself.

لا تندم على ما فات
La tandem a'la ma fat
Do not regret what is gone (62)

On the other hand, this proverb counsels that one should not waste time thinking about the past.

المائله تقع
Al-maiyla taga'
That which leans will fall down (64)

The moral lesson of this proverb is that if people are not educated with values and good morals they will be corrupted.

ما حك جلدك مثل ظفرك
Ma h'aka jildak mithil t'ofrak
Nothing scratches your skin like your own fingernail (65)

This is a classical proverb commonly used in Sudanese daily life. It is used to encourage self-reliance: for people to care for their personal affairs by themselves and not to depend on others. Expressed differently,

شرباً بيد الرجال عطش
Sharaban biyad al-rigal a'tash
Drinking what is in men's hands is thirst (66)

This proverb comments that anything that is not in your own hands but controlled by others is difficult to achieve.

لا تؤجل عمل اليوم إلى الغد
La tuajjil a'mal al-yaom ila al-ghadd
Do not delay today's work for tomorrow (32)

The lesson of this proverb is to encourage people to work and avoid laziness. It is known as an educational proverb, quoted mostly by teachers to encourage their students to work hard.

ما في راحة بدون تعب
Ma fi rah'a bidoon ta'ab
There is no rest without hardship (68)

The advice of this proverb is that you cannot gain and live a comfortable life without hard work.

من طلب العلاء سهر الليالي
Munn talab al-a'ulaa sahirah al-liyali
Whoever seeks exaltation spends his nights working (69)

This proverb encourages people to be hard workers if they want to achieve their goals. It is mostly quoted to students to encourage them to work hard for their exams.

قم نعينك ما ترقد نهينك
Gumm na'eanak ma trqudd naheanak
Get up and we will help you, do not lie down or we will humiliate you (82)

This proverb urges that everyone should try to work rather than thinking he might not be able to work, because if one tries to work, he will find help from others. On the other hand, if one does not try to work others will leave him behind and will not help him. My grandmother used to quote this proverb to us when we were at school to encourage us to do our homework, and to one of my relatives to encourage him to look for a job.

ما في سفر بلا دبر
Mafi saffar bala dabar
There is no travel without wounds (75)

This proverb reflects nomadic life where people use animals as means of transport. It points out that there is no travelling without wounds on the animal's back. It is used in situations when a person complains that he gained what he wanted after difficulties.

Islam encourages learning and knowledge. People quote the following verse as a proverb to emphasise that those who know are different from those who are ignorant:

"هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ" Q39:9
Hal yastawi al-ladean ya'lamuwn wa al-ladean la ya'lamuwn
Are those who know and those who don't know equal? (74)

On the other hand,

القلم ما بزيل بلم
Al-galam ma bizeel balam
Literacy does not conquer stupidity (56)

This proverb of social commentary is quoted to those who are educated and behave in a stupid way.

وعد الحر دين عليه
Wa'dd al-hurr dayeanun a'leahi
An honourable person's promise is a debt (77)

This proverb instructs that when people give their word, they have to keep it. Although Sudanese emphasise the importance of timekeeping and say fulfilling a promise is an obligatory matter, in reality they are not good examples in timekeeping in terms of appointments, for example to visit a friend or attend a meeting. On the other hand, they are known to be very honest in keeping their word in other matters like tribal matters or problem solving.

People quote the following Prophetic saying, which advises people not to intervene in others' affairs.

مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لَا يَعْنِيهِ
Min h'ussni Islam al-marei tarkuho ma layua'neahi
Among the good Islamic characteristics of a man is to ignore what does not concern him (81)

ده الجمل ودي النخلة
Dah al-jamal wa di al-nakhala
This is the camel and this is the palm tree (84)

The above humorous rural proverb is based on a story about a man who claimed that he saw a camel climbing a palm tree. People could not believe him, but he insisted that he was telling them just what he saw. They took him to the same palm tree and brought a camel; then they said to the man 'Here are the camel and the palm tree, just show us how it happened.' People use this proverb to mock a person who exaggerates or lies.

إذا أردت أن تطاع فأمر بالمستطاع
Ida aridta an tuṭaa' femur bil mustaṭaa'
If you want to be obeyed, do not ask for the impossible (to be done) (85)

People use this proverb to comment that obedience is possible only when you ask for reasonable things.

في تأنّي السلامة وفي العجلة الندامه
Fi a-tani al-salama wa fi al-a'jala al-nadam
There is safety in slowness and regret in haste (86)

This proverb is used to advise people not to rush in dealing with their affairs or making decisions. Similarly,

شد وتباطي إما شراً فات أو خيراً أت
Shidd wa tabaṭa ima sharan fatt wa ima khaeran att
Saddle your pack animal and slow down, either evil has passed by or good is coming to you (87)

This proverb is from nomads' environment where people depend on animals as a means of transport. It advises that one should prepare himself for travelling and slow down; he must accept whatever the days bring for him.

2.5 God and religious life

Religion as part of the Sudanese cultural system is an important element that influences Sudanese personalities and the word religious is frequently used to describe Sudanese character. People use some phrases from the Quran as proverbs. Al-Suyuti (1983) has already mentioned that the wide circulation of religious sayings among the people has given them the characteristics of proverbial wisdom.

Many of the Prophet's sayings are used as proverbs as well. Al-Gharawi has dealt with the Prophetic proverbs in detailed comments in his work, The Prophetic Proverbs (1981).

People believe in Allah or God as the one creator of the world and life provider for people and all things. Therefore, He arranges death, life and means of living, so no matter how many children parents have, Allah will look after them and no one needs to worry about how to arrange their living. Business, daily behaviour, relationships between individuals and the society are governed by religious rules.

Religion gives great comfort in Sudanese life. Trust in God and praising God are essential rules for living a comfortable satisfactory life. The following proverbs illustrate this belief:

الله ما شقَّ حنكاً ضيعه
Allah ma shagga h'ankan d'aia'u
God never made a mouth and left it (88)

This proverb is an expression of belief that God provides means of living for needy people and never blocks their source of livelihood. It is used to console the poor not to worry about their difficulties in staying alive, especially when they have a new baby in the family. It might also act as a green light for parents to have as many children as they want, as they believe that God will look after them.

People in Sudan believe that man has only to think about his personal matters and God will arrange for them to be fulfilled. They use the following proverb to express this value:

العبد في التفكير والرب في التدبير
Al-a'abd fi al-tafkeer wa al-rab fi al-tadbeer
Man has only to think and God will care of him (89)

القر بعيوبه غفر الله ذنوبه
Al-garra ba'iyobu ghafar Allah dinubu
He who confesses his faults, God will forgive his sins (90)

The above proverb is used to encourage people to repent or to turn from sin.

الاعتراف بالذنب فضيلة

Al-ia'traf bil danbi fad'ila

Confessing one's guilt is a virtue (96)

This proverb comments that the person who confesses is brave and honest, and will learn from his mistake instead of denying and persisting in his guilt.

لإن شكرتم لأزيدنكم

lain shakartum lazedanakum.

If you thank me, I will give you more (93)

Derived from the Quran, *Surah* 14, 'Ibrahim, verse 7, which reads:

"وإذ تأذن ربكم لئن شكرتم لأزيدنكم ولئن كفرتم إن عذابي لشديد"

"And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favour]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe'."

This is a Quranic verse, but people use it as a proverb to teach and to comfort. People are content with a very simple life and limited resources as they believe if they praise what they have, God will give them more. It is common to hear women saying to each other: 'God said Oh man if you praised my little giving, I will provide you with more'. Illiterate people in particular sometimes relate traditional sayings to the Quran or the Prophet's sayings.

لا إكراه في الدين

La ikraha fi al-dean.

There is no compulsion in religion (94)

Originally derived from the Quran, *Surah* 2, Al Baqara, verse 256 which reads:

"... لا إكراه في الدين قد تبين الرشد من الغي"

"There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion".)

(Also in Adam and Tum No. 1231 P. 148)

This proverb means that religion or belief is a private matter. People use it to encourage people to leave others to choose what they think is good for them.

المؤمن صديق

Al-mu'min s'iddeeg

The believer is trustful of others (97)

The extreme importance of trusting others is emphasised in Sudanese culture. However, the more the economic and political situation gets worse, the less trustful of others people become.

لا يحب الله الجهر بالسوء
La yuh'ib Allah al-jahr bil sua.
Allah does not like evil to be uttered in public (102)

(Derived from the Quran, *Surah 4, An-Nisa'* verse 148)
This proverb warns people against declaring their mistakes publicly.

الفتنة أشد من القتل
Al-fitnah ashadda min al-qatl
Causing discord is worse than killing (91)

(Derived from the Quran: *Surah 2, Al-Baqarah*, verse 191; which reads:
"والفتنة أشد من القتل... and *fitnah* is worse than killing". Verse 217 in the same chapter reads:
"والفتنة أكبر من القتل" "And *fitnah* is greater than killing ...". Among the meanings of *fitnah* are disbelief, discord, dissension, civil strife, persecution, oppression, injustice, seduction, trial and torment.)

Since strong relationships are one of the main characteristics of Sudanese social structure, deliberate provocation of discord is strongly disapproved of, as this proverb makes clear.

لا يغير الله ما بقوم حتى يغيروا ما بأنفسهم
la yaghear Allah ma bi qawm h'ata yigheero ma bi anfsihim
Allah never changes the grace He hath bestowed on people until they first change that which is in their hearts (104)

(Derived from the Quran, *Surah 8, "Al-Anfal*, verse 53"), which reads:

"ذلك بان الله لم يك مغيرا نعمة ا بأنفسهم أنعمها على قوم حتى يغيروا م"
dalika ban Allah lam yaku mughearan nia'matan ana'mha a'la qawmin h'ata yighero ma bi anfsihim

This proverb is used to pass judgement, commenting that people will never improve their life without changing their attitude and their intentions.

الأعمال بالنيات
al-a'malu bil-niyyat
Deeds are by good intention (104)

Both God and people judge deeds by intentions; if you have good intentions, people should judge you by them when you do anything. People use this proverb to emphasise the fact that what you do by mistake is unintentional, but your deeds are intentional.

ما عُبد الله باكثر من جبر الخواطر

Ma a'ubid Allah biakthar min jabr al-khawafir

Allah has not been worshiped with anything better than comforting people (106)

Although there are many different ways to worship God, the best one is through consoling and helping the needy. People use this proverb to encourage the powerful and wealthy to help the poor and advise all people to be considerate to each other.

البسوي سمح لرقبته والبسوي شين لرقبته

Al-bisawi sameh' leragabto wa al-bisawi shean leragabto

The good that one does is for him just as the bad is (44)

Regardless of one's relationship with God or people, this proverb expresses the point that if you do good things your reward will be good and if you behave in evil ways you will reap what you sow. It is used as a warning against evildoing. The meaning of this proverb is derived from the Quran *Sura 4, Al-nisaa*, verse 123, which reads:

" وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا... "

Menn ya'mal suwan yujeza bihi wala yajid lahu minn dooni Allah walean wala nas'eera

"... Whoever does a wrong will be recompensed for it, and he will not find besides Allah a protector or a helper"

And in the same Sura, verse 124 reads:

" وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا "

"And whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while being a believer, they will enter Paradise and will not be wronged, [even as much as] the speck on a date seed".

لكل هم فرج

Likuli hamin faraj

From every setback there is a way out (107)

The point of this proverb is that there is an end to every trouble. People use it to comfort each other in bad times.

لا تزر وازرة وزر أخرى

La tazir waziratan wizr ukhra

No troubled person should bear the troubles of another (98)

(Derived from the Quran, *Surah 53, "An-Najm*, verse 38", which reads:

"ألا تزر وازرة وزر أخرى"
wala tazr waziratan wizr ukhra;

Also, *Surah 6 "Al-An'am*, verse 164, which reads:

"ألا تزر وازرة وزر أخرى"
wa la tazr waziratan wizr ukhra
(Also in Adam and Tum, No. 1241 P 149)

This means that each person will face the consequences of his behaviour as no one will be punished on behalf of another. This proverb is used to teach that when a person does something wrong, he should not blame other people or expect anyone else to bear the consequences with him.

ليس على المريض حرج
Laysa a'la al-maread' h'araj
There is no criticism of a sick person (110)

This proverb advises that people should not blame a sick person for being incapable of doing things. Islam does not hold a sick person responsible. This proverb is used to comfort sick people that they are not being blamed for their defect.

من شاف مصيبتة هانت عليه مصيبة غيره
Mann shaf mus'ebtu hanat a'liyhu mus'eabat ghayru
He who sees others' misfortune finds his own disaster lighter (111)

This proverb comments that as much as you feel that you have heavy burdens, someone else has more difficulties than you. People use this proverb to counsel people not to let themselves be overcome by difficulties.

كان تجرى جرى الوحوش غير رزقك ما بتحوش
Kan tajri jari al-wuhosh ghear rizqak ma bthush
Even if you run around like wild animals you will never earn more than the fortune you are destined for (112)

To explain this proverb, one of my informants said to me:

Allah arranges poverty and wealth. You can work all day, but you cannot gain more than what was already arranged by Allah. You know how many children I have and how many dependants I look after? It is true that they do not work, either because they are still young or very old. I work to look after them, but I am only a means to gain their sustenance.

People use this proverb either to discourage a person from working more than usual or to console one, advising not to regret a hard life.

Another informant who was listening to the previous one said: " This does not mean that people become lazy and do not work hard. Arabs say:

إذا سكن الانسان تحرك الفلك بنصيب غيره
Ida sakana al-insann tah'arak al-fulkk bi nas'eeb ghayrihi
If one subsides (calms down), his orbit moves with others' fate (835)

This proverb comments that if you become lazy and do not work Allah will give to the ones who try to help themselves.

القدم مُسير ما مُخير
Al-gadam mussiyear ma mukhiyear
The foot has no power of free choice (113)

The point of this proverb is that man has no power to choose his movements or the type of his life as God has already arranged everything for him. It is used to comfort a person when he faces misfortune, saying that what has happened is out of his hands.

أنت تشاء وأنا أشاء والله يفعل ما يشاء
Anta tasha wa ana asha wa Allah yafa'l ma yasha
I wish and you wish, but God does His will (116)

People use this proverb to comfort each other, urging not to feel sorrow about what they cannot achieve. It states that God is the doer of everything. It is used as a comfort when matters go against people's plans.

ر فيما إختاره الله الخي
Al-khiyeer fima ikhtarhu Allah
The best for us is what God chooses for us (118)

This proverb advises that anything arranged for man by God is for his benefit. People use it to comfort a person who is in a crisis, meaning that he cannot do anything to avoid what has happened.

الله كان جاب قتالك بجيب حجازك
Allah kan jabb katalak bijeeb h'ajjazak
If God brings your murderer, He will bring your defender (119)

This proverb is about human solidarity. It consoles that you will never be alone in difficult situations because you will find supporters. It is used when someone desperately

needs support and feels that there is no hope or help and suddenly finds help.

ما انتقص مال من صدقة
Ma intaqas'a malun minn s'adaqa
Alms do not diminish wealth (120)

This proverb is used to encourage people to give to the poor without considering giving as a loss of wealth.

العند السيد أقرب من الفي الأيد
Al-a'indd al-siyeed agrab min al-fi al-iyead
What is in God's hand is nearer to you than what you have in your hands (121)

This proverb is widely used in the Sudan, especially by poor women. People use it to comfort each other not to lose hope that they might be blessed by wealth some day.

الراح في القيزان ما بروح في الميزان
Al-rah fi el-gizan, ma broah fi el-mizanan
That which is lost in the deserts' sand will not be lost on the scales (on Judgement Day) (122)

This proverb means that anything you lose now because of human injustice, you should not consider as a great loss, as God will pay it back to you on Judgement Day. People use it to warn against being discouraged by injustice, as people will face justice later.

ما على الرسول إلا البلاغ المبين
M a'la al- rasool ila al balagh al mubean
The duty of the prophet is only to convey the message (124)
Derived from the Quran, *Surah 5*, "Al-Ma'dah, verse 99"

الما في الرزق تقع من الخشم
Al-mafi al-riziq taqa' min al-khashum
What is not your fate will drop from your mouth (125)

This proverb implies that anything you get in your life has already being arranged by God, even your food. It is used to comfort people when they lose fortune or wealth.

الرزق على الله
Al-riziq a'la Allah
God bestows livelihood (126)

This proverb is in common use in Sudanese daily life, for people to comfort each other when they do not want to complain about difficult economic situations. Businesspersons who are trading in the same kind of goods might also use this proverb, as they believe many people trading the same goods will not affect the market.

الشكوى لغير الله مزله
Al-shakwa lighiyar Allah madala
Complaining to any one other than God is humiliation (127)

This proverb counsels that one should not express his sadness to anybody, as he might not find suitable comfort, or people might even hurt him by the way they deal with his sorrow. People use this proverb to discourage each other from complaining to ones who do not help them.

الإختصار عباده
Al-ikhtis'ar a'ibada
Frugality is worship (128)

This is a classical proverb used by ordinary Sudanese without any changes. It describes economising as a kind of devotion, as it is praised by God and tradition. Squandering is discouraged by religion and culture. This proverb is used to encourage people to avoid waste and to be moderate in their living. Any person can quote this proverb when appropriate, regardless of age.

الفوائد في العقائد
Al-fawaid fi al-al-a'qaid
The benefit is in the belief (129)

This proverb comments that unless you believe in a thing it will not benefit you. For example, if you do not believe that a given medicine will cure you, it is better not to take it, as it will not cure you. This proverb is used to encourage people not to hesitate in such matters.

إذا جاء القدر عمي البصر
Ida jaa al-qaddar a'amiy al-bas'ar
If fate comes, it blinds the vision (130)

One can describe the majority of Sudanese as fatalists. They believe that most of what occurs in their life is out of their hands because Allah (God) arranged it even before their creation. Therefore, there is always a cautious question whether people have free will to plan for their lives or not. Bearing this idea in mind, people always apologize for making unavoidable mistakes using this proverb. One might use it directly to justify his mistake, or others might quote it to console a person for a fault.

الأمّل ينهك والأجل يضحك
Al-amal yanhik wa al-ajal yad'h'ak
Hope fatigues you and death laughs at you! (131)

This proverb comments ironically that you keep hoping in your life and work hard to achieve your goals or to make your wishes come true until you get tired. At the same time, death is laughing at you for it knows that you will not live to achieve what you are hoping for. It is clear that the words ‘fatigue’ and ‘laugh’ here are used as metaphors. This proverb might be used to draw a person’s attention to the fact that he should prepare for the day after.

الدنيا ما دايمة
Al-duniya ma daima
The world is impermanent (133)

This proverb expresses an outlook, emphasising the fact that nothing will last forever and all people are subject to death.

كلّ شيءٍ ليه آخر
Kulu shay' layhu akhir
Everything has an end (134)

This is used to console a sad person who has lost a dear one that all of us will eventually die.

إتق دعوة المظلوم فإنها ليس بينها وبين الله حجاب
Itaqi da'wat al-mat'elum fainha liysa beanha wa bean Allah h'jab
Avoid bringing on yourself the complaint of one you have wronged, as there is no separation between him and God (135)

The proverb assures us that God is against all injustice. If you did wrong to an innocent person and he complains against you, God will respond to him. Therefore, you have to avoid hurting people.

يوم ليك ويوم عليك

Yawm leak wa yawm a'leak

One day is for you, and another is against you (136)

The point of this proverb is that life changes between happiness and sadness. People use it for social control in a situation when a person uses his power against the poor, to remind him that his power will not last long and he might be in the same situation one day.

3.5 Family, blood relationships and relatives

The family is considered the cornerstone of the Sudanese social structure. A household is usually headed by a male, and based on the Sudanese cultural system of extended families with members from different generations living in one house. In poor families, other members who are connected by kinship or marriage might help the householder to look after his dependents. Thus youngsters witness their nation's history as they live their daily life, communicating with their grandparents and observing how their parents treat them to learn their future responsibilities at an early stage of their life. They are encouraged to take responsibility for looking after their parents and relatives in future:

الحمار ان ولد يستريح

Al- humar kan wilid yistreah

(B. NO. 957, p. 222), and from my informants

Even a donkey will have rest if she/he has a child (151)

People use this proverb to blame those who do not look after their old parents, and they also use it to criticize parents for leading a tough life without giving their children a chance to look after them.

Children hear their mothers praising them by using such proverbs as these:

متين تكبر تشيل حملي
Metean takbar tasheel h'imli
When you will grow up to carry my burdens! (139)

جمال شيلي
Jamal sheali
A carrier camel! (140)

Parents, relatives and old people are highly respected by children and young people. This respect is accepted as a cultural and religious value that should not be questioned. The following proverbs express Sudanese views about this relationship.

الجنة تحت أقدام الأمهات
Al-janah tih't aqdam al-umahat
Paradise is under the feet of mothers (142)

This proverb promises that mothers will go to paradise or Heaven for the great work that they do in this life. It is used to encourage people to respect their mothers and to appreciate what they do for them.

اليامو ما بهمو
A-bi umo ma bihimo (A&T NO. 152, p. 19)
He who has a mother around does not worry (178)

This proverb says that mothers support their children regardless of their age; if one has any problem and his mother is still alive she will definitely be there for his help.

As Sudanese have great respect for their relatives on the maternal side, they are very kind to them. Islam has emphasised the importance of this relationship and warns the one who breaks off the relationship with his relatives that he will never go to paradise or even smell it.

غضب الوالد مقرون الرب بغضب
Ghad'ab al-walid maqroon bi ghd'ab al- rab
Parents' irritation is connected with God's anger (156)

This proverb warns that if one does not respect his parents, he will face God's curse.

People use the following proverb to emphasize the importance of cognate relationships.

أخو أخوك أخوك وراجل أمك أبوك
Akhu akhuk akhuk, wa rajil umak abuk
Your brother's brother is your brother and your mother's husband is your father
(144)

The first part of this proverb is used more often than the second part. People use it to encourage good relationships between half brothers or stepfathers and to show respect to stepfathers. In spite of the use of this proverb, it is known that when a mother marries, her children often hate their stepfather whether he is kind to them or not.

الامو عريانه ما بكسي خالتو
Al umo a'irynah ma biksi khalto
He whose mother is naked will not clothe/dress his aunt (145)

This proverb comments that one has to arrange his priorities and to start with important matters, using the metaphor of the closest relative.

الاهل الغابة الضرية
Al- ahal alghabah al d'areah
Relatives are a dense forest (147)

This proverb affirms that one who has many relatives will be respected for their sake, making it hard for others to talk about his mistakes. People use it to boast of their families.

العنده ظهر ما ينضرب على بطنو
Al-a'indo d'ahr ma bind'arib a'la batno (B. No. 713, p. 107)
Who has a back will not be kicked in his stomach (154)

Anyone surrounded by strong relatives is defended from injustice or humiliation. The word 'back' is used as a metonym, which means power in this context. This proverb is widely in use for social comment now in Sudan; people use it to criticize those who are in

power, saying that they and their relatives are beyond criticism.

أهلك كان كلاب سوي ليك ضنّب
Ahlak kan kilab sawi leek d'anab
If your relatives are dogs, make a tail for yourself (149)

This proverb advises that if you are born among a group you are one of them and you should be like them. This proverb is used to encourage people to behave according to their own customs and traditions.

Many proverbs stress the importance of family loyalty, including the following.

العنّده ضلّالة يرفعها فوق راسه
Al-a'indo d'ulalah yarfaa'a fuq raso (B. NO.712, p. 106)
He who has a shade, let him put it over his head (152)

This proverb uses imagery to teach that you should help yourself and your own family before you help other people.

اهلك قبّال تهلك
Ahlak qubal tahlak (B. NO. 448 p. 111)
(Go to) your relatives before you are destroyed (148)

This proverb urges that you rush to join your relative if you are in a disaster or troubles. People use this proverb to encourage those who leave their countries for a long time to go back to join their own people.

حديث اللّيك سد عليه البيت
Hadeath al-leak sid a'leho al-beat
Keep talk of your own relative behind closed doors (150)

This proverb advises that you should hide disgraceful or shameful matters about your kin, and not talk about them to strangers; keep them as secrets.

ضهر الوالد ما بجيب عدو
D'ahar al-walid ma bijeab a'adou
Your father's back will not bring you an enemy (174)

Sudanese say 'He is from my father's back' and mean that 'He is my brother', or 'We are from one man's back meaning that they are from the same father (i.e. brothers). This proverb insists that your brother will never turn against you and become your enemy. It is used to advise people to maintain a good relationship with their family and try to solve

family problems, for whatever the cause of their disagreement it will never turn to hatred.

أولى الزول يغطي ماعونه

A wla al-zul yaghtI maa'uno

Better to cover one's own pot before those of other people (175)

In Sudan, parents often encourage their children to choose their partners from their own relatives, especially between cousins. This proverb refers to girls as pots and to their cousins as covers. It is very important for a woman to find a good husband; her cousins are the ones who are supposed to solve this problem. Before he thinks of marrying a woman from outside the family to solve her problem it is considered better to marry one from within the family. The underlying teaching is that care and protection should be given to the family and relatives before looking after other people.

الوا الرحم أولى

Ulo al-rih'em awla

Relatives are more entitled to your kindness (153)

Favours should go to people connected by blood. This didactic proverb is derived from the Quran; *Surah 33; "Al-Ahzab"*, Verse 6, which reads:

(وألو الارحام بعضهم أولى ببعض في كتاب الله من المهاجرين والأنصار)

Wa ulu al-arh'am ba'd'ahum awla biba'd' fi kitabi Allah min al-muaminean wa al-muhajirean

(And blood relations among each other have closer personal ties in the Decree of Allah than the believers and the *Muhajirean*)²

القريب لقريبو والغريب تتدخر له

Al gareeb lagareabo wa al-ghareab tindakhirlo

Each relative to his relative, but a stranger's mistakes are not forgiven (161)

Sudanese pay great respect to the blood relationship. In this proverb they appear to be condemning anyone who does not maintain close relations with his relatives. This view is applicable to close family as well as extended family. The advice of the proverb is that relatives should forgive each other and condone their mistakes, but they should not forget any mistake committed by a stranger. They should monitor his mistake in order to punish him.

² *Muhajirean*: immigrant from Mekkah

الما عندك فيه لحمه ما عندك ليه رحمه
Al-ma-a'indak fihu lah'ama, ma aindak liahu rah'ma
You do not show mercy to one who is not your kin (143)

This proverb criticises some people who do not have any mercy towards those who do not have kinship with them.

انا واخي على ابن عمي انا وابن عمي على الغريب
Anna wa akhi a'la ibn a'mi wa ana wa ibn a'mi a'la al ghareb
My brother and I are against our cousin and my cousin and I are against the stranger (146)

This proverb expresses the fact that Sudanese stress the importance of membership and the closeness of relationship in a kinship group and community.

A similar proverb comments on blood relationships and loyalty:

وليدا ما وليدك ما بقول ابو ، مرفعين ما بوالف كان جريو ربو
Wileadan ma wileadak ma bigool abu, marfa'in ma biwalif kan jeario rabo
A boy who is not your son will not call you daddy and a hyena cub can never be tamed even if it is reared since its babyhood (180)

This proverb is from western Sudan, Darfur region. People in Sudan have great respect for those who have children. They encourage the youth to marry early and have their own children. The metaphor that a hyena cub can never be tamed even if it is reared since babyhood is used to emphasise that whatever you do for other people's children, you will never be closer to them than their own families. The same argument also means that others' children will never be like your own in terms of loyalty and strong relationship.

في جناك ليك داني
Fi janak leak dani
You have a closer one even among your own children
(Also in B. P2, NO.1007, p. 151) (155)

People use this proverb to comment that it is impossible to treat all people alike; even among your children one might be closer to you than the rest of them.

فقد الاخوان غربه
Faqd al-akhwan ghurbah
Loss of brothers is estrangement (158)
(B.2nd ed. P. 144)

Brothers are a sign of strength as they support each other on all occasions. When a person loses brothers by death he will be lonely and helpless, as this proverb points out. The following story shows this:

They said to Luqman: Your father has passed away. He said I have separated my own affairs. They said: Your wife has died. He said: I have renewed my bed. They said: Your mother has passed away, he said: My worries are cleared away. They said: Your brother has died. He said: Now my back has been broken.

الغراب ما بسل عين اخيو
Al-ghurab ma bsil a'in akhiu
A crow never pecks the eye of its brother (179)

There is an application of metaphor in this proverb, as people consider that crows have a type of unity. The image in this proverb affirms that brothers never stand against each other.

Children inherit their fathers' morals whether genetically or in terms of behaviour.

Youngsters might imitate their parents and try to be like them. However, later when they may try to be have a separate identity as result of their education, the influence of parents is still important in children's characters and manners. The following proverb might be used to emphasise the fact that a child will become like his father:

هذا الشبل من ذاك الأسد
Hada al-shibl minn daka al-asad
This cub is from that lion (160)

But relationships with children and relatives are not always smooth, as the following proverbs complain.

قلبي على ولدي وقلب ولدي على حجر
Galbi a'la waldi wa qalb waladi a'la hajar
My heart goes to my son but my son's heart is like a stone (162)

A parent always treats a child with great kindness, worries when he is sick or away, but this impious child's heart is hard as a stone. He treats parents with coldness.

الليك ليك كان لبن عشر سويه في عينك
Al-leak leak kan labn a'ushar sawi fi a'eanek
Yours (relative) is yours; even if he is *a'ushr* milk put it in your eyes (164)

(*A'ushar*: a name of a plant with toxic liquid, which causes blindness if it is dropped in eyes.)

The proverb tends to be quoted to urge family loyalty to those who disavow their kinship of relatives who have a bad reputation. It also reveals another message; that you pay for others' stupidity simply because they are your relatives.

الاقارب عقارب
al-agarib a'garib
Relatives are scorpions (177)

This proverb is using the poisonous scorpion as a metaphor to criticise relatives who cause problems and poison your life or turn it to hell.

ما عنده خال يهديه
Ma a'indu khal yahdie
He does not have a maternal uncle to advise him (165)

Khal in Arabic means the mother's brother. People in Sudan believe that the mother's brother is always kind and sincere because there are no causes of alienation like inheritance. They also say the mother's brother shares in the child's parenting. This proverb reveals preference for the kin on the mother's side.

ما مثل ابوك لكن بربيك
Ma mithil abuk lakin berabeak
He is not like your father, but he will bring you up (166)

He is not the same as your father in his natural parental kindness, but he will look after you and do whatever he can to bring you up. In Sudan, eldest brothers, stepfathers or uncles take responsibility of bringing up children if they have lost their fathers. People use this proverb to reassure fatherless children and give them confidence.

أحن من الوالد خاين

Ah'anna minn al-walid khayin

More soft-hearted than a parent is a deceiver (167)

This proverb warns that if someone pretends that he loves you more than one of your parents, he deceives you, as the natural kindness in parents' hearts is God's gift and no one can love you more than they do.

الوالد سويس

Al-walid sayis

The father is a diplomat (168)

(B. NO.928, p. 151, vol.3)

This proverb implies that the father is more aware of his own children than anybody else is. He knows about their behaviour, intentions and their instincts, for he is the closest person to his children. It tends to be quoted to those who think that parents do not understand their children's needs or the way they think, especially when children are more educated than their parents are.

الوالد يستر اربعه واربعين عوره

Al walid yastur arba' wa arba'in a'ora

The father covers forty-four mistakes for his children (169)

This proverb comments that due to natural parental instincts, a parent always forgives his children, unlike children, who do their duty towards their parents for reasons of religion or social beliefs.

ولد الوز عوام

Wadd al-wiz a'wam

The son of a duck is floater (170)

The proverb notes the influence of parents on their children either by inheritance or by education, on their character or their occupation.

ان شاء الله في كل بلد ولد

In shaa Allah fi kuli balad leak walad

With God's will, may one have a son in every country! (176)

Sudanese social structure is build of extended families and very wide social relationships with neighbours and others. When a Sudanese leaves his country, he tries to make good social relationships in his new home. People use this proverb to comment approvingly when they get help from a relative or someone they know, even if he lives far away.

ود الدور محفور

Wad d al-dour mah'goor

A son in his homeland will not be respected (181)

I have heard this proverb repeatedly during tribal conflict in Darfur region. It is believed that an officer from another region will be more respected by ordinary people and they will listen to him more than they do to an officer from their own region or a similar tribe. This belief is widespread, but I personally could not understand the reason for this attitude towards local officers, perhaps familiarity breeds contempt.

الولد هلال البيت

Al-walad hilal al-beat

The son is the crescent of the house (173)

People in Sudan as well as many other Arab and African countries believe that male children are more supportive than girls are. Beside males' economic role, they consider sons as an extension of their fathers as they keep their names alive, for only their sons' children will have the same family name. Sudanese overwhelmingly prefer men to women even if a man is helpless in his family.

A proverb expresses this attitude:

الراجل إن بقى رخمه قدام البيت رخمه

Al rajal inn bigga rakhma gidam al beat rah'ma

A man is a blessing in front of the house even if he is a vulture (183)

This proverb means that even if a man is like a greedy scavenger in comparison to other birds, he will bless the family as the women (daughters, sisters, mother and wife) will have a man in the house. However, nowadays whether they are vultures or not some women are taking more responsibilities than men are.

هين جلدك ما تهين ولدك

Heen jildak ma teheen wildak

Humiliate your skin; do not humiliate your off spring (184)

This proverb counsels that it is better for you to work hard even if you face difficulties, to make a good living for your children rather than letting them be humiliated or lead a difficult life.

الولد حزام امه

Al-walad h'izam umo

A son is a belt for his mother (185)

The simple image of this proverb expresses the idea that as girls follow their husbands, boys take responsibility for looking after their mother. Often they do not leave their family's house, and bring their wives to live with them.

قريبك كان أكل لحمك ما بكسر عضمك

Gareebak kan akal lah'amak ma bikesir a'd'mak

If your relative eats your meat, he will never break your bone (186)

The proverb remarks that when a person is hurt by a relative the hurt will not be a severe one. Because a relative should be kind to you by nature, whatever the problem between you and your relative the blood relationship will prevent big damage. I have heard this proverb on many different occasions, especially when parents want to encourage their daughters to marry from their own families. It is believed that husbands who are relatives are a safe choice for they respect the blood relationship and never hurt their wives.

Another proverb contradicts this one:

قريبك زاوروه لا تجاوره

Gareebak zawro la tejawro

Visit your relative but don't be his neighbour (187)

(Also in Badri NO. 1143, p. 171)

Let your house to be far from your relatives and visit them from time to time when you miss them, but do not live with them as neighbours, as daily association with them may cause conflicts or problems. However, it is very common in Sudan for people from extended families to live in one house and rely for their living on the head of that family.

الآخذ أمك كلو أبوك

Al-akhadd ummak kulo abook

Whoever marries your mother becomes your father (189)

In Sudanese culture respect is a very important element, especially towards older people, either because they are considered wiser or for their age. Those who treat old people with disrespect will be isolated by their community or treated as odd people.

As this proverb might be used even if you dislike the person, it would often be used indirectly to a third person. It reminds that you should treat your stepfather like your own father, as he is your mother's husband.

4. 5 Company and Friendship

Sudanese have a strong belief in the proverb that says, "As a man is, so is his company". One can say that Sudanese have very strong opinions about this area in their social life. Therefore, they teach their children to be careful about the company they keep as friends. Disasters and difficult events are the time when a man knows his true friend, so people treat those friends who were there for them in bad times like their own brothers. Older people and parents advise that one should forgive friends and not blame them for simple mistakes. Taking advantage of friends is unacceptable behaviour; one should be considerate to his friends at all times.

The following proverbs reflect Sudanese ' views about company and relationship:

من جالس جانس

Mann jalass janass

He who sits with people becomes one of them (190)

People use this proverb as advice to choose good friends.

صاحبك إن ما جيته على خاطره خسرتو

S'ah'bak in ma jitu a'la khatru t'alamtu

If you do not agree with your friend, you will lose him (192)

This proverb comments that you should try to avoid disagreeing with a friend for unnecessary reasons.

ألف صاحب ولا عدو واحد

Alff s'ah'ib wa la a'adoo wah'id

A thousand friends but not one enemy (193)

This proverb suggests that a thousand friends will not hurt you as one enemy does. It assumes that all friends are good people and honour the meaning of friendship.

عدو عاقل خير من صديق جاهل

A'adon a'aqil khayyrun minn s'adiqqin jahil

A wise enemy is better than an ignorant friend (194)

A wise enemy might not hurt you with his wisdom but an ignorant friend does not know the consequences of his behaviour. The latter kind of friend might harm you or put you in troubles when he thinks he is helping you. People might use this proverb to criticise when someone finds himself in trouble due to a friend's behaviour, especially if he meant well.

الصاحب المخسر هو العدو البين

Al-s'ah'ib al-mukhsir hu al-a'du al-biyeen

The friend who spoils your life is a clear enemy (195)

This proverb bluntly states that if a friend causes damage to your life, manners, or reputation, you should consider him an enemy and not a friend.

ربك وصاحبك ما عليهم مدسه

Rabak wa s'ah'bak ma a'leahum madassa

There are no secrets from your God and your friend (197)

This proverb says that your God knows every thing about you and you should not hide any secrets from your friend. People use this proverb to describe friendship as a very close relationship.

صاحبك إن أباك قلل عليه الحوم

S'ah'bak inn abak galil a'liahu al-h'oam

If your friend is not happy to see you, do not visit him (198)

This proverb advises that if your friend becomes weary or bored with you, you should not pay him frequent visits, but still try to keep him as a friend. People use this proverb as advice to keep a good friendship.

الصاحب منحه

Al-s'ah'ib minh'a

A friend is God's gift (199)

The meaning of the proverb is clear. People use it to emphasize the importance of friendship.

صاحبك إن بقي عسل ما تكلمو

S'ahbak inn biga a'ssal ma takmilu

If your friend becomes honey, do not finish it (eat it all) (200)

This proverb advises that people should not take advantage of good friends or misuse their generosity.

صُحبة فلان زي القرش

S'uhbat fulan zai al-girish

His friendship is like a penny (201)

This proverb describes someone's friendship as wealth that does not last long. People use it to condemn a person as an unfaithful friend.

الصديق قبل الشقيق

Al-s'adeeg gabel al-shageeg

A loyal friend is before a real brother (204)

The proverb comments that friendship may bring people closer than the closest blood relationship.

عند الضيق ينعرف الرفيق

A'indd al-d'eag yina'arif al-s'adeeg

You know your friend when you are in need (205)

This proverb is used to express admiration for true friendship in difficulties or bad times.

قيم راسك وأعرف ناسك

Qaiyeam rasak wa a-a'rif nasak

Use your mind and know your people (206)

The point of this proverb is to counsel that one should use his mind and think carefully about people around him in order to know his enemy and test his friend.

The following is used to sum up an experience. It ridicules two friends as useless failures:

إتلم التعيس على خايب الرجا

Itlama al-ta'eas a'la khaib al-raja

The unlucky and hopeless got together (207)

الطيور على اشكالها تقع
Al-ttyoar a'la ashkaaliha taqa'
Birds of the same features flock together (208)

The figurative use of the word *al-ttyoar* (birds) implies people. The above proverb comments that people who have similar manners suit each other as friends. People also use this proverb to condemn bad company.

الما يبلع ريق على ريق ما يمسك صديق
Al-ma yabla' reag a'la reag ma yamsik s'adeag
He who does not swallow spittle after spittle will not keep a friend (209)

Swallowing spittle in this proverb means being patient enough to tolerate friends' mistakes. People use this proverb to encourage forgiveness between friends.

محل ما تامن خاف
Mah'al ma tamin khaf
Wherever you trust you need to fear (210)

This proverb advises that the more you trust your friend the more you need to be cautious; he could hurt you at any time, because he knows everything about you. People use this proverb to warn against unlimited trust in others.

خصام الرجل الضكر ولا صُحبة الراجل الأصبينه
Khis'am al-rajil al-d'akar wala s'uh'bat al-raji al-ud'eyna
Dispute with a wise man is better than friendship with an ignorant and weak one
(211)

People use the above proverb to advise the choice of good friends.

5.5 Neighbourhood Relationships:

Some Sudanese proverbs view neighbourhood relationships as more important than blood relationships. Both religion and cultural values encourage people to establish good relationships with neighbours and even to think about the type of neighbour before you build or buy a house. It is common in Sudan that a neighbour might look after his neighbour's children and property when needed, shares pains and gains with neighbours, who borrow and lend from each other and exchange advice.

The following proverbs represent neighbours' relationships in Sudan:

الجار قبل الدار

Al-jar gabel al-dar

Seek the neighbour before you get a house (213)

This proverb urges that before you buy a house you have to think about the type of neighbours you will have in your new place, as they will be the people who will live with you. People use it to emphasise the importance of neighbours' relationships.

جارك القريب ولا ود أمك البعيد

Jarak al-gareab wa la wad umak al-ba'id

Better your close neighbour than your distant brother (214)

This proverb emphasises that you should establish good relationships with neighbours as neighbours will be there for you when you need them more quickly than your brother who lives far way.

أحفظ مالك ولا تخون جارك

Ah'fat' malak wa la takhoin jarak

Keep your possessions and do not accuse your neighbours (215)

This proverb gives advice that one should keep his money in a safe place for the sake of good relationships with neighbours, warning people not to leave their valuable things out and accuse their neighbours of taking them.

إن جار عليك جارك حول له دارك

Inn jar a'leak jarak h'awil lo darak

If your neighbour oppresses you, move your house (216)

This proverb says that if your neighbour tyrannizes you and you fail to make peace with him, it is better to sell your house and to move to another place. It is mainly used to encourage people to work to the best of their ability to establish good relationships with neighbours.

الجار ما جار عليه الزمان

Al-jar ma jar a'laihu al-alzaman

Let no neighbour be oppressed by life (217)

This proverb is in a form of a prayer for a neighbour not to be tyrannized and face difficulties in his life.

من صبر على أذى جاره ورثه الله دياره

Mann s'abar a'la ada jaru warthu Allah daru

He that is patient in tolerating his neighbour's harm, God will bequeath him his neighbour's house (218)

The counsel of this proverb is that even if neighbours hurt you, God will reward you for your patience.

6. 5 Marriage and Women

Marriage is the only legal relationship for having children or establishing a family in Sudan. A relationship between couples prior to their marriage is absolutely forbidden by both custom and religion. Therefore, the idea of single mothers does not exist as the birth of children before marriage is a crime. It is important for a man to choose a woman of good values from a good family. A divorced woman has a limited chance for marriage, as she is the one who is often blamed for the break up of her marriage.

Sudanese society is very diverse in how it sees women in society. This diversity arises mainly from the diverse cultures in Sudan and the changes that Sudanese society is going through. Women undoubtedly have a vital role in shaping the society, either by keeping traditions going or by putting a brake on some of the traditions that are outdated. The society is also busy shaping the role women play and the appearance of women in society. However, the Sudanese society's traditions are firmly linked to its religions. The three main religions are Islam, Christianity and the animist and these three come with differences in practices. Often women's position in Islam is misinterpreted. Women in Sudan play the traditional role of bearing the family domestic duties and any other duties that a woman might qualify herself to do. They have the role of keeping the cultural traditions alive through the generations. This is mainly passed on by grandmothers

through their relations to their daughters and hence their grandchildren. Women in Sudanese culture are also responsible for maintaining the pride of men and *vice versa*. The man is deemed to be the provider for the family and hence has a privileged position in decision-making for all the family. Normally the family trains its male children to take up this family provider position together with its privileges.

However, the man is the decision-maker even in rural areas where women are providers for the whole family including the husband himself. There is a rigid structure in the Sudanese society in which family members are trained to take up roles and positions depending on their gender and age. Normally with this structure comes the comfort of feeling that one fits in exactly the right place, by keeping up his responsibilities and duties.

Modernity is posing a challenge to this structure, especially when it comes to how women see themselves fitting in. The education system in Sudan does not differentiate a great deal between boys and girls. This in itself poses the question in women's minds that since intellectually they are equal, there should be no difference in opportunities either of leading the family or deciding to take charge of their own lives without the aid of a male figure. Hence the traditional division of labour is called into question. This fact, coupled with other modernity-related facts including economic ones, enable women with some degree of education to see their role in society as different to their grandmothers'.

Although Islam grants complete rights to women as mentioned in "*Al-Nisa* verses", Sudanese often look at women with a suspicious eye, describing them as ignorant and mentally deficient persons. According to men's commonly-held opinion about women, they are weak on the one hand and evil on the other. As a result they are dominated by

men at all stages of their lives. As a child and adult a girl is controlled by her brother or her father; later when she marries, she moves under her husband's domination. Parents, brothers and other relatives have the right to interfere in girls' decisions about marriage. Some families can even make other choices for their daughters without consulting them. One should mention here that Islam has highly honoured women, and strictly warns men against the consequences of bad treatment or humiliation of women. The woman has full rights as a human being under Islam's rules and it is strongly forbidden to force her to marry according to her parents' choice. However, (mis) treatment of women is governed by customs and tradition, not by Islam's view. Nevertheless, Sudanese women in general are in a state of continuous struggle for emancipation. This has resulted in keeping women in a place that they have to fight their way out of, morally, socially and economically.

The proverbs in this section reflect marriage and women as seen through Sudanese eyes.

الزواج نصف الدين
Al-zawaj nis'f al-dean
Marriage is half of religion (219)

This proverb is from the Prophet's speech. It emphasises that marriage is an important part of Muslims' life. This proverb is used to encourage early marriage, as Muslim religion will not be complete without marriage.

People use the following proverb for the same purpose:

الزواج سُتْره
Al-zawaj sutra
Marriage is protection (220)

Marriage protects the youth from engaging in unhealthy relationships.

The following proverb advises to avoid marrying a woman who has had a child before, even if it is dead.

أم الدرْفون ولو مدفون
Umm al-darfun wa lao madfun
Avoid a mother of a child even if it is dead (221)

The word *darfun* means a child. It is known in Sudanese society that men prefer to marry virgin women. They avoid a divorced woman especially if she has children. A widow is preferred to a divorced one, as it is often assumed that a divorced woman is to blame for failing to keep her first marriage.

نعال أم قديد ولا مره ام وليد
Na'al um geidead wa la mara um welead
Old shoes with holes are better than a woman who has a son (262)

This similar proverb jokes that it is better for a man to have old shoes with holes in them than to marry a woman who has been married before and got a son. People use this proverb to encourage men to marry virgin women.

طيب الحديد والضرب نصيب
Taib al-h'adeadah wa al-d'arib nas'eeb (B.NO. 437, p. 62)
Choose a good wife from a good family, and having children is a matter of luck (222)

This proverb insists that a man must choose a wife with good manners and should not worry about having children from her as this matter has already been arranged by God. This proverb is used to encourage the youth to marry from respectable families, who bring up their daughters according to good ethics.

طيب الخال وخال الخال شوف كان يحيي بطل
Taib al khal wa khal al-khal shoof kan yaji batal
Let the maternal uncle and his maternal uncle be good and see if you will get a bad child (223)

This proverb is used to comment that if you chose a wife from a good family, you will never get a bad child, for your child will be like his maternal uncles.

لا تلد الحية إلا حية
La talid al-h'ayia ila haiya
A snake will have snake children (224)

This proverb advises that parents usually get a child with their features and behaviours. This proverb is used to encourage people to choose a good partner; it is also used to condemn bad parents whose children inherited bad morals from them.

العاقِل يَتَزَوَّجُ لِأَوْلَادِهِ
al-a'qil yitzawj li awlado
He who is wise marries for his children (225)

It is urged that the wise man should think about his children's future by choosing a good wife to enable them to have a good mother.

The proverb implies the importance of having a wife from a good family in terms of ethics and respectfulness. Sudanese believe that even if a girl is modest and polite she should be avoided if she comes from an immodest family. It is derived from the Prophet's speech:

(إياكم وخضراء الدِّمَنِ فَإِنَّ العِرْقَ دَسَاسٌ)
"Iyakum wa khad'ra al-dimen, qaloo wa ma khd'ra al-dimen? Qala: al-h'asna fi manbati al-suo".

This means: Be aware of 'khadhra al-dimen'. They said and what is khadhra al-dimen?' He said: 'A pretty woman of evil origin' (226)

ادوهن أعينوا عليهن
Adohin wa a'aeno a'leahin
Let your daughters get married and help their husbands (227)

This proverb urges families to help their daughters to get married and help their husbands, whether they are poor or rich, by educating and disciplining them when they are young.

ولَدِكَ خَيْرٌ وَبِتِّكَ اخْتَارَ لِيهَا
Waladak khauro wa bitak ikhtar liyha
Let your son choose his own wife but choose a husband for your daughter (228)
(Also in A&T NO. 1418 p. 171)

This proverb expresses the fact that parents have a major say in their daughters' marriages. Some Sudanese believe that a husband chosen by the parents will be a right choice, for they know better than their daughters, who have limited contact with men outside their families. Some parents force their daughters to marry men they know nothing about, or sometimes whom they have never even seen, believing that it is best for their daughters.

أخذت أخيكُ ليكَ ما ابتقى ليكَ

A khddat akhiyak leak ma betabga leak

A marriage based on your brother's opinion will not be compatible (229)

On the other hand this proverb says that to marry someone according to your brother's opinion will not be a successful marriage. In spite of this fact, large numbers of Sudanese families still prefer arranged marriages. People use this proverb to encourage the youth to take their decisions by themselves in this matter.

المره مكسورة جناح

Al-mara maksurat janah'

Woman has broken wings (230)

This proverb represents women as being as weak as birds that cannot fly. Some Sudanese believe that women are weak and helpless. Therefore, they should be protected by men all their lives, first by their parents, then their brothers, then their husbands and by their sons when they become old.

عاقلة النسوان قلبها مثل حبة الدخن

A'aqlat al-niswan a'glaha zi h'abat al-dukhun

The brain of the wisest women is like *durra* seed in its size (231)

(*durra* is millet, a very small seed)

This proverb exaggerates to state that women are narrow-minded. Men use it to humiliate women and to say that they are unwise creatures, mentally unequal to men.

ما تتحزم بالنسوان فزعهن زغاريد وسلاحهن بكاء

Ma tith'azam bil-niswan, faza'in zagharead wa silah'in buka

Do not depend on women; their support is trilling and their weapon is crying

(233)

The point of this proverb is to describe women as useless in good times as well as bad times, and urge therefore that people should not rely on them at all.

النساء حبايل الشيطان

Al-nissa h'bail al-shiytan

Women are pregnant by Satan (234)

This proverb claims that women are responsible for all evils, even if men commit them.

من سواهن تجارتُهُ يا خسارتُهُ
Mann sawahin tijartu ya khasartu
How great is his loss that he made women his business (235)

This proverb advises that a man who keeps company with women will lose everything; whether it is innocent company or not, he will waste his time and an adulterous relationship will damage his reputation. It is used to warn those who make unnecessary relationships with women.

أم قمبور شن بتسوي
Um gambur shin bitsawi
A woman, what does she do? (236)

The point of this proverb is to express the idea that women are useless and helpless. Therefore, people should not rely on them.

المَره شعر تابع رَقْبِه
Al-mara sha'ar tabia' ragaba
A woman is hair that follows the neck (254)

This proverb represents the woman as being a person without will; she follows what the man says as the hair moves only when the neck moves.

المتحزم بالنسوان عريان
Al muth'azim bil el-niswan a'riyan
He that dresses himself with women is a naked man (237)

This proverb means that the one who depends on women is the same as a naked person. People use this proverb to warn against relying on women in making decisions or any other matters.

ضربة الإنتايه زي مسحة الدهنايه
D'arbat al-intaya zai mash'at al-dihnaya
Punishing a female is like rubbing butter over the body (238)

This proverb states that to punish a woman is as easy and enjoyable as rubbing butter over your body. It reflects the fact that some men enjoy punishing their wives physically.

أفجخ البصله قبل تبقي أصله
Afjakh al-bas'ala gubal tabga as'ala
Crush the onion before it becomes a cobra (239)

This proverb emphasises physical punishment as a means to discipline a woman. It advises to crush her when she is young when it is easy to shape her; not to wait until she becomes a mature person and will not obey you. People use this proverb to support the view that physical force is the best way to discipline women.

خليتها المره قريه دم إن شلتها خرّت وإن وعت
Al-mara girbat damm inn shiltaha kharat wa inn khalyta waa'at
A woman is a leather bag full of blood; if you carry it, it pours out and if you leave it, it becomes pus. (240)

The words used in this proverb reflect the negative image of women in their society. Large numbers of Sudanese consider women as troublemakers or problems in themselves. Men use this proverb to represent women as not only passive members of society, but also as a problematic issue that needs to be sorted out.

المره إن بقت فاس ما بتكسر الراس
Al-mara inn bigat fass ma bitaksir ar-ras
Even if the woman were an axe she would not break the head (241)

This proverb states that however great the importance of a woman, she remains powerless.

المره العاقر ضيفه في البيت
Al-mara al-a'agir d'eafa fi al-beat
A barren woman is a guest in the house (243)

Procreation is the most important role of women; the failure to have children will lead to divorce, or else the husband will marry another woman to have children by her. Therefore, a woman without children is considered as a guest, for she might either leave the house or stay without having any authority there.

ما تامن السحابه ولو ضلّت ولا تامن المره ولو صامت وصلّت
Ma tamin al-sih'aba wa lao d'alat wa la tamin al-marah wa lao s'amat wa s'alat
Do not trust the cloud even if it has darkened and do not trust a woman even if she has fasted and prayed (244)

This proverb comments that there is no guarantee that a cloud will rain even if it is heavy and dark; it may leave your land and rain somewhere else. In the same way, it asserts, if you saw a woman fasting and praying you should not believe that she is a good person.

Although Islam encourages people not to assume that a person is bad or guilty unless they see evidence, Sudanese say the opposite thing about women. Men also use this proverb to tell women that however well they behave they remain evil.

الراجل كله ولي المره

Al-rajil kulu wali al-mara

Whoever a man is, he is the woman's guardian (caretaker) (245)

This proverb advises that any man, regardless of his age, knowledge or mentality, is considered responsible for women. This proverb is used to emphasise the fact that the male is preferred by the society in terms of protection and responsibility.

المره كان أخذت راجل هم وكان قعدت في بيتك هم

Al-mara kan akhadat rajil hamm wa kan ga'dat fi biyeatak hamm

A woman is a burden whether she is married or stays at her parents' home (246)

This proverb describes women as a burden both in their husband's houses and with their families.

People emphasise that their worries about women last a long time by uttering the following proverb:

البنات هم للممات

Hamm al-banat lilmamat

Worries about girls last to death (247)

المره كان قلت أدبها دُفها بأختها

Al-mara kan galat adabah dugaha bi ukhutih

If a woman shows disrespect, punish her with another woman (248)

The above proverb urges that if a wife is disobedient her husband should punish her by marrying another woman. As Islam allows men to marry more than one wife under some restrictions, some men totally abuse this law by marrying just to insult the first wife.

سعد البنات نور البيت وقعان حقره للبيت

Saa'ad al-banat noor al-beat wa gua'ad al-banat h'ugra lilbeat

Girls' marriage is a light in the house and their staying in their parents' house is oppression to the house (249)

When a girl gets a husband that means she is a good girl so she brings honour to her family, but staying at her father's house is an offence to them as it may be evidence that she is not a good woman. The proverb describes this attitude.

الرجال يزيلوا الغبار
Al-rijal yizeelu al-ghubar
Men remove the dust (250)

This proverb implies that men are capable of solving any problem. It is used to emphasise that men are strong and have the power and the authority to remove any obstacles.

أم الضكور أضانها بارده
Umm al-d'ukur ad'anah bardah
The mother of male babies has peace of mind (252)

The wife who gives birth to male babies is preferred to one who has female babies only. She has peace of mind as her husband will love her and will not threaten to marry another woman. In addition, her husband's family and the members of her community will respect her. The proverb expresses these facts.

جيبى حُجار وتكلي الدار
Jeabi h'ujjar wa takli al-dar
Give birth to male babies to support your house (253)

This proverb advises that if you want your marriage to continue for a long time, giving birth to male babies is the only method that helps you to stay with your husband.

المَرَّة النقتاقه قاطعة مال وقاطعة رزق
Al-mara al-nagnaga gata'at mal wa gata'at riziq
A nagging woman is a money loser and livelihood stopper (255)

It is warned that God will bring loss of wealth and prevent the means of living to a family that has this kind of woman.

المَرَّة مايدوها رَسَن
Al-mara ma bidawha rasan
A woman will not be given a leash (256)

This proverb is used to emphasise that women should not be allowed to become leaders in their society, as they are considered as unwise and mentally deficient

المره ما بوادعوها

Al-mara ma biwada'oha

A consignment will not be given to a woman (259)

The point of this proverb is to advise that women should not be trusted as they are either dishonest or have weak memories.

تلاته ما ترفع منهم عصا المره والنقاره والحماره

Talata ma tarfa' minahum a's'a : almara wa alnugara waal h'umara

Do not take your stick away from three things: a woman, a drum and a female donkey (257)

Although violence and physical abuse towards women are serious criminal offences in Sudan, a considerable number of women suffer from physical punishment by their husbands. This proverb urges men to use a stick to discipline their wives, as they do to beat drums or to lead a donkey. Ironically it refers to a female donkey, not donkeys or animals in general.

زيناً للرجال تلقى وزيناً للنسوان المي خطى مجراه

Zeanan lilrijal talga wa zeanan lilniswan almi khita majra

Doing a favour to men brings you a good turn and doing a favour to women is water that has missed its stream (258)

This proverb argues that good deeds towards women are wasted work for women will not return the good deeds when you need them. Some men in the Western Sudan use this proverb to discourage each other from treating women kindly.

رأي المره قربة إنقذت في الخلاء

Rai al-mara girba ingadat fil khala

Woman's opinion is like a leather bag full of water that has been punctured in the desert (260)

The view expressed here is that a woman's views are wasted like water spilled on the sand; her opinion is considered to be wrong even before she speaks.

نار ومره ما عندهم صغير

Nar wa mara ma a'indahum s'aghear

Fire and women never have a small stage (263)

This proverb comments that both fire and women cause damage however small they are; so do not ignore a small fire as it might burn your house; and do not say of any woman that she is still too young to harm you or to marry you.

أسعى الدابه السريعه وأخذ المره المطيعه كلها للعمير تمتيعه
.Asa'a al-daba al-sarea-a' wa akhud al-mara al-mutiya' kulha lila'umur tamtiya'
Keep a fast animal and marry an obedient woman, as they are the enjoyment of
your life (264)

Animals are means of transportation in small villages, so the proverb advises men to keep a fast animal to facilitate their travelling. As women undertake heavy burdens inside and outside the house, it advises them to choose an obedient woman to play the double role without any complaints.

The following proverb warns men against marrying a frowning woman:

إحذر البلد الجيعانه والدابه الكسلانه والمره الكشرانه كلها للعمير مهانه
Ah'dar al-balad al-jia'ana wa al-daba al-kaslana wa al-mara al-kashrana kulha lila'umur mahana
Avoid living in a famished land, keeping a lazy animal and marrying a frowning
woman as they cause humiliation (265)

المره قوتها في لسانها
Al-mara gowata fi lisanah
Woman's power is in her tongue (266)

This proverb comments that women are physically weak, but their power is concentrated in their tongues, as they are very talkative.

A few proverbs praise women although they imply messages of hegemony and misuse.

Let us examine the following proverbs:

الراجل عين البيت والبنت سند البيت
Al-rajil a'in al-bait wa al-bint sanad al-bait
The man is the eye of the house and the girl is the support of the house (267)

This proverb observes that the man is the eye who looks after the house and controls it, and the girl acts as the support of the house by looking after the family with domestic work (cleaning, cooking , looking after children, helping guests.)

الراجل برجاله والكريم بأم عياله
Al-rajil birijalu wa al-karim bi um a'iyalu
The brave man is with his men and the generous one is with his wife (268)

This proverb comments that a man becomes strong and brave when he has good men around him and becomes generous if he has a good wife. The patient woman who takes

responsibility for cooking for large numbers of guests on a daily basis and looks after them as well as her children without any complaint is preferred to any other woman.

الرجال قبايل والنسوان نفايل
Al-rijal gabail wa al-niswan nafayil

Men are with their tribes and women are with their good deeds (269)

This proverb advises that it is important for a man to belong to a good tribe as people judge men by their tribes. On the other hand the tribe is not a major factor in judging a woman as her children will not belong to her tribe but take their fathers' name. Therefore, it is important for the woman to have a good nature and values, as they are the measures by which her society judges her.

المره البيقولوا مره من العتبه ولوراء
Al-mara al-bigoalo mara minn al-a'taba li wara

The woman that they can call a real woman is behind her doorstep (270)

This proverb urges that a good woman should stay in her house all the time and not leave it, so people will respect her. It is used to encourage women to stay at home to show that they are respectable. However, seclusion is one of men's ways to control women whether they are their mothers, sisters or wives.

إمساك بمعروف أو تسريح بإحسان
Imsak bima'roof ao tasreeh' bi-ih'san

Retained in honour, or released in kindness (95)

It is also derived from the Quran: *Surah 2, Al-Baqara*, verse 229, which reads:

"...الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانِ فَإِمْسَاكَ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ بِإِحْسَانٍ"

(Divorce is twice. Then [after that], either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with good treatment.)

The proverb addresses those who abuse their wives and try to compel them to live with them under threat and harassment, urging respectful behaviour. It is also quoted if husbands become aggressive and abusive when they divorce their wives.

7.5 Sudanese experiences and wisdom

This section includes proverbs that examine human circumstances and conditions in many different ways, especially in terms of good and evil, people's nature and attitude towards their surroundings, their experiences and wisdom that is drawn from their observation and practice in daily life.

Through their proverbs the Sudanese express their character and mentality, enabling an outsider to know how people in their environment deal with their life.

a). Adversity and misfortune

إن غاب الكديس لعب الفار
Inn ghab al-kadees la'ib al-far
When the cat is away, the mice will play (314)

People use this proverb to describe a situation when one who has authority goes away and others do not do their work properly or do what they like without consideration for rules.

الجمره تحرق الواطيها
Al-jamra tah'rig al-waṭiyha
Firebrands burn the one who treads on them (388)

This proverb comments that only the one who is in pain or grief feels it. People use it to express their frustration that others do not feel for them.

ضحك الرجال بُكاء
D'h'ikk al-rijal bukka
Men's laughter is crying (391)

Sudanese believe that a man should not cry and they relate crying to women and children. If a man has to cry even if he has lost a dear one, he should not cry in public. A man might laugh in a difficult situation, as he cannot express his sadness in crying. This proverb reminds that if you see a Sudanese man laughing at a difficult time, you should not assume that he is happy, as it might be an expression of sadness.

التور إن وقع كترت سكاكينه

Al-toar inn waga' taktar sakakeenu

If the ox falls knives will increase, (it will be easy to stab it) (313)

The word ox in this proverb is used to represent someone in authority like a governor or a tribal leader who is unjust, but whom no one is allowed to criticize. When he falls people start to talk freely about him and might create stories to describe him. The proverb uses metaphors from farmers' and hunters' environment although it is in use in cities. The kind of ox referred to in this proverb is a buffalo, which is very fierce.

كُتلوك ولا جوك

Kataloak wa la joake

Killing you is better than scaring you (278)

This proverb advises it is better to kill than repeatedly threaten to kill. It is used to encourage people to take actions quickly and not to delay doing things that they should do anyway.

مافي شجرة ما هزاها ربح

Mafi shajrah ma hazaha reeh'

There is no tree that is not moved by wind (310)

This proverb notes that each human being has passed some difficulties in his life. The meaning centres around two words, tree and wind. They are metaphors to represent human beings and their disasters. The proverb might be used to console a person that this is the nature of life and all people go through similar difficulties.

الشقي في الزبده يلقى عضم

Al-shaqi fi al-zibdda yalqa a'ad'um

An unfortunate one finds a bone in the butter (420)

This proverb vividly describes a person who finds misfortunes in unexpected places.

عُمر الشقي بَقي

A'umer al-shagi bagi

The miserable person has a long life (421)

When a poor or sad person escapes danger, people use this proverb to observe that people who suffer live longer.

شماتة الأعداء أحرُّ من سكرات الموت

Shamatat al-a-a'adi ah'ara min sakarat al-moat

Enemies' gloating over your grief is hard to bear than the agony of death (423)

This proverb states that one would prefer to die rather than see his enemies' glee at his misfortune

ميتة وخراب ديار

Meatah wa kharab diyar

Death and the ruination of homes (548)

People use this proverb to describe adversity when many problems happen at one time.

المودر يفتح خشم البقره

Al-moadir biftah' khashm al-bagarra

He who has lost a valuable thing, might open the cow's mouth (321)

This proverb is related to rural areas where cattle are kept. It says that if a person has lost a valuable thing, he might even search for it in the mouth of a cow. The point of this proverb is that the one who has lost something will never lose hope of finding it, so people should not blame him for his hard search.

b). Advice

هين قرشك ما تهين نفسك

Heen girshak ma tiheen nafssak

Humiliate your penny, do not humiliate yourself (292)

This proverb means that you can use money to buy peace of mind and live a comfortable life. People use the proverb to encourage a person not to show his need to people if he can use his money to avoid that.

أنظر عيبك قبل عيوب الناس

Ant'ur a'iubak gabul a'iuob al-nass

Know your own mistakes before you follow others' mistakes (303)

This proverb is used to advise people to correct and counsel themselves before they think about advising others.

كان كترت عليك الهموم أرقد نوم
Kann kitrat a'leak al-himoom, argudd noom
When pressure proves difficult to handle, lie down and sleep (274)

This proverb means that if you have too many problems to be solved, it is better to try to ignore them. Although people use this proverb to comfort each other, it also sends a negative message as it encourages escaping problems instead of facing them.

كترت المزاح تجيب النطاح
Katarat al-mizah' tajeab al-nitah'
Too much joking causes fighting (276)

This proverb warns people against the consequences of excessive joking.

كثرة الطله تمسّخ خلق الله
Katarat al-talla temasikh khalq Allah
Too frequent visits make one boring (277)

If you do not visit people frequently, they miss you and become eager to meet you. But if you meet them frequently they might not feel happy to meet you as they saw you recently or they know they will meet you soon. Therefore frequent visits are not advisable.

كلّ تغيّره ليها خيره
Kullu taghyeera laiha khiera
Every change has its goodness (281)

This proverb means that every change in life has its positive sides. It is used to encourage change, especially for those who hesitate fearing that change might lead to negative consequences.

المرسال إن ريج رجليك ما يريح بك
Al-mursal in raih' rijlak ma yareah' balak
If the courier gives rest to your legs, he does not give peace to your mind (285)

This proverb means that when you ask another person to do work on your behalf, you might get rest for your body, but you may not be happy for the work might not be done properly.

كل شهامة ليها ندامة

Kullu shahama laiha nadama

Any magnanimity has some regret following it (286)

This proverb implies that when one does good things for others they may be ungrateful. One should not expect that people will praise good work at all times.

c). Ostentation

إدين وإيبين

Iddaiyann wa ittbaiyann

Borrow to show off (315)

This proverb encourages as well as criticises the Sudanese' bad habit of spending more than they can afford either out of good will, to honour their guests or to show off. Both habits are criticised although people in general fail to avoid the habit of spending for the sake of honouring their guests. One of my informants said:

Although the current economic situation does not allow the majority of this nation (Sudanese) to be generous as the old generations used to be, still you find people ready to spend what they have saved in a year in one day to honour a guest. The Sudanese should rethink their inheritance and some of their values as it seems they were made for a time very different from this difficult time.

The following proverb contradicts the previous one and encourages people to avoid debt:

الدين ولو درهمين يسود الخدين

Al-dean wa lao derhamean yasoal al-khadean

Debt darkens the face even if it is only two *dirhams* (316)

أطول منك باع لا تماشي وأحلى منك ملاح لا تعاشي

Atwal minnak ba-a' ma tamashi wa ah'la minnak mulah' la ta'ashi

Do not walk someone one who walks faster than you, and do not eat dinner with one whose food is more delicious than yours (317)

The point of the above proverb is to advise the poor not to follow or try to keep pace with the rich for they might get tired or insulted by their rich partners.

d) Information

القلب يشوف قبل العين
Al- galib yashoof gabl al-a'iyān
The heart sees before the eyes (272)

It is believed that wise people sense disasters before they occur. People usually use this proverb when a person has an unusual feeling that something wrong is going to happen to him or to a member of his family and his feeling comes true.

كان سلم العود اللحم يعود
Kan silm al-a'udd al-lah'am bia'oād
If the wood (bone) is safe, the flesh will be restored (273)

This proverb states that if the skeleton is fit and healthy, restoration of flesh is a matter of time and one can achieve it easily. This proverb is widely used by both old and young people. They use it to comfort a sick person that as his bones are not broken, he/she will get well to live a normal life again.

كثر النقمة للطلاق وكثر المرض للموت
Katarat al-nigga lil ṭalag wa katarat al-marad' lil-moat
Too much nagging leads to divorce and too much sickness leads to death (275)

The point of this proverb is that unnecessary arguments will spoil any relationship. If a husband and his wife are arguing all the time, it will lead to their divorce. The second part of the proverb says that being sick all the time will lead to death. However, people usually use only the first part of this proverb, applying it to any relationship, not only marriage.

الكراع تدب محل القلب ما يحب
Al-kuraa' tadib makan al-galib ma yah'ib
The foot goes where the heart likes (279)

One of my informants told me that he always feels that it is very difficult to go to places where he does not feel comfortable with some people. He also feels that the place is far away although in reality it is not. When he wants to visit friends or loved ones, he never counts the distance between his place and where they live, for he feels happy to visit them.

المريود ما ليه مثيل هو أعوج ودر به عديل

Al-marud ma lio matheal, huo aa'waj wa darbu a'adeal

No one is like the beloved, he is not straight, but his way is straight (280)

This proverb means that if you love a person and he does unacceptable things, you ignore it as you do not feel that he has done something wrong. People use this proverb to emphasize the fact that lovers forgive each other's mistakes.

ناره الاوقدها يدفاهها

Naru al-ugda yadfaha

Let him get warm with the fire that he lighted (283)

The point of this proverb is that a person must face the consequences of anything that he does. People use this proverb to emphasize the fact that whether a person does good or evil, he will face the consequences.

كل شئ بتمنه

Kulu shayi bi-tamanu

Everything has its price (287)

This proverb means that one cannot get anything without hard work. It might also be used when negative consequences occur, to remind the person that what has happened to him is a result of what he did.

كل عقدة ليها حلّال

Kullu a'ugdah laiha h'lllal

Every knot has someone to undo it (109)

The point of this proverb is that there is a solution for any problem. It encourages people not to lose hope and to seek help when they are in trouble. People use it to comfort someone who feels helpless due to critical problems.

هما يبكي و هما يضحك

Haman yibakki wa haman yid'd'ah'ik

Some worries make you cry and some make you laugh (288)

People use this proverb often in an ironical way to express their grief and sorrow.

كل زمن له رجال
Kullu zaman leho rijal
Every time has its men (289)

This proverb states that each era has its famous people, whether they are scholars, governors or courageous people or for any other reasons. People use this proverb to emphasize that each era has its good men who leave their mark on people's lives.

الغيبات للرجال هيئات
Al-ghiybat lilrijal haibat
Absence is dignity for men (290)

This proverb means that travelling gives men knowledge and wealth. It is used to encourage people to travel in search of a better life.

مالاً توادعه وادعه
Malan tiwadia'u wadia'uu
Money that you consign, say farewell to it (291)

This proverb means that if you give money to anyone to trade with it or to keep it, you have to say good-bye to it, as nobody will look after it as well as you do. This proverb advises people not to leave others to deal with their business.

كل كثير يرخص إلا ابن آدم كلما كثر يغلى
Kullu katear yarkhas's' ila ibn adam kullma kitir yaghla
Too much of anything makes it cheap, except for people, who become more valuable (293)

People become stronger when they are united in large groups. The message of this proverb is that unity makes people more worthy and effective.

كلام القصير ما بتسمع لمان النهار يحمى
Klam al-gis'ear ma bitsamia' laminn al-nihar yahma
The words of a short person are never heard until the day gets hot (294)

A short person in this proverb means a poor person. Sometimes, people measure a person by his appearance and consider a well-built man rather than a wise one who is short or thin. The proverb says that people do not consider a poor man's words as good advice until they get into trouble and find out that what he has said was right. The message of this proverb is that people should not judge each other by appearances.

زلة الجاهل مستوره وزلة العالم مشهوره
Zalat al-jahil mastoara wa zalat al-a'alim mash-hura
The ignorant one's mistake is hidden and the scholar's mistake is famous (295)

This proverb notes that when ignorant people do things wrong, no one talks about their mistakes, but if a scholar makes one mistake all the people talk about it.

لا انكسرت قِزازه ولا إندفق عسل
La inkassarat gizaza wa la indafaq a'asal
The bottle is neither broken nor its honey spilt (296)

When people argue with each other and one of them gets angry, the other party in the argument or a third party might use this proverb to calm the angry one down. It means that every thing is fine in spite of the argument.

الحلم سيد الأخلاق
Al-hilm sayeed al-akhlaq
Tolerance is the master of good manners (297)

The point of this proverb is that forbearance is the most important aspect of good manners. People quote this proverb to an angry person to calm him down and to encourage him to forgive the one who has annoyed him.

لا خلقه ولا اخلاق
La khilga la akhlag
Neither beauty nor good manners (298)

All humankind praises good manners. If a person is not good looking but has good manners, people do not think about his appearance as he has an important kind of beauty. People consider the one who is not handsome and behaves badly as a combination of all the negative properties.

ترى الرجل الهزيل فتزدريه وفي أثوابه أسدٌ هصور
Tara al-rajul al-hazeala fatazdreahi wa fi athwabihi asdun has'oar
You see a weak person and condemn him, but he has a lion under his clothes
(301)

The following proverb, like the foregoing one, might be used to describe a person as quiet, but very effective and strong. It might also be used to describe a harmful person:

تحت السواهي دواهي

Tih't al-sawahi dawahi

There are great disasters beneath silence (302)

ما كلو بركه بتجيب ولد

Ma kullu barka bitjeeb walad

Not every labour is rewarded with a baby boy (305)

The above proverb reflects the mentality of Sudanese in discriminating between their own children on the basis of their sex. Parents prefer a male child, as he is the one who keeps his father's name. His children will take their grandfather's name as their family name, unlike a female child whose children will take their father's name. The one who has a male child will not be considered as a dead person after his death as his son will keep his name. On the other hand, the one who has only female children may be considered as a dead person even before his death as his name will not be taken by any other generation.

However, the main point of this proverb is to warn people to be cautious about what they are doing, as the consequences will not be positive all the time.

ما بخلي حجرا ما بقلبو

Ma yakhali h'ajaran ma yaglibu

Leave no stone unturned (306)

People use this proverb in two different situations. It can be used to describe a person who has lost something and who makes an intensive search, to the point that he turns over everything that he thinks his thing might be under. In this case, they mean that he is at a great loss. In the other situation, people might use it to describe a person as very curious to know about others, or even to get general knowledge.

لا يرحم ولا يخلي رحمة ربنا تنزل

La yarh'am wa la yakhli rah'mat rabanna tanzil

He neither gives mercy to others, nor allows God to have mercy on them (308)

This proverb is used to condemn those who do not help and put obstacles to prevent other people from helping.

أخرب من الجراد

Akhrab min al-jarad

He causes more havoc than grasshoppers (309)

To illustrate this proverb one of my informants said:

Do you remember the year 1984 and what happened in that year? Grasshoppers attacked all the fields in the country. There was a great lack of crops, so famine attacked the

country. If a person can cause more havoc than grasshoppers that means he is a real devil. This proverb is used to disparage someone who harms others or takes revenge.

ناح وأسود مراح أبيض ج
Abead' ganah' wa aswad murah'
Having a white wing and a black pasture (311)

This proverb describes a person who looks very rich in the way he dresses, but in reality, he is poor. The phrase 'black pasture' means that he has no animals whereas the one who has a large number of animals is considered a rich man. The proverb is used to mock a person who struggles to appear rich.

أبوي أمير وابوك أمير مين بسوق الحمير
Aboi ameer wa abook ameer mean bisoq al-h'ameer
My father is a prince and your father is a prince; who will look after the donkeys!
(312)

This proverb is entirely decontextualized. It is directed at over-proud people who are unwilling to follow each other's advice or help each other in any way.

إن جاتك في مالك سامحتك
Inn jattak fi malak samah'atak
If it struck your wealth, it is merciful (319)

This proverb means that if life has struck you through any loss of your wealth or money at least it forgave you in regard to health or your children. People use the proverb to console a person in such a situation, that it would be worse if this disaster happened to your health or your family.

المال ضل الضحى
Al-mall d'ull d'uh'a
Wealth is a forenoon shadow (320)

From their daily experience, people have observed that shadows of things like trees, mountains or buildings appear for a short time in the forenoon, and then disappear due to the sun's movement. They represent the short life of the forenoon shadow as a metaphor for the quick change in human circumstances from wealth to poverty. The message of this proverb is that one should not be too proud of his fortune as he might lose it quickly and be left only with his relationships with others. Therefore, people should establish good relationships with others and not rely on their wealth.

العين بصيره والأيد قصيرة
Al-a'in bas'eara wa al-aid gas'eara
The eye is perceptive, but the hand is short (323)

This proverb says that I can see your problem and understand it clearly, but unfortunately, I am powerless to help.

كل مكروبا يترخي
Kulu makroaban yitrakhi
Every tie will be loosened (324)

This proverb means that every difficult situation will end and good times will return. It is used to encourage people to be patient as their difficulties will not last long.

إبرته ما تشيل خيطين
Ibrato ma tasheel khetean
His needle never carries two threads (325)

When Sudanese recite this proverb about a person, they mean that he is impatient and nervous. In addition, it may be used to describe a person as narrow-minded. It is mostly used to describe a third party.

أبقى سواي وكوأي الناس تريدك
Abga sawai wa kawai al-nas tareadak
Be open-handed and revengeful; people will like you (326)

The proverb says that if you are generous in solving others' problems, but at the same time you take revenge when necessary, people will like you for your generosity and respect you for your power.

إبن آدم من طين يعكر ويصفي
Ibn adam minn teen ya'kar wa yas'fa
Man comes from mud; he becomes turbid and then clears (327)

This proverb says that as man is created out of mud, he has the same nature as mud. He becomes muddy if shaken and pure if he is left calm. It implies that a man gets angry if there are reasons for anger and very clear or quiet in normal circumstances. People use this proverb to apologize after they get angry, or they quote it to another person to calm him down.

الفي قلبو على لسانو

Al-fi galbo a'la lisanu

What is in his heart is on his tongue (328)

What he thinks in his mind he speaks directly without hesitation or fear of any person.

أدوة شبر سوى ضراع

Addo shibir sawa d'ura'

They gave him a span and he made it a cubit (330)

This proverb says that they gave a man a size or a distance of one span and he exaggerated and made it a cubit. If people allow a person to do a thing in a limited way, and he exceeds that limit, people may quote this proverb to describe him as gluttonous or greedy. Usually the proverb is used to describe a third party, but not to speak directly.

عين ابن آدم ما يملها إلا التراب

A'in abin Adam ma yamlaha ila al-turab

Only sand fills Adam's son's eye (331)

This proverb means that man is greedy by nature. In Sudan, people say that a contented person has filled eyes. Human beings always want more than they have.

جلد النمر ما بتغير

Jild animir ma bitgheyyar

The leopard's skin never changes (332)

This proverb says that the leopard's skin stays the same regardless of its age. The proverb represents humans' negative behaviour. If one's behaviour is evil he will never change whatever you do to change him.

الماعون إن كاله بدفق

Al-ma-a'oan inn kalou bidaffiq

The container will overflow when it is overfilled (333)

If you try to put in a vessel more than it can take, the excess will flow out of the container. This proverb is used to advise people not to exaggerate in any matter, and to be moderate.

اللي ما تعرف أصله دليله فعله

Al-ma ta'rif as'lu dalealu fia'lu

If you do not know a man's origins, his deed is the indication (334)

The point of this proverb is that people can be judged by their actions or deeds.

الطبيعة جبل

Al-tabaia' jabal

Human nature is a mountain (335)

This proverb describes human nature as firm and as difficult to change as a mountain. People in Sudan use the word human nature to mean morals and sometimes customs. They use this proverb to criticize those who repeatedly make the same mistakes and promise to change their behaviour.

الطبع يغلب التطنع

Al-tabia' yaghib al-tatabua'

Nature conquers pretence (336)

This proverb means that habits are stronger than learning and if one tries to behave differently from his own nature, he will not be able to continue pretending as his natural behaviour will appear very soon. It is used to advise people to avoid pretence.

اللي طبعه جيد يبقى سيد

Al-tabau jayead yabqa sayead

He who has good manners becomes a master (337)

A person with good manners avoids problems with others and tries to solve them with wisdom. Therefore, people will like him and might choose him to become their leader.

الطغى يزيل النعمة

Al-tagha yazeal al-nia'ma

Pride eliminates blessing (338)

This proverb states that if a person becomes proud of what he has, God will remove the causes of his pride from him. It is used to advise people to praise God's gifts instead of becoming proud of their property.

أظلم من حيه
At'lam min h'aiya
More oppressive than a cobra (339)

As snakes generally cannot dig their own holes to hide in, they find other animals' holes and hide in them. Any animal is afraid to enter its hole when a cobra is inside; it has to make another hole for itself. This proverb is used to describe a person as extremely unjust.

إتعلم الزيانه في روسين اليتامى
Ita'alm al-ziyana fi rosean al-yatama
Learn haircutting on orphans ' heads (505)

This proverb observes that if you hurt an orphan, you do not need to worry about the consequences, as they have no parents to complain to you or punish you. The point of the proverb is that people deem weak those who do not have anyone to protect them.

الإضينه دقه واعتذر له
Al-id'iyah dugoo wa a'tadir loo
Punish the weak man and apologize to him (348)

This proverb suggests that a weak man cannot take any action against you in any situation. People use it when one person humiliated by another, especially if the latter is in a strong position and then apologizes for what he did. It is used to condemn those who do not mind hurting people and are not embarrassed to apologize for their behaviour without being really sorry.

أداني أمان الكديس للفار
Addani amann al-kadees lilfarr
He gave me the kind of peace that the cat gave to the rat (340)

Cats are known as rats' hunters, and if a person had an agreement with someone who later betrayed him, he might use this proverb to express his frustration about the relationship. This proverb is commonly used nowadays as people do not trust each other as the old generations used to do.

السواى ما حداث
As-sawai ma h'addath
A doer is never a great talker (341)

This proverb means that a practical person does not talk too much as he puts his work first. One of my informants commented that "our politicians did not hear about this proverb. They kept preaching to us for years about what they would do, but we have seen nothing in reality. People who work never talk too much."

الشحاد كورتو ما بتتملي

Al-shah'add korto ma bititmali

The bowl of the beggar never fills up (342)

This proverb says that whatever you give a beggar; you will never satisfy him; he will carry on begging because he begs from greed more than need. The proverb might be used to condemn greediness and the habit of begging if a person does not desperately need to do it.

الشينه منكوره

Al-sheana mankoora

A dishonourable thing is denied (343)

This proverb says that people are always denying what they think might bring them shame. It is used if a person has tried to escape others' criticism. Some people also may use it if one tries to hide his relationship with a relative who has a bad reputation.

الممنوع مرغوب

Al-mamnua' marghoob

Everything that is forbidden is desired (344)

This proverb states that it is human nature to desire forbidden things.

لا بجدع لا بجيب حجار

La bijadia' la bijeeb h'ujar

He neither throws stones nor brings them (to the one who uses them) (345)

This proverb describes a person as useless. It is used in a situation when a group of people are doing some work or discussing a matter and one of them does not join in, so they use this proverb to encourage him to take part.

أصلع ما يخاف من قوب

As'la' ma bikhaff min goob

A bald-headed man is not scared of scabies (347)

If he has already lost his hair, a man will not be afraid of a disease that damages people's hair. This proverb might be quoted to a person who is careless about his behaviour due to his past.

من دقته وأقتل له

Minn dignu wa aftil lu

Give him twine from his own beard (349)

This proverb describes people who use your own money or property to give pretending that they help you. People use this proverb when they make a fool of a person. They also use it to express their disagreement with the way that a person pays a debt or solves a problem.

أطلب الفضل من أهل الفضل ولا تتطلب من الفقري بعد يتمول

Aṭlub al-fad'el minn ahal al-fad'el wa la taṭlub al-fagri ba'dd yitmawal

Ask a favour from those who have favour and do not ask a poor man after he becomes rich (350)

One of my informants explained this proverb as follows:

A noble man is generous by his origin and you can ask his favour at any time for he will never turn you down. But the one who became rich after poverty might think twice before he tries to help you. He feels that by spending his money, he will become poor again or he might even insult you.

However, the proverb is also used to encourage people to seek help from high minded and respectable people.

أطلبوا حوائجكم من أحاسن الوجوه

Aṭlibu h'awaijkum min ah'asin al-wajoh

Ask your needs from those who have pretty faces (351)

The phrase "pretty faces" in this proverbs means noble people. The proverb says that if you have to ask someone to do you a favour, you should ask a noble person for he will do it for you without reminding you from time to time that he did you a favour. People use this proverb as advice to ask for help from the right people.

الأعور في بلد العمي يقدل

Al-a-a'war fi balad al-a'imi yagdil

In the land of the blind the one-eyed man is swaggering (352)

If a person has only limited knowledge about a thing and he is found advising those who are more ignorant than him, people quote this proverb to him. In addition, if a person hides an ethical problem and condemns someone who speaks publicly about the same problem, people may use this proverb to criticize him.

الطشاش في بلد العمي شوف
Al-tashash fi balad al-a'imi shoaf
Half blind is seeing in the land of blindness (354)

This proverb means that one who cannot see properly is considered as endowed with eyesight in comparison with the blind. People might quote this proverb when someone with a limited level of knowledge or wealth becomes proud of it among those who have less than he has.

حلم الجيعان عيش
H'ilem al-jiya'an a'eash
A hungry man dreams of bread (355)

This proverb means that you dream of what you worry about. People might quote it to a person who talks about something out of reach or beyond his ability. They remind him that he cannot achieve it.

في العين حقرة وفي القلب نقره
Fi al-a'in h'ugra wa fi al-galib nugra
He is contemptible to the eye but leaves his mark on the heart (356)

This proverb means that people might despise a person when they see him, but when he takes actions they might be impressed by him. It advises people not to judge others by their appearance.

الحقيقه مره
Al h'agiyga murrah
Truth is bitter (357)

The meaning of this proverb is that it is difficult for people to accept the truth if it will affect their interests. People might also quote this proverb if a person faces trouble because he has spoken the truth. The brave one who dares to speak the truth before anyone might get into trouble.

كان ليك حاجة عند الكلب قوله يا سيدي
Kan leak h'ajah a'indd al-kalib goolo ya sidi
If you need something from a dog, call it my lord! (358)

The point of this proverb is that if you require something from any person regardless of his status you can flatter him to get what you want. Although flattery is criticised by religion and tradition, this proverb encourages people to use it to get what they want.

الباب البجيب الريح سيده وأستره
Al-bab al-bijeab al-reak' sidu wa istreeh'
If a door brings wind shut it and relax (359)

This proverb means that one should solve the causes of his troubles. People use it to encourage others to put an end to their troubles.

عينه في الفيل يطعن في ضله
A'ino fi al-feel yata'an fi d'ulu
He looks at the elephant and stabs its shadow (360)

A hunter wanted to hunt an elephant. When he saw it, he got scared and stabbed the elephant's shadow. This proverb comments that although you know the person who causes trouble, you avoid talking to him directly. This proverb is quoted to someone who pretends to have bravery and power but when he faces the danger he is scared and fails to do anything.

ابلاى برقبتو بربطو من صلبه ماله
Abalai biragabtu barbotu minn s'ulbu malu
A monkey has a neck, why has it been tied by its waist? (361)

This proverb is common in use in Darfur region. People use it as criticism that one does not do things directly.

أكلنا عيش وملح
Akalnna a'eash wa millih'
We ate bread and salt together (362)

This proverb says that we have shared our food in bad and good times. It is known in Sudanese culture that when you share food with some one or exchange food with him that means you have made an agreement with him for loyalty. Both sides should stand by the unwritten contract that each of them should protect the other and avoid betrayal or any other action against one another. People use this proverb to express fidelity towards each other. They believe that if you have betrayed this kind of relationship you will face the consequences of death or other losses either of souls or of wealth.

Sudanese describe their pain when they have been betrayed by someone with whom they have had a close relationship, by using the following proverb:

جرح الملاح أمضى من جرح السلاح

Jarh' al-mulah' amd'a min jarh' al-silah'

The wound inflicted by trusted associates is deeper than a weapon's wound (368)

إن قمت سائر كتر العواير

Inn gumtta saiyear kattir al-a'wayir

If you want to move away, make more scandals (366)

The person who created the above proverb is from a nomadic area in the Western Sudan as the word *saiyear* means to move with your animals to another place. In Sudan, herders stay in a place for a short time and when the place runs out of grass and water they move with their animals to another place. This type of living is a cycle for life. They build their social life with those who share their grass and water, and when they move to another place, they establish new relationships.

إن جاتك من صغارها عدها من كبارها

Inn jattak minn s'ugharah a'iddaha minn kibbara

If you are offended by children, count the offence as coming from their parents (367)

This is because children imitate their parents and if they hear them talking about a person in a respectful way they respect that person as well; if they hear them talking negatively about him, they show disrespect or repeat what they have heard from their parents.

الراجل ضررس بحمل الحلو والمر

Al-rajil d'urru' bih'mal al-h'illoo wa al-murr

A man is a molar tooth; he tolerates the sweet and the bitter (368)

This proverb is intended to reflect men as the patient and strong gender. It means that whether the situation is good or hard men are capable of dealing with it. The proverb might be quoted to a person if he showed impatience in difficulties and hard times.

العين ميزان

Al-a'ain meazan

The eye (sight) is scales (369)

This proverb suggests that the expert in his craft measures things by eye without using any tools. People use this proverb to encourage good observation and strong perception of things.

التكرار يعلم الحمار
Al-tikrar yia'lim al-h'imar
Repetition teaches a donkey (370)

This proverb might be used in two different situations. The first is to encourage repetition to make people understand, and the other is to mock the one who does not understand after many explanations.

العطشان يشوف الرهاب مويه
Al-a'tshan yashoof al-rihabb moaya
A thirsty person sees a mirage as water (371)

The meaning of this proverb is that a person in a desperate situation holds on to anything thinking that he might find hope in it. People use this proverb to describe those who helplessly seek remedies or solutions for their problems.

ما تدفق مويته على الرهاب
Ma tedafiq muiytak a'la al-rihab
Do not pour out your water because you saw a mirage (372)

This proverb advises that one should not lose what he has because he has seen a sign that he might get something else. It is used to warn people not to give up what they have, and rely on a promise.

القلب كان غاب الجته بالخراب
Al-galib inn ghabb al-jitta belkharab
If the heart has gone, the body will be ruined (373)

Sudanese use the word 'heart' as an equivalent to the word 'mind'. They might say that a person has no heart and they mean that he does not concentrate when he works. This proverb describes a mad person as one whose heart has gone. It means if one has lost his mind or become mad, his body is useless although it is fit and healthy. The proverb might be used to advise people not to blame a mad person regardless of his healthy appearance.

الفي ايده القلم ما بكتب نفسو شقي
Al-fi ieduo al-galam ma biktib a'umro shagi
He who has a pen in his hand will never write of himself as an unfortunate (374)

This proverb emphasises human selfishness. One of my informants explained it as follows:

People in authority usually start changing things beginning with their own circumstances. They build good houses, buy expensive cars and try to get everything for themselves before the end of their regime. Then they try to find good jobs for their relatives and the concerns of their nation come late on the list of their agenda. In fact, they misuse the meaning of this proverb.

People use this proverb to criticize people in similar positions to those mentioned by my informant.

عذر أقبح من الذنب

A'udr agbah' minn al-danb

His excuse is worse than his sin (375)

This proverb might be quoted to a person who gives an unacceptable excuse to justify his misdeed.

الليل والنهار واحد على العميان واللوم والشكر واحد على السجمان

Al-leil wan-nahar wah'id a'la al-a'miyan wa-loam washukur wah'id a'la as-sajman

Day and night are the same to a blind person, as are blame and praise to an idle one (376)

In a discussion one of my informants insisted that there is no use in advising an idle person, thanking him or blaming him, as he is senseless by nature and no one can change human nature. I argued that whatever a person's nature is he can change, but my informant used the first part of the proverb to ask me if daylight makes a difference in a blind person's life. People might quote this proverb to say that some people will not improve.

النجيع ولا الوجيع

Al-najeea' wala al-wajeea'

Leaving home is better than staying and being miserable (377)

If one is continuously offended in his own place, it is better for him to leave it. People use this proverb to encourage others not to accept humiliation even if it is from their own people. Those who leave their countries because governors persecuted them for their political activities also might use this proverb to express their frustration.

أرنب السلطان تقود الفيل

Arnab al-sultan tagoad al-feel

The Sultan's rabbit leads the elephant (378)

Although a rabbit is a weak animal this rabbit can lead the elephant because it is the rabbit of the sultan. People use it to emphasise the fact that the one who is close to power and authority can do what he likes.

لوفيهما خير ما أباهما الطير

Law fiyha khear ma abaha al-tayear

If there were any good in it, birds would not have rejected it (379)

People use this proverb to express their desperation about a matter.

خير وسيلة للدفاع الهجوم

Khear waseela lildifa' al-hujoom

Attack is the best means of defence (380)

The above proverb is used to encourage those who are wronged to defend themselves.

الباباك في البحر يقول ليك مليتني عجاج

Al-babak fi al-bah'ar yigul leak maleatni a'ajaj

He who hates you will say that you threw dust at him even if you were in the middle of the sea (381)

Someone who hates you tries to find any excuse to make trouble for you.

إتمسكن لمن تتمكن

Itmaskan lamman titmakkan

Pretend to be humble until you have power (382)

This proverb says that if you want to get what you want you have to pretend that you are a weak person. People use it to condemn those who hide their power and show it only after they achieve their aims.

الولف كتال

Al-wilif kattal

Close attachments kills (383)

This proverb means that familiarity creates a strong relationship between people. Sudanese usually use the word 'al wilif' as equivalent in its meaning to the word 'love'. In this proverb, they mean that strong attachment or love might cause great pain to a person. One can quote this proverb to a distressed or grieving person who has left his place or dear ones.

تلصق الطين في الكرعين ولا يبقى نعلين

Tilis'iq al-tēan fi al-kira'ean wala bibga na'eleen

Mud stuck on the feet will not become shoes (384)

People use this proverb to emphasise that any type of relationship will not replace relatives or family relationships. They use it to condemn one who prefers to belong to other people rather than their own relatives.

بليالة مباشر ولا ضبيحة مكاشر

Balilat mubashir wala d'abih'at mukashir

It is better to offer boiled millet with a smile than a slaughtered animal with a frown (385)

A simple meal with a hearty reception is better than an elaborate meal to show hospitality, if the host is not glad to see you.

بعيد عن عينك بعيد عن قلبك

Ba'eed a'n a'eynak ba'eed a'n galbak

Far from your eyes, far from your heart (386)

The meaning of this proverb is that you hardly remember those who stay far away from you. People use it to blame each other or a third party if they forget a person because he is absent.

جلدا ما جلدك جر فيه الشوك

Jildan ma jildak jur fiho ashok

Skin that is not yours, stick thorns into it (387)

This proverb condemns human selfishness. It says that if a skin is not yours you can hurt it with thorns, as you do not feel the pain. The proverb is used to rebuke those who do not care how they use others' belongings when they borrow them or those who do not worry about others' problems.

مال البلاش كثر منه ولو يأذيك

Mal al-balash katir minu wa lao ya-adeak

Take as much as you can that is free, even if it harms you (389)

This proverb says that if you get a chance to have things for free, you take more than you need even it might harm you. This proverb criticises greedy people in an ironical way.

القرد في عين امه غزال

Al-girid fi a'ain umu ghazal

The monkey is a deer in his mother's eyes (390)

A monkey represents ugliness from the Sudanese point of view and a deer is a symbol of beauty. The point of this proverb is that a mother never sees her child as ugly. If a person expresses his admiration of his own things, people might use this proverb to tell him that they do not agree.

مصائب قوم عند قوم فوائد

Mas'aib qaweman a'inda qawemin fawaid

Misfortune for some is advantage for others (392)

This proverb means that some people might benefit from others' disasters, for example, when one dies and others get his money.

نايم في نومه جاهو كومو

Naim fi noamu jahu komu

He was asleep when he received his share (393)

This proverb comments that a person got his portion without striving for it. People use it in a situation when a person gets things without any effort. It might also be used when a bad event occurs without any expectation.

عصاعميان و مسكوه

A'miyan wa masakoho a'as'a

He is blind and they gave him a stick (394)

A blind person never leaves his stick behind him for any reason as he relies on it. If a person is given a thing or advice and he holds it all the time, people might use this proverb to remind him that he needs to be flexible and to make some changes in his ways.

شكار نفسو إبليس

Shakkar nafso iblees

The one who praises himself is a devil (395)

As the Quran stated that the devil said he was better than Adam, people condemn one who praises himself publicly. This proverb might be quoted to advise people to avoid this habit and to give others a chance to praise them.

عشم إبليس في الجنة

A'sham iblees fi al-janna

Devil's hope in Paradise (396)

It is believed that the devil will never see Paradise, so people use this proverb to confirm that what a person asks for will never come true.

عايره وادوها صوت

A'ayra wa addoha s'oaṭ

Racing and being lashed (397)

A herder may quote this proverb. It describes an animal running and still being lashed, as a consequence it increases its speed. If a person is cautious about building a relationship with people and sees in them something he does not like, people might quote this proverb to explain that the person has been alienated by what he has seen.

وقع الفاس في الراس

Waga' al-fass fi al-ras

The axe has fallen upon the head (398)

This proverb means that a problem has already occurred so it is difficult to find a way out of it. It is used in a situation where a negative action has taken place and people try to solve the problem when it is too late.

الفات حده ينقلب لصدده

Al-fatt h'adu yingalib lid'idu

That which goes beyond its limit will turn to its opposite (399)

Moderation is required whether in human relationships or in individuals' lives. Exceeding the boundaries between people or being extreme in daily life might spoil relationships or turn individuals' lives to hell. This proverb is used to discourage exaggeration in anything.

كان غلبك سدها وسع قدها

Kan ghalabak sadha wassa' gadaha

If you failed to patch a puncture, enlarge it (400)

This proverb says that if you have failed to solve a problem you should make it worse. People quote it to a person who tries to help to solve a problem, but causes more difficulties instead.

كريم اد غشيم

Karim adda ghasheem

A generous person has offered a gift to an undeserving one (401)

If a generous person offers a wicked person a gift, the latter hardly appreciates it and his reward to the generous one might be to harm him. Sudanese do not encourage honouring a villainous person for he will humiliate you. People use this proverb to discourage others from giving to the undeserving.

لا خيرا منك ودخانك يعمي

La khairan minnak wa dukhanak ya'mmi

No benefit comes from you, and yet the smoke you make causes blindness (403)

This proverb describes someone who creates problems and hurts others. It is used to condemn those who do not help others or even live as burdens on their society and yet become troublemakers.

لا قيني ما تعاشيني

Lageeni ma ta'asheeni

Better to meet me with a warm heart than offer me dinner (404)

It is better to receive a person graciously and to show him that you are happy to see him than to offer him food when you are displeased about his arrival. This proverb is used to advise people that a warm welcome is the most important element in making good relationships, not offering food.

لو طقو في كوعو ما تنزل دموعو

Laoo tagoo fi kua'o ma tanzil dimoa'o

Even if they hit him on the elbow, he will never shed tears (405)

This proverb describes a stingy person by saying that he even keeps his tears when he is in pain, because he feels that he will lose them. It is used to exaggerate in describing stinginess.

النفس اولى من الصاحب

Al-naffs awla min al-s'ah'ib

One's own self is worthier than a friend is (406)

Although this proverb implies selfishness, it declares the fact that people prefer themselves to their friends especially in difficult situations. In a situation where a person has to save himself first before he thinks about others, people may use this proverb to apologize that it is natural that they have to consider themselves first.

كل إنسان في نفسه سلطان

Kulu innsan fi nafsu s'ultan

Everybody is a sultan to himself (407)

This proverb indicates that everybody has dignity and values himself as a free man; nobody can compel him to do what he does not want to do.

شجرة الصندل تعطر فاسه
Shajarat al-s'andal ta'ttir fasa
A sandalwood tree perfumes its axe (408)

In this proverb, a noble person is metaphorised as a sandalwood tree because he does good even to his enemies. When an axe is used to cut a sandalwood tree, the perfume will stay on the axe; it never gets a bad smell for being the enemy of the tree. When people hurt a noble person, he still remains noble and does not react to his enemy's actions.

صمت دهرًا ونطق كفرًا
S'amat dahran wa nataq kufran
Paused for a year and then spoke nonsense (409)

This proverb is used to ridicule those who do not talk much, but when they do they either cause trouble by their talk or say unacceptable things.

القشبة التي قصمت ظهر البعير
Al-qasha alti qas'amat t'ahar al-ba'ear
The straw that broke the camel's back (410)

This proverb is used when there are many causes behind a given problem so when the last is added it creates a crisis.

طوله طول النخلة وعقله عقل السخلة
Tolu tool an-nakhala wa a'glu a'gl as-sakhala
As tall as a palm tree with a mind of a baby goat (411)

The proverb describes a person who is tall and well built, but silly with a small mind. It is used to condemn adults who behave in a stupid way.

عظم حوت ولا بفوت لا يتبلع
A'd'um h'utt la bitbalia' wala bifutt
A fish bone in the throat can neither be swallowed nor expelled (412)

This proverb describes a person who is very difficult to deal with as a fish bone swallowed by mistake. People use this proverb to express their frustration about such people.

سادي دي بطين ودي بعجين

Sadi di biteen wa di ba'jeen

He blocks one ear with mud and the other with paste (413)

This proverb is used in a situation when a person completely ignores what is going on around him and pretends that he does not hear or know about a given situation.

علمته الرماية فلما اشتد ساعده رماني

A'lamtahu al-rimaya fa-lama ishtadda sa'idahoo ramani

I taught him to shoot, but when his arm got stronger, he shot me down (414)

This proverb represents negative human nature, betrayal and perfidy. It is used when a person uses his knowledge against one who taught him or looked after him. The proverb is based on an excerpt from an old Arabic poem. A poet who was first satirized and later shot dead by his son said:

علمته نظم القوافي فلما قال قافيته هجاني

وأعلمه الرماية كل يوم فلما اشتد ساعده رماني

A'lamtahu nat'em al-qawafi falma qal qafitahu hajani

Wa ua'limahu al-rimayati kula yawmin falama ishtadda sa'idahu ramani

I taught him how to write poetry, when wrote his poem he lampooned me,

And taught him to shoot, but when his arm got stronger, he shot me down

Describing the betrayal by his son he said that he taught him how to write poetry, and in his poem he lampooned his father; he taught him how to shoot and then he shot his father dead. According to Arabic literature, the father died immediately after he said these words. People repeat these words or part of them to describe similar situations.

علمته الشحده سبقتني على الابواب

A'lamtu al-shah'ida, s'abagni a'la al-abwab

I taught him begging and he gets to the doors before me (416)

This proverb criticizes those who learn negative behaviour and become worse than the one who taught them.

رة جعجهكت بلا طحين

Katarat ja'ja'h bala tah'een

Much noise and no flour (417)

This proverb is used to condemn a person who talks too much but does no fruitful work.

في النهار يسبح وفي الليل يضح
Fi al-nahar yisabbih' wa fi-leil yid'abbih'
He prays all the day, but he slaughters (people) at night (418)

This proverb describes a person who pretends to be good by trying to show others good behaviour, but in secret he is evil. It might be used to describe a person as a hypocrite as well.

كر عيه قي البحر وفاتح خشمه لموية المطر
Kira'eaho fi al-bah'ar wa fatih' khashmoo limoayat al-matar
His feet are in the sea and he opens his mouth for the raindrops (419)

The Sudanese use the word sea when they mean the Nile river. The proverb says that although he stands in the Nile, he seeks raindrops in case the Nile runs dry. People use this proverb to exaggerate in describing a person as greedy.

الصفراء تَنَحَّتْ
Al-s'afra tinh'att
The yellow leaf will fall down (424)

A yellow leaf will fall from the tree; a green leaf will stay on the tree as it is strong and healthy. People use this metaphor to describe an evil person or leader as a yellow leaf bound to fall from a high place.

ضرب عصفورين بحجر
D'arab a'us'forean bih'ajar
He hit two birds with one stone (425)

This proverb is used when a person aims to do one thing and gains two benefits.

من عقولنا ما نُشَدَّتْ أُولُنَا
Min a'ugoalna ma nushidat us'oalna
Because of our wisdom nobody asked about our origins (426)

The proverb comments that if we always behave with wisdom and we do not make any mistakes, we do not give people any reason to search for our origins and question from which tribe we come. This proverb is used to emphasize the fact that a person should be judged by his manners and morals, not by his origins.

الدنيا بالمنافع والاخره بالاعمال

Al-duniya bil-manafia' wa al-akhra bi-ala a'mal

Life's benefit is in its opportunities, but the afterlife's benefit is gained with good deeds (427)

This proverb means that you can take any opportunity to make a good living, but for the sake of the day after you need to do good and to avoid evil.

ما هكذا تورد الابل

Ma hakaḍa torḍu al-ibil

That is not the way to take camels to the water pool (428)

As the environment affects metaphor, the people of the Sudan use their surroundings like animals or trees in figurative speech. Camels are common animals in the Sudan, considered as patient animals. This proverb is quoted to one who uses a bad approach.

مد رجلك قدر لحافك

Mid rijleak a'la gadur lih'affak

Stretch your legs according to your mattress (429)

The point of this proverb is to advise that one should live within his income and spend according to his means.

من تابع الناس مات هما

Mann tabba' an-nass mata hammann

Whoever chases people's affairs is bound to die of solitude (430)

The explanation of this proverb is straightforward. It encourages people not to interfere in others' affairs, and not to do things just in order to please others.

من حفر حفرة لاخيه وقع فيها

Munn h'afar h'ufratan liakhiyih waqaa' fiyaha

He who digs a hole for his brother falls in it (431)

The word brother in this proverb refers to any person that is not your enemy. The teaching of this proverb is that if you harm others you will be punished with your own weapons. Both the Quran and the H'adith emphasise the consequences of harming others.

من عاشر قوماً أربعين يوماً صار منهم
Munn a'ashara qawman arba'ean yawman s'ar mithlahum
He who lives with a group for forty days becomes one of them (432)

The point of this proverb is that it is human to socialize with people you live with. Whether you take bad companions or good ones, eventually you will behave like them. It encourages people to keep good company and to avoid evil people.

دنیا دبنقا دردقی بشایش
Duniya dabanga dardigi bishaish
Life is brittle as *dabanga* (a clay pot); roll it slowly (433)

This proverb is commonly used all over the country although it is a Darfurian proverb. The word *dabanga* is known among people of the western Sudan as a big cylindrical seed store made of clay and used to store corn or other seeds for the dry season. As the material used to build this type of store is only clay, people must move it by rolling it very slowly, otherwise it will be broken. Metaphors from people's surroundings are used with great effect to express their wisdom in handling daily problems. The message of this proverb is that diplomacy is needed in life to solve problems.

الدنيا ما بتبقى جنه
Al duniya ma bitabaga jannah
Life will never be paradise (434)

This proverb emphasises the fact that life will not last long. People use this proverb as a reminder that both bodies and circumstances will change and end, so one should be patient in facing this painful truth.

قديمك ما تجفالو كان عود نار ادفا
Gadeemak ma tajaffa lao a'udd narr adaffa
Do not abandon your old belongings; even if it is only firewood use it to get warm (435)

The point of this proverb is to encourage people to preserve their heritage and traditions.

قدم السبت تلقى الاحد
Gaddim al-sabit talga al-ah'ad
Offer on Saturday and you will find on Sunday (436)

As Sudanese are often vouching for each other and united in solidarity, each individual has to take part in this responsibility by being co-operative. The one who is irresponsible and does not stand with the community will be isolated and will not find others' support when he needs it.

ما تامن لامن تطامن
Ma taamin lamin tit'amin
Do not feel safe until you are buried (437)

The meaning of this proverb is that life changes between good times and hard times. If you live a very comfortable life, do not think that you will never suffer for no one knows what will happen tomorrow. The lesson of this proverb is that one can have difficulties at any time.

كان اخيك زينو بل راسك
Kan akhiyak zayyano bil rasak
If your brother has his hair cut, wet yours (438)

The point of this proverb is that if your brother has been punished as a consequence of bad behaviour you have to expect the same treatment if you do what he has done. Sometimes people use it as a political gesture when the government arrests opposition politicians, as the arrests might include all opposition parties.

لا عنرَ لِمَنْ أُنذِر
La a'udra limann undir
No excuse for one who has been warned (439)

The point of this proverb is that the person who knows the consequences of his actions has no excuse for doing them, as he is aware of the outcome.

لا ناقة لي فيها ولا جمل
La naqat li fiyha wa la jamal
I have neither a she-camel nor a he- camel in this matter (441)

This proverb means that 'I have nothing to do with it'. People use it when they do not want to involve themselves in others' affairs.

إذا كان المتكلم مجنون فالمصطنت يكون عاقل
Ida kann al-mutakalim majnoon fa-al-mustamia' yakoon a'agil
If the speaker is mad, the hearer should be wise (442)

If some one exaggerates in his talk the listener should not believe whatever he hears, but use his own mind to judge it. People quote this proverb to notify the speaker that they do not believe all they have heard from him.

ليس من رأى كمن سمع

Laiysa mann raa kamann sama'a

The one who saw is not like the one who heard (443)

This proverb is used to advise people not to believe all they hear and to rely on what they see more than what they hear.

بلدا ما بلدك امش فيها عريان

Baladan ma baladak amshi fiha a'rian

Walk naked in a country that is not yours (444)

Although this proverb is commonly used throughout the country, it has a negative message: that you can do whatever you want if you are not in your own country. People also use it when they want to criticise a stranger's behaviour. For example if a person comes from another town or village and behaved in an unacceptable manner people would quote this proverb at him or about him.

من خلى داره قل مقداره

Mann khala daru galla migdaru

He who leaves his home (country) loses his dignity (445)

The point of this proverb is that every one is honoured in his country. People use it to encourage a person to stay in his own country and to warn him against emigration.

أقتل البلد بالولد

Aqtul al-balad bilwalad

Kill the country with its own sons! (446)

This proverb means that if you want to destroy a place, you could have eyes or spies in that place to advise you about the weakness of their people. This proverb calls for betrayal and treachery, it is considered as a diplomatic proverb that people use in wars.

أكل البعجبك وألبس البعجب الناس

Ukkl al-bia'jbak wa albas al-bia'ajb an-nas

Eat whatever you like and wear what other people like (447)

The point of this proverb is that one should consider the general taste in the way one dresses, but food or nutrition is a personal matter as it affects only the person himself. Therefore, if you are among other people try not to wear strange clothes; at the same time do not eat with them something that you do not like just to please them.

السمعة ولا طولة العمر

Al suma'a wala tolat ala'umer

Good reputation is better than long life (448)

The meaning of this proverb is that it is better to live for only a short time behaving with good manners and having a good reputation, rather than having a long life without good values. My father used to quote this proverb on many different occasions. Especially when a relative or a friend hurt him, he used to respond in a wise way. I used to talk to him about his way of life, but he used to tell me that life is short and what will remain behind us is what we did for people. Then he quoted this proverb.

كلبا ما ساعيه عند القتيص ما تلقاه

Kalban ma saa'iyho a'indd al-ganeas' ma talgaho

If you did not bring up a dog you will not find it when hunting (449)

Although this proverb is related to rural areas where people use dogs for hunting, it is often used in urban areas as well. One informant explained it as follows:

If you have not brought up your own dog and trained it how to hunt you will not find it when you need it for hunting. It is the same thing in other occupations: you need your own tools to rely on. For example, you are a student now; if you did not study hard, you cannot find anything in your memory to write on your exam day.

This proverb may be quoted to any person who is not well prepared for his work, whether inside or outside the family.

بيعة في سعين

Biya'a fi sia'yyan

Sale in a sack (450)

This proverb is used when a person buys a thing without having full details about it. One day I bought a small piece of land in the town where we live. I did not see the land, but I completed the official procedure with a lawyer and the property owner. My mother was very angry, because we did not see the land ourselves. She then recited this proverb, insisting that something might be wrong with it. Two years later, I found that the land is on the edge of a *wadi* (valley). People usually avoid building housing or doing any business near valleys in that area because it is sandy and subject to erosion.

A Sudanese folklorist's view

Although I have heard the following proverbs in their natural context in my daily life as an insider in my community, they were described to me by Dr. Malik Al-Zaki, a well-known folklorist who has had radio and TV programs about folklore for many years. I

used to visit him in his house in Omdurman town during my fieldwork to record some of my data. I have translated and summarised the exact meaning of his words. Most of the proverbs discussed here are originally from western Sudan although many of them are known throughout the country.

الخريف اللين من شواقيروا بين
Al-kharif al-liyyin min shawageeru biyyin
A wet autumn is known by its signs (451)

Dr. Al-Zaki said:

Farmers can predict from the very beginning whether they will have a good rainy season or not by means of certain signs. In fact, this proverb is used as a metaphor in any situation where you can know the endings by signs and give a conclusion.

He continued: When you say:

الجواب من عنوانو يكفيك
al-jawab min a'nwano yakfeek
A letter's address satisfies you
(The address of a letter reveals its contents) (453)

That means you know about the content of a matter from initial signs.

لكل قاعده شواذ
Likuli qa-a'da shawad
Every rule has its exceptions (453)

This proverb is a classical proverb used without any changes in its form. People use it to justify their attitude towards the law or to treat a given situation as an exceptional case.

المال الما ملك ما تحسبه في راس مالك
Almal al-ma malak ma tah'sibo fi rass malak
Wealth is not yours; do not count it as your capital (454)

Dr. Al-Zaki said this proverb means that one should not rely on what others have, especially in business. He gave me another proverb to explain further:

الشهر الما عندك فيه نفقة ما تعد ايامو

Al-shahar alma a'indak fiyho nafaga ma tia'id ayyamu

Do not count the days of a month for which you have no pay (455)

There is no use in counting the days of a month if you will not be paid in that month.

الما ليها ضناب الله بحاحي ليها

Al-ma leyha d'anabb Allah bih'ah'I leyaha

That which has no tail, Allah will drive insects away from it (456)

This proverb reflects the pastoral environment and it seems it was first quoted by cattle-herders. Usually animals use their tails to drive flies and insects from their bodies. If an animal has no tail for any reason, God will look after it by protecting it from flies or give it an idea that it can use to defend itself when insects attack it.

Dr. Al-Zaki said this proverb is used in a situation when a person is poor or of a low status, and people think that he/she has nobody to protect him/her. One can quote this proverb to explain God's justice.

I have always heard this proverb in Darfur region.

ما تشكر لي راكوبه في الخريف

Ma teshakkir laiya rakoba fi al-khareef

Never recommend a thatched hut in the rainy season (458)

To explain the meaning of this proverb Dr Al-Zaki said:

Thatched huts are found in rural areas in Sudan. They are very useful in summer, but in winter when it rains nobody can rely on them. Therefore, you cannot advise anyone to have a thatched hut as a shelter in the rainy season.

The following proverb is used when someone praises a person in front of people who know about his faults. People recite it to show that the praise is undeserved.

بيت القش بدسك ما بدسك حسك

Biyat al-gash bidissak ma bidiss h'ssak

A thatched hut will hide you, but not your voice (459)

Dr Al-Zaki illustrated this proverb as follows:

If you live in a thatched hut, it will hide you from others' eyes. But when you talk any passer-by can hear what you say. Therefore, those who live in such houses should be careful about what they say, especially about other people.

الراس ما بشيل جرین

Alras ma bisheel jarrean

The head cannot carry two pots (460)

In rural areas, women use pots to carry water from wells or *wadis* (valleys) to their homes. A woman cannot carry two pots of water on her head at the same time. This proverb means that you can do only one task at a time. It may be directed at a person who wants to do many things at the same time and fails to finish any of them well.

الجري و الطيران غلب النعام

Al-jari wa al-tayran ghalab al-na'am

Running and flying at the same time proved impossible for the ostrich (461)

The ostrich tried to fly and run at the same time, but it found it was an impossible thing to do. This proverb implies that one cannot join two contrary things or reverse situations.

قلت تور قال أحلبوه

Qulta toar qal ah'libu

I told him that it is an ox, but he said milk it (462)

This proverb is used to criticise unacceptable stubbornness when a person is determined on foolish ideas.

جقلو ولا مشي عرجا

Jagloo wa la mashi a'urruja

An unpaved or muddy road is not a path for lame people to walk (464)

Dr. Al-Zaki illustrated this proverb as follows:

This proverb is originally from the western Sudan. The word '*jagloo*' refers to muddy roads. Usually it is difficult for truck drivers and animals' herders to use unpaved roads during the rainy season, especially in Darfur region where the nature of the ground is very muddy. In the dry season, unpaved roads become bumpy and rough because animals and trucks were using them when they were wet. Therefore, it is very difficult for a crippled person to use them.

Any person may address this proverb to a person who tries to do some work beyond her/his ability, to warn against the consequences.

الارضه جربت الحجر
Al-ard'a jarrabat al-h'ajar
The termite tried the rock (465)

This proverb means that although the termite is a small and weak insect it tries to dig into rocks to live in them or eat them. The message of this proverb is that however poor or weak one is he/she should try any possible means to achieve goals. The proverb may be applied to any person who avoids doing what he/she wants because he believes that he might not be able to do it.

أسأل مُجرب ولا تسأل طبيب
Asal mujarib wala tasal tabeeb
Ask an expert, do not ask a doctor (466)

This proverb means that people prefer knowledge gained by experience.

أدي العجين لخبازو ولو ياكل نصه
Adi al-a'jeen likhabazu wa-lau yaku nus'u
Give the dough to a baker even though he may eat half of it (467)

This proverb advises that you should let your work be done by experts whatever the cost, as you will pay more in the end by asking unprofessional people to do work for you.

المُضطر يركب الصعب
Al-mud'tar yarkab al-s'a'ab
The desperate will take the difficult path (468)

This proverb comments on the fact that a desperate person might do anything, as he/she has no choice. The message of the proverb is that we should not blame a person who does anything out of necessity as that might be the only way left for her/him.

النصيحه ضرب سوط
Al-nas'eaha d'arib s'oat
Advice is as painful as lashing (469)

The meaning is that it is difficult to tell someone directly that what he is doing is wrong. The word advice in this proverb means truth (people in Sudan sometimes use the word advice when they mean telling the truth).

النصيحة نور
Al-nas'eaha noor
Advice is light (470)

The metaphor in this proverb suggests that advice, like light, shows you the right way to take.

الني مرجوع للنار
Al-nai marjoa' lilnar
The raw food goes back to the fire (471)

If food is not well cooked, it has to be re-cooked. This proverb is quoted to encourage people to settle matters and not to leave them unresolved.

اليتيم ما بوصوه على البكاء
Al-yateem ma biwas'oho a'la al-bukka
An orphan will not be advised to cry (472)

Consolation and support to orphans are very important to help them to overcome their grief. No one should advise them to cry for they are already in a situation that compels them to do so. The application of this proverb is determined by the situation of the person. Dr. Al Zaki said that one meaning is, if you know that a person will be very good at doing a thing, you do not need to give him advice in how to do it.

كثره الولادات بكسرن رقبة الجنيا
Katarat al-waladdat biksiran ragabat al-jana
Too many midwives will break the child's neck (473)

The meaning of this proverb is that when too many people try to do one thing at the same time, they will spoil it.

However, this proverb contradicts many other Sudanese proverbs, like this one:

إيد على إيد تجدع بعيد
Eied a'la eied tajdau' ba'eid
A hand on a hand throws faraway
(gets work done quickly) (690)

This proverb means that a group of people can make the work lighter.

الدبيب الفي خشمو جراده ما بعضي
Ad-dabeeb al-fi khashmo jarada ma baa'dd'i
A snake that has a locust in its mouth does not bite (475)

The meaning of this proverb is that if you have bribed someone to do work for you, he will not be able to harm you or to say anything against you as you have paid him for his silence. In my discussion about this proverb with one of my informants, he explained that in the past one could not recite this proverb publicly as bribes were considered a criminal offence and the community would reject anyone who gave or took them. Nowadays as the economic situation is extremely confused, people simply give or take bribes under many different names.

Unfortunately, this kind of behaviour has penetrated Sudanese life and ethics during the last decade due to the severe decrease in the standard of living. Some people have been compelled by poverty and heavy family responsibilities to accept such things. Now people actually use this proverb or others with similar meanings to encourage each other to pay officials to finish their business.

الأيد الما تقدرها حبها ملوية
Al-eiad al-ma taqdara h'ibaha malwiya
A hand if you cannot oppose it, kiss it even if it is turned against you (476)

This proverb says that if you cannot resist a very strong force, it is better to accept it even if it is turned to insult you. It means that one has to be fraudulent and use tricks to save oneself.

شجره كان هوززت ولا وحيدوا يا ابلاي يا هبوياي
Shajara kan hozazat wala weh'eado ya habobai ya ablai
A tree cannot shake by itself; if a tree shakes, either a monkey or the wind shakes it (477)

This proverb is from Darfur region. My informant said it means that there is no reaction without action. This proverb is often used when people find proof against one who denies an accusation.

The following proverb is similar in its meaning and use to the above one:

العود لو ما قيه شق ما بقوت طق
Al-a'uoad lao ma fiyho shaq ma biqool taq
A stick without a crack in it will not creak (479)

This proverb means that it is unlikely a person will be accused without reason. People use it to express their suspicions about other people.

ما شتمك إلا اللي بلغك

Ma shatamak ila ali balaghak

The one who reported to you was the one who insulted you (480)

This proverb means that the one who reports gossip to you also wants to insult you. This proverb is used to advise people not to inform others about negative things said about them.

الحبل ينقطع محل رقيق

Al-h'abil bingatia' mah'al rigayeag

A rope will break where it is thin (481)

The situation in which this proverb might be used is when a person has something and desperately needs it, but for some reason it gets damaged or lost. In addition, people use it if someone has only one child and this child dies or becomes handicapped.

الجمال ما بعرف عوجة رقبته

Al-jamal ma bia'rif a'wajat ragabtu

The camel does not know the crookedness of its neck (482)

This proverb might be used in a situation when a person criticises others while he himself has similar defects or may make the same mistakes.

إذا حضر الماء بطل التيمم

Ida h'ad'ar al-ma batla la-tayammum

If water is available, one cannot use sand for ablution (483)

Muslims wash with clean sand or earth where water is unavailable. This proverb says that there is no need to use sand when water is available. People use the proverb when they have been using an alternative thing and suddenly they find the original one. They might also use it for example, when they are talking to a person in charge and suddenly his boss enters the place.

وليد دابي ومرقد وادي وبوباي سلطان ما منهم امان

Welwead dabi wa margadd wadi wa bobai s'ultan ma minahum amann

One cannot feel secure with a baby snake, a riverbed and a sultan's fallow land (484)

A baby snake may hurt you although it is small. If one builds a house or grows plants in a riverbed, they will be at risk of flooding all the time. In rural areas in the Sudan, some people abandon their lands for a long time, and others can use that land in a peaceful way. But if the fallow land belongs to the Sultan or the king, one should avoid it because he

might take it back at any time. The proverb points out that governors can use their authority at any time.

الماسك الدرب بلقى رفيق

Al-masik al-darib bilga rafeeg

He who takes the road will find a companion (485)

This proverb means that one should not hesitate for fear of travelling alone. The word road in this proverb implies the beginning of any enterprise. If a person begins any type of work, he will find someone to help him to finish it. For example, my mother uses it when my sisters or I want to travel. As Sudanese always prefer that women should have company when travelling, she hopes that we find a good companion on our journey. The use of this proverb is to encourage people's initiative. Anyone may use this proverb regardless of age or status.

كله شوکاي بسلوا بقدايته

Kulo shokai bisilo bigadayato

Each thorn is withdrawn through its own hole (486)

This proverb implies an interesting metaphor, where the one who first said it reflected his environment and his own surroundings to express his wisdom. In it there is an inner meaning and an outer meaning for the word thorn (*shuka*). In my discussion of this proverb, my informant gave many different interesting examples about the importance of disconnecting different problems. To illustrate this proverb, he said:

If a thorn pricked you, you would use the same hole where it entered your body to pull it out. If you tried to pull it out by a different way, you would hurt your skin and suffer pain. One should address problems with the same logic and solve each problem individually. For example, if you have a misunderstanding with any person, you should not treat his family in an unacceptable manner.

The proverb is used to advise people not to confuse different issues at one time.

أكل مع الجيعان وبيع مع الصرمان

Ukul ma' al-jia'ann wa biya' ma' al-s'arrman

Eat with the hungry and buy from the needy (487)

This proverb means that a hungry person will eat much food, so he will encourage you to eat as well; and if you want to buy something, try to find someone who a desperately needs money and buy from him, as he might sell his goods very cheaply.

اتبع الدرب ولو كان عاير وتزوج بت الحله ولو باير

Atbaba' al-darib wa lao a'yir wa itezawj bit al-h'ila wa lao bayir

Follow the road even if it is winding and marry a woman from your area even if she is old (488)

This proverb consists of two parts of advice. The first part means that one should follow a known road even if it is rugged or rough, to reach one's destination safely instead of risking an easy short road without knowing about it; it might be dangerous and put your life at risk. The word road in this proverb also means a manner or way of life. One should behave in a way that leads to good consequences. This part of the proverb bears a positive message and good advice.

The second part of this proverb encourages a man to marry from his own district even if the one he wants to marry is an old woman. Either the one who quotes this proverb wants the hearer to help to solve unmarried women's problem in his own community, or he prefers his community and does not like marriages to be outside his small community. Old people may use this proverb in advising young ones. People of the same age might use it to each other, but it is unlikely to be used by the young to old people.

الجيزه النكدانه والدار العطشانه والدابه الكسلانه ديل أجري منهم ما تلوانا

Al-jeeza al-nakedana wa al-dar al-a'tshana wa al-dabah al-kaslana, deal ajri minahum ma talwana

An unhappy marriage, a thirsty land and a lazy pack animal, escape all these (489)

A happy marriage is the cornerstone of a successful family. A miserable husband or wife will make family life unbearable. Therefore, it is not advisable to continue in such a marriage. Water is a historic problem in the rural areas in the Sudan. As in most of the Sudan people depend on very primitive ways to get water, they try to build their villages near natural sources of water or at least far from dry lands. The proverb advises to avoid living in a dry land. Animals are easiest means of transportation, so one should not keep a lazy animal. This proverb is related to farmers and villagers and it is not in use in urban regions.

الحي بشوف

Al-h'ai bishoof

One who lives will see (what will happen) (491)

This proverb means that any person will see what is going on in life and what the days are hiding. People usually use this proverb when sad events happen. They comfort themselves that as long as we live our lives we have to see difficult or strange things happen to us.

الحي رزقو حي

Al-h'ai rizgo h'ai

Whoever is alive, his sustenance is alive (492)

This proverb means that daily bread is a boon from God arranged for one's life. It is believed by the Sudanese that whatever the number of the family their living is arranged by God. Even when they have guests, they believe that Allah has arranged their food and the owner of the house is only a means for delivering this sustenance. Some people might use this proverb if they are criticized by others for having many children. However, with the severe drop in the standard of living some people in urban areas do not seem to believe in this proverb any more.

الفي قلبك يغالبك

Al-fi galbak yaghalbak

What is in your heart will defeat you. (493)

This proverb means that however you try to hide your intentions by your behaviour they will come out. Therefore, one should not hide his true feelings about a given situation. This proverb may be used when a person talks about an issue and suddenly says something different. When people hear that, they will understand that what he said as a slip of the tongue is his real opinion or his desire, so they may quote this proverb to him.

الجراد تابع اوله

Al-jarad tabia' awalo

The locust will follow its leaders (495)

Locusts usually attack crops in large groups. When the first ones in the flock fly in one direction all the rest follow. This proverb is an outcome of observation of a natural phenomenon. People use it to say that children will behave like their fathers or big brothers. The proverb also contains an insult to a third party. For example, if one criticized another's behaviour, a hearer who knows about the person criticized might use this proverb to say that the ancestors of the person had the same bad habit or reputation.

طاقيه كان وقعت من الراس، تقع في الكتيف

Tagiyyaa kan waga'aat min ar-as taga' fil al-katif

When a hat falls from the head, it falls on the shoulder (498)

This proverb is widely used in areas where tribal authority is still effective. A tribal leader, known as *nat'ir*, has many duties to surrounding villages under his authority. He has assistants known as *a'umad* singular *au'mda*. In the absence of the leader usually because of death or sickness, one of his assistants takes his place, usually a brother, a son, cousin or close relative. This proverb is used to emphasise the fact that tribal leadership has to be inherited within the same family.

الوجيعه تولد العقر

Al-wajea'a tawlid al-a'uqar

Prejudice makes the barren give birth to babies (498)

The proverb says that prejudice compels people to do impossible things to get rid of the causes of their troubles. In addition, they may work hard to achieve their goals in spite of any obstacles. This proverb may be used in a situation where someone achieves good results despite bad treatment.

الجنيه كلب تابع سيدو

Al-janiya kalib tabia' sido

A crime is a dog that follows its owner (499)

This proverb states that if someone commits a crime, his wrongdoing will follow him: either people remember his crime or he himself lives with a sense of guilt for the rest of his life. Therefore, people should mind their behaviour and avoid wrongdoing.

ركاب سرجين وقاع

Rakkab sarjean waqaa'

Who rides on two saddles will fall (501)

This proverb is quoted when a person does not keep to his principles. It may also be used if one tries to do two different things at a time. It encourages people to finish one thing at a time before they start another.

الدنيا تجيك والناس ما تخلياك

Al-duniya tajeak wa al-nas ma takhaleak

Life oppresses you and people blame you (502)

This proverb means that even when you face difficulties in your life people do not leave you alone as they hurt you too. People use this proverb to express their frustration when they face different difficulties all at once.

أضحك تضحك الدنيا معك أبكي تبكي وحدك

Ad'h'ak tad'h'ak al-duniya ma'k abki tabki wah'dak

Laugh and the world will laugh with you: cry and you will cry alone (503)

This proverb means that when you are in good times you will find people around, and you have to be happy to keep them around you. However, if you are miserable and want to forget your sadness, you must cry by yourself, as nobody will share that with you. People use this proverb either to encourage laughter or to complain that at hard times they do not find friends to support them.

السلطان كان أصبعه شاركه في الحكم بقطعه

Al-s'ultan kan s'ubaaa'o sharako fi al-h'ukum biqata'o

The sultan would cut off his finger if it shared his power (504)

This proverb emphasizes the love of authority and lack of confidence of governors. It says that however close a person is to the sultan, he will get rid of him whenever he fears that he might emulate him. The message of this proverb is that no one, even relatives, should trust those who are in power. One might use it to comfort a person who has been hurt by someone in power.

ارجى سفيه ما ترجى خايب

Arja safeeh ma tarja khayib

Rely on a prodigal person rather than on a hopeless person

Sudanese consider one who spends his money on unnecessary things and does not look after his family and relatives as imprudent and prodigal. In spite of the fact that such behaviour is extremely unacceptable, this proverb says that you can rely on him rather than an idle person. A man who stays at home without a job is considered as hopeless. The proverb condemns idleness, describing the unemployed as worse than the prodigal.

ارقد متدفى تقوم متعافى

Argud mudaffi tagoom muta'affi

Sleep warm and you will get up healthy (507)

This proverb is considered as health advice especially in winter. One may quote it to a person who complains of cold or stomach problems in winter.

أم العشره تموت تحت الشجره

Umm al-a'shara tamut tih't al-shajara

The mother of ten (children) dies under a tree (508)

This proverb means that having too many children will not guarantee that one will live and die in honour. A mother of ten might die lonely and poor in spite of the fact that she has people who are supposed to look after her. The proverb is used to comfort those who have no children and think that they might not find someone to help them when they are getting old.

البتريده لا تحاسبه لا تناسبه

Al-bitreedo la-teh'asbo la tinasbo

Neither share a business, nor enter into marriage alliance with the person you love dearly (509)

As Sudanese are very keen to keep a good relationship with their loved ones, they do not encourage establishing business relationships with them. The reason is that they affect either their work or their relationship for they cannot call them to account. If they did, or the other called them to account it might be misunderstood.

البيخاف طلوع الجبال بيقضي عُمره في الكراكير

Al-bikhaf tuloo' al-jibal bigad'I a'umro fi al-karakeer

Whoever fears climbing mountains will live forever in caves (510)

This proverb means that if a person is afraid to improve his life by taking a step forward, he will remain all his life at the same stage. The proverb encourages people not to fear or hesitate to improve their lives.

السعن المويتو شويه جاباغ

Assia'in al-moytu shawayya jalbagh

A leather bag with a little water in it shakes frequently (512)

This proverb means that one without knowledge talks too much about unnecessary things. In contrast a wise person talks about useful things when it is necessary. This proverb condemns ignorant talkative people. People use it to criticize them.

الحسنه في الما بيسواها مغصه للسواها

Al-h'asana fi elma biswaha maghas'a lilsawaha

A favour to the one who does not deserve it, is an annoyance to the doer (513)

If one does a favour to a person who does not deserve it he will regret doing it. The undeserving one will pay the giver back according to his ungrateful nature.

لا تامن بامانك ولا تخون بخوانتك

La ta-amin biamanak wala takhwain bikhwantak

Do not trust others to have your honesty and do not accuse them because you are dishonest (515)

If you assume others are as honest as you are you might regret it later. On the other hand, if you are traitorous do not assume that all people are like you. This proverb is used to encourage people to examine each other's character before they make judgements.

اليشكره بالكذب يبنذك بالكذب

Al-yashkurak bi-al-kadib yinabizak bi-al-kadib

He who lies to praise you will lie to criticise you (516)

This proverb is used to advise people not to trust a liar.

كاتل الروح وين بروح

Katil al-roah wean biroah

The soul killer has nowhere to go (517)

Anyone who kills a person can not hide forever. It is known that a murderer always leaves some sign that leads to him, or he might confess out of the pricking of his conscience. This proverb is used to warn that no criminal can hide from justice.

دقاني بكى وسبقتي إشتكى

Daqani baka wa sabaqni ishtaka

He slapped me and wept; he went before me and complained

(He wept to victimise himself) (519)

People use this proverb in a situation when a person hurts someone and complains about him at the same time.

الحضر أبو يعرف كلام جده

Al-h'id'ir abu ba'rif kalam jidu

Whoever lives to know his father, knows the wisdom of his grandfather (520)

This proverb implies that each father has a great effect on his son. A father teaches his son wisdom that he learnt from his father.

الحقيقة مثل الضل ما بتندفن

Al-h'ageega mithal al-d'd'ull ma bitindafin

Truth, like a shadow, cannot be buried (521)

If one tries to bury a shadow, he will fail whatever amount of sand he uses. Similarly, truth will always come out. The message of this proverb is that no one can hide the truth, so people should speak the truth always regardless of the consequences.

أترك من قل خيرته تلق غيرهُ

Atruk munn gala khiyro talga ghearo

Abandon the one whose benefit decreases and you will find some one better (522)

This proverb means that if you have a close friend or relative and you find that he is not good enough for your company, you should leave him and you will find someone who deserves to be your friend. The word benefit in the proverb means good (rather than evil). People use it to encourage a person to leave bad companions, or it might be used to comfort someone who abandons a bad friend and feels sad that he did so.

الما ضاق إيدك ما ببقى رفيقك

Al-ma d'aq iedak ma bibqa rafeaqak

He who does not suffer from your hand will not become your friend (523)

This proverb states that good friendship comes after a fight or an argument.

إذا كان رب البيت للطبل ضاربا فلا بأس على الصبيان فيه من الرقص

Ida kana rab al-beati lilṭabl d'arban fela bas a'la als'biyani fiyhi minn al-raqas'i

If the head of the house is a drummer, the boys are allowed to dance (524)

This proverb is a classical proverb used by ordinary people in its standard form. It means that youngsters behave as adults do. A child imitates his father or mother, so one should mind his behaviour for his children might do the same when they grow up. If a person makes a mistake that has already been made by his parents or a relative, people might use this proverb to blame his parents or his family by showing that older people have a great effect on their children's behaviour.

كالمستجير من الرمضاء بالنار

Kalmustajeri minn al-ramd'ai bilnar

Like one who seeks protection from scorching heat with fire (526)

This is a classical Arabic proverb used by ordinary people without changes in its form. It is used when a person tries to get away from a difficult situation and finds himself in a worse one.

أرسل حكيماً ولا توصية

Arsil h'akeeman wa la taws'ih

Send a wise man and do not advise him (528)

This proverb is a classical proverb used by ordinary people in its standard form. It says that if you want to send a person to do something on your behalf, you should choose a wise man but not tell him what to do or to say, for he does not need your advice. The

proverb is used to advise people to be careful when they want to rely on others to represent them or to do work for them.

أعمل معروف وارمي في البحر
A-a'mal ma'roof wa armi fi al-bah'ar
Do a favour and throw it into the sea (529)

This proverb advises people to do favours even for those who do not deserve them. It is used to encourage people not to expect rewards for their good deeds.

السعف بكربو وكنت لين
As-sa'af bekriboo wakint layyinn
Palm leaves are plaited when wet (530)

The meaning of this proverb is that it is easy for you to tie palm leaves immediately after you cut them. If you delay in plaiting them, they will get dry and break into pieces. The message of the proverb is that one should settle matters immediately as they might be complicated to resolve later.

الضلام غطى الجبال
Al-d'alam ghatā al-jibal
Darkness covers the mountains (531)

People consider the dark as a shelter. Therefore, if they want to do something out of observers' eyes, they prefer to do it at night. Nomadic tribes prefer to travel during the night for their safety and to avoid the heat of the desert. Some extremists also allow their wives to go out or to visit their families only at night, so that strangers do not see them. This proverb might be used to encourage working at night for the above reasons. Otherwise, it might be a proverb of highway robbers.

الدنيا تلد الالوجاع
Al-duniya talid al-awja'
Life gives birth to pain (532)

One should be aware that it is the nature of life that one faces difficulties and different types of pain.

المال السائب يعلم السرقة
Al-mal al-saib ya'lim al-sariga
Unattended money teaches theft (533)

The point of this proverb is clear. If you are an employer and you do not supervise your work properly, your business will suffer because you will give a chance for dishonest people to take advantage of you. The proverb encourages people to look after their money and not to depend on others to deal with their business without supervision.

الغائب حجته معاه
Al-ghaib h'jtu ma'ahu
The absentee might have his reasons (534)

This proverb means that you should not judge or blame an absent person for you do not know why he is absent. He may have strong reasons that prevent him from attending.

اللقى أحبابه نسي أصحابه
Al-liga ah'babu nisa as'h'abu
The one who met his beloved ones forgot his friends (535)

People use this proverb to blame their friends for being too busy with their families and dear ones to visit them.

نعم المؤدب الدهر
Nia'm al-muadib al-dahar
Time is the best discipliner (536)

A person who has no manners and does not accept discipline from others will be disciplined by time, because he will eventually face difficulties that compel him to respect others, or because he is getting older and has to learn as he matures.

القوي ياكل الضعيف
Al-gawi yakul al-d'a'eef
The strong one eats the weak one (537)

The meaning of this proverb is clear. It describes human nature as unjust as there is no place for the poor or weak.

الوادي ما بنسى دربه

Al-wadi ma bansa darbo

The *wadi* does not forget its pathway (541)

One of my informants explained this as a geographical proverb that concerns a natural phenomenon. When riverbeds disappear due to natural changes such as desertification, people sometimes try to build houses or to cultivate in these areas. In rainy seasons, they may be flooded if nature re-activates the riverbed. For this reason, people say that a *wadi* will never forget its passage even if it disappears for years.

People use this proverb to advise others not to settle in such areas. The proverb may also be used if a person abandons his people for a long time for any reason, and later comes back to live with them.

شوف الرهاب ما بنفع العطشان

Shoaf al-rihab ma binfa' al-a'tshan

Looking at a mirage will not benefit a thirsty person (542)

People use this proverb to warn against depending on unknown hopes.

شوف العين ما بقتل غزال

Shoaf al-a'ain ma bigtul ghazal

You cannot kill a deer by looking at it (543)

This proverb condemns those who build hopes without actions and encourages people to prepare themselves for any work they want to do.

النقاط كمل القربة

Al-naggaṭ kammal al-girba

Constant dripping has emptied the water bag (544)

One of my informants explained this proverb as follows:

If you have a big water bag with a small hole in it, the water will keep dripping through the hole until it becomes empty. The same thing will happen if you have some money and you spend it little by little, one day you will find yourself without a penny. In daily life, if you make small problems with your friends and people around you, even if the disagreement is small in time it will accumulate and become a big problem. In this case, your friends will become exasperated and feel that you are a troublemaker as you criticise them all the time and create

problems, so they will leave and you will find yourself without any friend around you.
The point of this proverb is that people should not ignore small things for they might cause great damage or big loss in the long run.

القرش بلد الفرش
Al-girish bilid al-girish
Money breeds money (545)

The point of this proverb is that if one has money and does some business, he will get more money. It is used to encourage people to put their money into business instead of keeping it, as it will finish if it is spent.

باب النجار مخرج
Bab al-najar mukhllaa'
The carpenter's door is falling apart (547)

This proverb is used to describe any person who owns a thing or knows a craft or vocation, but does not himself benefit from his knowledge even though he uses his knowledge to help others.

الكلام المالك ما تتصدر ليه
Al-kalam al-ma leak ma tits'adar leyaho
Do not stand up for words that are not yours (440)

The meaning of this proverb is that you should not make any confrontation with people over others' affairs. The message is that one should not adopt others' problems.

لا تشيل راس ميت تبلى بيه
La tasheel rass meit tabla biyho
Do not carry a dead head for you may entangle yourself (494)

Caution is very important in some situations and places especially where tribal conflicts are dominant. If you carried a dead head, people might accuse you of killing a person. The proverb says that one should not get involved in a matter without knowing its details or consequences. For example, a person may try to mediate to solve a problem or even take sides in a conflict and might bring big troubles upon himself. People use this proverb to warn against interfering in others' affairs out of good will without knowing the consequences.

قليل العرفه يدخل بين العصا والقرفه

Galeal al-a'irfa yadkhul bean al-a's'a wa al-girfa

He who has little knowledge interferes between the stick and its bark (550)

This proverb means that it is unwise to intervene in close relationships between friends, married couples or relatives.

حار تقول مال يتيم

H'ar tagoal mal yateem

As hot as an orphan's wealth (551)

One of my informants explained this proverb in this way:

It is known in Sudanese culture that after a child's father dies the child's next of kin will look after her/him. The dead father's money or any other wealth should be kept safe until the child becomes an adult, who can deal with his own affairs. The person who misuses orphans' money will be criticised by his people and it is believed that he might lose his health and wealth as consequences.

Islam forbids misusing orphans' wealth as well. People use this proverb to describe difficulties that they might face when they are doing a task. Usually when a meal is too hot to eat, people also quote this proverb.

كل تأخيره فيها خيره

Kul ta-akhiyah fiyha khiyah

In everything that is late, there is good (553)

This proverb advises that things that come late are good. It is used in a situation when a person delays in doing something because he cannot find time or for a reason beyond his control. He or a second party might quote this proverb for comfort.

People may use the following proverb to express the same meaning. They might also use it to emphasise that God has arranged a time for everything and no one can change the time when things have to happen.

كل شيء بأوانه

Kuli shayi bi-awanu

Everything has its time (554)

ريسين يغرقوا المركب
Reyisean ghargoo al-murkab
Two captains in a boat will sink it (556)

They will sink it as they might disagree with each other. People use the above proverb to encourage unity around one authority.

سماحة الضنذية البطنها مليانة دود
Samah'at al-d'undubah al-batuna malyana dud
The beauty of the *tund'uba* (tropical fruits) that are full of worms (557)

This kind of tropical fruit is red and looks very beautiful from outside, but usually it is full of worms as it is very soft and easy for insects to get inside. People use this proverb to describe a good-looking person with bad behaviour.

كل المرض من الله الا مرض البطن من سيدو
Kul-al-marad' min Allah illa marad' al batun min siydu
All diseases are from God except the disease of the stomach, which is from the patient (560)

As a person is free to choose his food, he has to take the right food to avoid being sick. This proverb is used to warn people against bad nutrition habits.

السفر قطعة من جهنم
Al-safar gita'a minn jahnam
Travelling is a piece of hellfire (562)

In rural areas and distant villages, people still use animals as means of transportation. They take days or months in the baking summer or rainy seasons to reach their destinations. People use this proverb to comfort those who show their annoyance or discontent when they become tired during their long journeys.

ما في سما عقب النار
Mafi siman a'qab al-nar
No poison survives fire (563)

The point of this proverb is that heat kills all germs. If a person feels disgust about eating any kind of food, people might use this proverb to persuade him to eat without worrying.

اللي يعيش يشوف
Al-yea'eash yashuf
He who lives will see (565)

This proverb is used when unfamiliar things happen, to emphasise that we continuously learn new things in life.

الكلب لما يسعر اول ما يعضني ناس البيت
Al-kalib lama yasa'ar awal ma ya'd'i nas al-beat
When a dog has rabies, he starts to bite his owners (566)

A rabid dog bites the people who live with it in the same house; there is no chance to avoid it if they do not realize that it is affected by the disease. This proverb is used to explain that those who are close to you might harm you more than others might.

الكلب بريد خانقه
Al-kalib biread khangu
The dog likes his throttling (567)

Although a dog represents faithfulness in many people's view, many think that a dog likes a person who harms it. However, people use this proverb to describe a wicked person who respects only those who are very rude to him.

محل ما تخطت راسك ختت رجلك
Mah'al ma tukhut rasak khut rijleak
Where you put your head, put your feet (568)

This proverb states, 'whatever you do I do not care'. People use it to express their indifference to threats.

الضايق قرصة الدبيب يخاف من الحبل
Al-d'aiq gars'at al-dabeab yakhaf min al-h'abil
He who has been bitten by a snake is scared of ropes (569)

The point of this proverb is to advise people not to blame someone who is frightened of those who hurt him or anyone similar to those who hurt him. It might also be used to criticise people for being afraid where there is nothing to be afraid of.

إذا حضرت الملائكة ذهببت الشياطين
Ida h'ad'ratt al-malaika dābat al-shayāteen
If the angels come, the devils will leave (570)

This is a classical proverb used by ordinary people in its standard form. If a person tries to leave a place because someone he hates arrives, people use this proverb to discourage him from leaving by showing that they have understood his intention. It is an indirect admonition not to show hatred or bad feelings publicly.

النية البيضاء تغلب السوداء
An-niyya al-bid'a taghlib al-soda
White intentions conquer black ones (571)

Good and bad are described in this proverb as black and white. The proverb praises people who do not have ill will and advises against bearing a grudge toward others. A good intention leads to a good ending and a bad one has bad consequences.

اليد العليا خير من اليد السفلى
Al-yad al 'uliya khaerun min al-yad al-sufli
The upper hand is better than the lower hand (574)

This is a classical proverb, used without any change. It teaches that it is better to give than to take.

و بارك الله فيمن زارخف
Bark Allah fi mann zara wa khaffa
God blesses the one whose visit is short (575)

This is a classical proverb used in its original form. It encourages visitors not to stay for a long time with their hosts. Nevertheless, as it is not polite for hosts to express desires for visitors to leave, visitors themselves commonly use it.

بارك الله فيمن نفع وأنتفع
Barak Allah fi mann nafa' wa antafa'
God bless the one who helps himself and others (575)

The lesson of this proverb is that it is beneficial to help others and to help yourself at the same time rather than waiting for others to help you, or spending your money and time helping other people without considering yourself.

باصرو ما تعاصرو

Bas'ro ma ta'as'ro

Deliver it gently, do not force it through (579)

The advice of this proverb is that people should deal with any matter with gentleness and flexibility, not with force and severity.

الحجّاز يموت اول الناس

Al-h'ajjaz yamut awal al-nas

The peacemaker dies before others (580)

This proverb warns that the one who tries to make peace and stop fighting, might die first as both sides might attack him. People use this proverb to discourage people from rushing to stop fighting when the parties are very aggressive.

أخذَ التّار يَنْفَى العار

Akhadd al-tarr yanffi al-a'arr

Taking revenge wipes out dishonour (582)

This proverb represents the worst custom that Arab Sudanese tribes inherited from their Bedouin ancestors. Those who live in rural Sudan take revenge by themselves. They consider the one who does not do so a coward and in some tribes, they even avoid any relationship with him. Conflicts often occur because of grazing land and water. People in towns solve their problems through courts, but those who live in towns also have connections with rural areas. Therefore, I cannot assert that this chronic problem does not affect those who live in towns. I have lived all my life in towns, but ironically, my parents come from two of the biggest tribes in the Sudan, which are known for their historical conflicts. People in rural areas use this proverb to encourage each other to revenge themselves.

كُلّ غايب ادوه حقه

Kullu ghaib adoo h'agoo

Give every absentee his right (583)

The meaning of this proverb is that one should not judge a dispute by listening to one party while the other is absent. One of my informants told me that he would never make a judgement even if a man came to him with a broken leg before he had heard from the person who broke his leg, as he might have done it in self-defence. This proverb is used to warn people to be very cautious when they render their judgement against people.

8.5 Contentment and Patience

Sudanese value contentment in their lives. Many proverbs have praised contentment, because with it one will not feel the bitterness of poverty.

Patience is encouraged by religion and tradition. It is believed that a patient person will be rewarded either sooner, in this life, or later, in the afterlife. This message is a comfort for those who are in pain as well as the poor. The following selected proverbs reflect contentment and patience as seen by Sudanese proverbs.

الغنى قناعة في ال
Al-ghina fi al-qana-a'a
Wealth is in contentment (585)

This proverb counsels that it is not necessary to have money to be rich as the rich person is the contented one. Some people are very rich, but they are not satisfied with what they have and feel that they still need more.

جراده في اليد ولا الف طائره
Jarada fi al-kaff wala alif tayira
A locust in the hand is better than a thousand flying (587)

This proverb advises that if you have one small thing in your hand it is better than the promise of thousands of things when you cannot guarantee that you will get them. One might lose what he had, thinking that he will get more. The proverb is used to condemn greediness and to encourage people to be satisfied with what they have.

كان صفت النيه العنقريب يشيل ميه
Kan s'ifat al-niyah al-a'ngreab yisheel miyeh
If people's intention is sincere towards each other, one bed is enough for hundreds of them. (588)

The message of this proverb is that with loyalty people can be united in solidarity and solve each other's problems. People use the proverb to resolve a situation in which a large number of people share limited resources.

هجلدايتي ولا تمر زول

Hajildaiti wala tamur zoal

My balanite fruit is worth more to me than others' dates (592)

Balanites are a kind of trees that grow in deserts or tropical areas. Dates are considered as rich fruit in comparison with balanite fruits. The proverb says that our poor simple things are worth more to us than others' valuable things that do not belong to us. People quote this proverb in the western Sudan, mainly Darfur, to express contentment with what they have.

الفارغه يملها الله

Al-fargha yamlaha Allah

God will fill that which is empty (595)

The Sudanese believe that only God arranges their means of living. A poor person should not feel sad because he has limited means of subsistence for that is his fate in life. People use this proverb to comfort the poor, or to show their own contentment with what they have.

دابر تعيش

Dabir ta'eash

Work in your own way and you will live (596)

This proverb advises that you have to make your own arrangements, whether regarding means of living or your social relationships, so you can live without any problems. It is used to encourage people to make their own way of organizing their lives and avoid conflicts with others.

من حقر بقليله ضاع

Mann h'agar bigalealu daa''

He who disparages the little that he has will lose it (598)

This proverb states that if one does not value the small amount that he has and develop it, it will finish and he and his family will get poorer. It is used to encourage people to be thankful for what they have and to work hard to increase it, rather than ignore it hoping that they might get more.

من رضى بقليله عاش

Mann rid'a bigalealu a'ash

He who he is satisfied with the little that he has will live (600)

This proverb counsels that if a person is content he will live happily, as he will not think

about other luxuries that others enjoy. People use this proverb to encourage the value of contentment in their society.

الصابرات روابح ولو يجن قماح

Al-s'abrat rawabih' wa lao yajin gumah'

Patient souls are winners even if they come back with empty hands (604)

In this proverb people prefer patience to concrete profit as a reward for endurance.

الصابر جابر

(Badri p. 113)

Al-s'abir jabir

Who is patient is a settler (605)

This proverb predicts that a patient person will get a place to live.

الصيدر ولو مر ما يضر

Al-s'abur wa lao mur ma bed'ur

Patience will not harm you even if it is bitter (612)

This proverb teaches that although there is bitterness in patience, patience will not cause damage.

(See Appendix B for other proverbs related to this section)

9.5 Silence, speech and the tongue as represented by Sudanese proverbs

In Sudanese culture, silence is preferred to speech and it is regarded as a virtue that is difficult for many people to have. It is preferred to speech in many different ways in Sudanese proverbs. Silence is also praised by religion and there are many Quranic verses and prophetic speeches that praise silence.

a). Silence and Speech

إذا رأيتم المؤمن صموتا وقورا فأدنوا منه فإنه يلقي الحكمة
Ida raitum al-mumin s'amutan waqoran fa-adnu minho fa-inhu yulaqin al-h'ikma
If you see a sedate, silent believer, approach him as he teaches wisdom (615)

A silent man is considered a wise man and the proverb advises respect for him.

أندم على اللي قلتو ما تتدم على اللي ما قلتو
Andam a'la al-gultu ma tandem a'la al-magultu
Regret what you said, but do not regret what you did not say (616)

It is advised by this proverb that it is better to regret not saying certain things to a person than to regret having said something that might harm others or cause problems.

إذا كان الكلام من فضه فالسكوت من ذهب
Ida kan al-kalam minn fid'ah fa-al-sukoot minn dahabb
If speech is made of silver, silence is of gold (618)

This proverb is used to advise people that silence is a sign of respect. Silence is encouraged by Sudanese proverbs to avoid problems and unnecessary arguments with fools.

الكلام لو داير تكملو هملاوا
Al-kalam lao dair tikamlu hamilu
If you want to put an end to talk, ignore it (619)

This proverb urges that to end unnecessary conversations you should not respond to the person who is speaking with you. It encourages people not to indulge in fruitless arguments.

Silence may be considered as a type of communication, especially when parents consult girls about their marriage. If parents do not hear any response from their girls, they consider that as a positive sign that their daughters have no objection. The following proverb notes this meaning of silence.

السكوت علامة الرضا
Al-sukut a'lamat al-rid'a
Silence is a sign of consent (620)

الكلام بركته في قلاته
Al-kalam barakto fi gilato
The blessing of a conversation is in its shortness (621)

Speech is the cause of many problems as viewed by Sudanese proverbs. It is considered better for the speaker to be brief. One of my informants quoted the above proverb to me when he realized that I wanted to talk to him; then he asked me what I wanted. The proverb may be used by an older person to a younger person, or by a person to a group of people in a discussion to make it short.

Many proverbs deal with the effect of soft words on people's relationships:

الكلام اللين يبرق الثعبان من جحره
Al-kalam al-liyyean yamrug al-thua'ban min juh'ro
Soft words get the snake out of its hole (622)

This proverb advises that harshness and severity are not effective policy. Whether you are of higher status or lower status, you cannot gain others' trust by strength or force. Therefore, lenience and kindness are required in dealing with some matters.

كلام اول ما يتحول
Kalam awal ma bith'aowal
The first word uttered cannot be changed (623)

The teaching of this proverb is that one should stand by one's word. It encourages people to be honest and not to change what they first said under any circumstances.

الكلام أوله سكرات وأخره فكرات
Al-kalam aowlo sakkarat wa akhro fakkarat
Talk is inebriety at the beginning and thought at the end (624)

The point of this proverb is to warn that a person should think about his words before he talks and about to whom he is talking and why. You might talk to someone without thinking about the consequences and regret it in the end. According to many informants, it is possible for any person to use this proverb to any other person regardless of age.

الكلام الحلو بخور الباطن
Al-kalam al-h'ilo bakhoor al-bat'inn
Sweet talk is incense for one's inside (625)

The lesson of this proverb is that soft talk relieves and comforts the hearer. One of my informants described it as a message to people to consider their words and correct them before they utter them. It is usually used when a person talks in a harsh way; an old person might quote it to a young person, but it is difficult for a young person to say it to the elderly.

الكلمة اطول من العمر
Al-kalma at'wal min al-u'mar
One's word lasts longer than one's life (626)

Reminiscences remain after one's death, whether they are praise or criticism. It is believed by the people of the Sudan that when people praise you after your death God and his angels will confirm it. The purpose of this proverb is to remind people memories of the good and bad things one said will remain after their death.

b). The Tongue

The tongue is viewed in Sudanese proverbs as an organ that strongly affects human relationships. It is used as a metaphor for speech. The following proverbs show how the tongue causes trouble and harms others:

لسانك حصانك ان صنته صانك وان هنته هانك
Lisanak h'us'anak inn s'unto s'anak wa inn hinto hannak
Your tongue is your guard, if you preserve it, it preserves you and if you humiliate it, it will humiliate you (629)

This proverb comments that if you mind your words before you utter them; people will respect you and be careful when they talk to you; if you harm people by using hard words, they will do the same to you. This proverb is a classical proverb used by Sudanese without any changes in its standard form. It is used to encourage people not to talk about unnecessary matters or to cause troubles through what they say.

اللسان آفة سيدو

Al-lisan affatt siddo

The tongue is an epidemic to its owner (630)

Your tongue might cause you big problems, like an epidemic disease that you cannot control. This proverb is used to warn people against the negative situations caused by the use of their tongues. It advises them to be aware of this when they talk to each other.

لسانه زي المقص

Lisano zai al-magass

(His) tongue is like scissors (632)

The metaphor of the tongue as sharp scissors embodies its potential as a dangerous tool that can be used to harm people's feelings. This proverb criticises by metaphor, as the following one does.

لسانه طويل

Lisano taweel

(He) has a long tongue (634)

'Long tongue' is a metonymical expression to describe a person who harms others for simple reasons or even without any reason.

لسانه غالبه

Lisano ghalbo

(He) is controlled by his tongue (635)

This proverb is used to describe a person who talks too much about others' affairs without being asked, or cannot keep secrets. It is believed that a wise person is controlled by his mind, unlike the ignorant one who is controlled by his tongue.

اللسان لحمه ما فيه عظم

Al-lisan lah'mah ma fiho a'd'um

The tongue is a piece of meat: it has no bone (636)

This proverb vividly comments that it is easy for a person to move his tongue, so it is up to him to use it for good or evil.

لسان من رطب ويد من خشب

Lisano min rotab wa ieado min khashab

(He) has a tongue of mist and a hand of wood (637)

The proverb describes a greedy person who talks softly, but never gives or spends when help is needed.

جرح السيف بيرا لكن جرح اللسان ما بيرا
Jarih' al-seaf bibra lakin jarih' al-lisan ma bibra
The wound of a sword will heal, but not one caused by a tongue (638)

The point of this proverb is that the harm caused by words lasts long. Words can be more painful than the wound from a sword.

أعتر برجلك ما تعتر بلسانك
Aa'tar birijlak ma ta'tar bilisanak
Stumble with your foot; do not stumble with your tongue (640)

The teaching of this proverb is to be careful about your words. Stumbling with your foot may cause personal pain, but stumbling with the tongue will cause pain to someone else.

10.5 Solidarity as seen in Sudanese proverbs:

The social structure in Sudan, where beliefs and values are shared among family members, a village, a tribe, and the whole nation, is supposed to create cohesion.

Although Sudanese are known to their neighbours as a nation of strong solidarity, an insider or a close observer may find that is not always the reality. Sudanese try to call for social solidarity through their proverbs. Social solidarity also is expressed in Sudanese institutions like The Ministry of Welfare, almsgiving authorities, churches, and mosques, local and tribal organizations.

In this section I will try to examine some of the proverbs that deal with this important value, which reminds us of ideals to live by, by showing how the society should protect its individuals and how the individual should be loyal to his society. Concepts like co-operation, respect and consultation are strongly recommended by Sudanese proverbs.

شجره كان مالت بتكي في أخيو

Shajara kan malat bitaki fi akhiyo

When a tree sags, it leans on its sister (the nearest tree) (642)

This proverb is originally from Darfur and has been adopted by all Sudanese. It illustrates the solidarity of the people of the Sudan. The rich should support the poor and the strong support the weak. The proverb may be recited to any person to encourage her/him to seek help from family or relatives without embarrassment.

الأصبع الواحد ما بغطي الوجه

Al-as'bba' al-wah'id ma bighati al-wajih

One finger will not cover the face (643)

This proverb comments on the importance of solidarity and cooperation. A relative commenting on this proverb said that if you put one finger on your face to cover it, you will cover only a small part of it, but with your five fingers, you can cover your face. She continued that one cannot live without the help of others.

البركه في اللمه

Al-barraka fi elamma

Blessing is in being many (645)

The value expressed by this proverb is that unity is good. People use it to encourage being together.

الناس بالناس والكل برب العالمين

An-nas ben-nas wal-kul berab al-a'lameen

People support one another, but all together are supported by God (646)

In spite of their social differences, people need each other. The proverb remarks on the need for support between individuals or among group members no matter what their status or capability, as God will support all of them together.

الناس اولاف ما أجناس

Al-nass awlaff ma ajnass

People are companions not relatives (647)

This proverb is used to assert the value of relationships based on love and friendship, compared to the relationship between relatives. It is used to encourage people not to limit their companionship to their relatives.

العين الواحدة تكرم الف عين
Al-a'yn al-wah'da takrim alf a'yin.
One eye respects a thousand eyes (648)

This proverb throws light upon Sudanese social life. It comments that if you have a good relationship with one member of a family, you must respect anyone who is related to her/him. Moreover, you should perform all the social duties towards the members of that family.

My mother usually uses this proverb. Recently, I talked to her about her hard work to help a person who once behaved badly towards her. She advised me that we should not blame a person or his behaviour at a time when he needs us. In addition, she was acting for the sake of his family as they have good morals. She then quoted the proverb.

على شان البحر يُكرم القيف
A'la shan al-bah'ar yukram al-geaf
For the sea's sake, the beach is honoured (649)

Because people are afraid of falling into the sea, they walk carefully on the beach. The proverb uses this metaphor to comment that people respect the relative of a respected person for his sake, even if the relative does not himself deserve respect.

العين ما بتعلى على الحاجب
Al-a'yn ma bit'la a'la al-h'ajib
The eye never stands higher than its eyebrow (650)

It is natural that the eyebrow is above the eye. The metaphor is used to express the social relationship between higher and lower positions, observing that those who are of low status will never be higher than those who are of higher status. However, currently this type of hierarchical relationship no longer exists. Some people sometimes use this proverb in family relationships to show respect to parents or the elderly

المكر السىء يحيط باهله
Al-makr al- sayyio yah'itu bi-ahlihi
Malice surrounds its perpetrators (651)

This classical proverb is derived from the Quran, *Surah 35, (Fat'ir)*, verse 43 and has the same meaning. The word يحيط (surrounds) in the Quranic verse is substituted by the word يكر (surrounds) in the proverb. The proverb teaches that malice has bad consequences for those who use it against others.

المال بروح وتبقى الوجوه
Al-mal biroah' watabqa al-wojoh
Wealth will go and faces remain (652)

This proverb counsels that fortune and money do not last long, but relationships between people remain. People use this proverb to condemn those who change according to their wealth and to encourage good relationships with others regardless of their social status.

ما ينبح في مكانه إلا الكلب
Ma yanbah' fi makanu ila al-kalib
Only the dog barks in its home (653)

The point of this proverb is that one should respect visitors and not do anything that might harm them. It is used to encourage people to show a warm welcome to their guests.

في قبورهم شائلين حمولهم
Fi quborum shailean h'umoalum
Even in their graves, they take their responsibilities (656)

This proverb observes that some people continue to be responsible for their families even after death. It refers to those who are or were responsible for large extended families and have wealth; they leave it for their families. The members of such families continue to look after themselves using the money left for them by their dead relative. People use this proverb to praise their responsible and kind relatives.

الشورى كتاب وسنه
Al-shura kitab wa sunna
The Quran and the *Sunna* prefer consultation (657)

As both the Quran and the *Sunna* (of the Prophet Mohammad) emphasize consultation, Muslims prefer to consult each other before they take decisions. People use this proverb as a reminder that this advice is not given only by people but by their religion as well.

بيت الشورى ما ييخرِب
Bait ashura ma khirib
A house of consensus never falls apart (658)

As the extended family is a cornerstone in the Sudanese social structure, matters of what other societies might consider as individual privacy are considered to be family concerns in Sudan. Issues like marriage, divorce, buying or selling are not considered individual matters, so discussions about them might reach beyond the extended family to distant relatives, family friends or even the elderly and those considered as wise in a village or

small town. Therefore, a group decision is considered to be a right decision, which the one who consults others' opinion will never regret. This proverb is used to advise people not to take individual decisions.

On the other hand, people might contradict this proverb by saying that each person should find the solution to his own problems. In such a situation, they use the following proverb:

كل واحد عقله في راسه يعرف خلاصه

Kulu wah'id a'glu fi rasu ya'rif khalas'u

Every one has his brain in his head, so he ought to be able to get out of his troubles (660)

ما بكتل ضوي لضوك

Ma baktul d'awi lid'awak

I will not put out my light for your light (661)

The above proverb comments that both of us are capable of generosity; therefore, I will not put my light out, so that when guests come to town they go only to your house. The proverb is used to explain that a person is happy to take the initiative in generosity.

ما عبد الله بأكثر من جبر الخاطر

Ma a'ubid Allah bi aktar min jabr al-khatir

God has not been worshiped with anything greater than comforting others (662)

This proverb counsels that one of the best ways to worship is to treat people with kindness, conciliate them and help them when they are in need. It is used to encourage solidarity.

أرحموا من في الأرض يرحمكم من في السماء

Arh'amo mann fi al-ard' yarh'mekum mann fi al-sama

Show mercy to those who are on earth: He who is in heaven will have mercy upon you (663)

The lesson of this proverb is that God will be merciful towards people if they pity those who need help. People use this proverb to encourage kind treatment and solidarity in their community.

النسب حسب

Al-nasab h'asab

Where one marries determines one's honour (665)

Relationship by marriage is highly respected by Sudanese. One should to the best of one's ability show respect to relatives by marriage. The teaching of this proverb is that whatever family you married from, you have to respect its members.

الما دارك ما لامك

Al-ma darak ma lamak

He who does not like you, would not blame you (666)

The one who blames you in a friendly way probably wants you to correct a mistake or to establish good relationship with you. This proverb is used to encourage people to accept admonition by friends, for they do it for a friend's benefit and out of good will.

ما تمسكه من أيده البيتوجعو

Ma tamsiku min eidu al-bitawja'u

Do not hold him by the hand that pains him (667)

You should not put pressure on a person when he is in a weak position and cannot deal with a situation. This proverb emphasises the importance of indulgence in human relationship, especially in business and paying debts.

عامل الناس زي ما تحب يعاملوك

A'amil al-nas zay matih'ib yaa'milook

Treat people in the way you want to be treated (668)

The proverb is used to encourage people to establish fair relationships.

المصارين في البطن يضاربو

Al-mas'areen fi al-batun yid'arbu

The entrails in one's belly quarrel with each other (669)

The proverb tends to be quoted to calm those who overreact when they have a confrontation with others. It implies that people cannot avoid some misunderstandings if they live together in one community. Therefore, one should not be aggressive or end relationships with others because of disagreements.

كان اتنين قالو ليك راسك مافي المسو
Kan itnean galoo leak rasak mafi almasoo

If two people tell you that your head is not there, touch it (to make sure that it is there) (670)

The meaning of this proverb is that if you are criticized or advised more than once about the same thing, you should listen or at least rethink what you are doing. The proverb is used to encourage people to listen to each other's advice.

كل شاتا معلقه بعصبنا
Kullu shatan moa'llaqa bi a's'abata
Every sheep is hung from its own gut (671)

This proverb advises that each person is responsible for his own mistake and no one is punished for someone else's mistake.

خير البر عاجله
Khiyear al-birri a'ajulho
The best charity is the quickest charity (672)

This proverb counsels that performance of good deeds should be quick and timely. People use it to encourage helping the needy at the earliest time.

ياكلوا ويقشوا في طرفه
Yaklu wa yigushu fi tarfu
They eat and clean their hands on his clothes (673)

This proverb describes a tolerant person who forgives his enemies as well as his friends by saying that people eat his food and clean their hands on his clothes. It exaggerates in order to praise.

لا تبخل بموجود ولا تتكلف بمعدوم
La tabekhal bimawjoad wa la titkalaf bima'doam
Do not be stingy with what you have and do not burden yourself with what you do not have (674)

This proverb advises that you should spend within your means and not become greedy. You should not spend so much that you put yourself in financial problems. This proverb is used to encourage people to be moderate in spending their money.

عفا الله عما سلف

A'afa Allah a'ama salaf

God has condoned the past (675)

The point of this proverb is that God forgives people for what they do, so people should forgive each other. People use this proverb to praise forgiveness and to encourage people not to remind each other of their mistakes.

كثر العتاب جفا

Katarat al-a'itab jaffa

Too much admonition is counter-productive (676)

The point of this proverb is that one should avoid blaming others unnecessarily, as people will consider it rudeness. The proverb is used to encourage people not to exaggerate in blaming each other.

إذا عُرف السبب بطل العجب

Ida a'urifa al-sabab batāla al-a'jab

When the reason is known, wonder ends (44)

This proverb is used to encourage people to know the cause of any problem before they make their judgement.

مال دمه ومُخاطه

Mall dama'a wa mukhata

(His) wealth is made from tears and snot (678)

This proverb describes the wealth of the unjust as money made from tears and snot, collected from helpless and weak people who can only cry, being unable to defend themselves. It is used to condemn a person who makes his wealth by oppressing and tyrannising others.

المجالس بالأمانات

Al-majjaliss bil-amanat

Councils are based on trust (679)

People in villages and small towns choose a group of people whom they consider wise to be responsible for solving their problems. Usually they gather in one place, either a house or a mosque, to discuss matters. Before they leave the place, they remind each other not to talk about the matter in public or to their families as it is considered as private. People

use this proverb to advise each other not to betray others' privacy.

من فشٌ غيبنته إنهدت مدينته

Mann fasha ghabeantu inhadat madeantu

He who avenges himself destroys his land (680)

This proverb warns that if a person tries to punish everyone that hurts him, he will destroy his land if he is a governor, and if he is a common person he will lose God's reward. It is used to encourage forgiveness.

الياكل مال النصراتي ينضرب بسيفه

Al-yakul mall al-nas'rani yend'arib biseafu

He who betrays an unbeliever will be punished with his own sword (681)

This proverb teaches that if a person has made an agreement with anybody regardless of his religion, he should fulfil all his promises. It is used to encourage honesty in all circumstances.

الظلم إن عمَّ هان

Al-t'ulum inn a'ama hann

If injustice prevails, it becomes easy (to tolerate) (683)

If those in authority are unfair to all people it is easier for them to tolerate, but if the injustice is towards only a specific group of people, they will find it difficult to cope with. People use this proverb to console each other in crisis situations like natural disasters, famine or wars, when everybody becomes needy.

أكرموا عزيز قوم دُلُّ أو غني إفتقر

Akrimo a'zeez qawmin dalla awo ghaniyun iftaqarr

Honour a noble who has become low or a rich man who has become poor (684)

This is a classical proverb used in its standard form by ordinary people and its meaning is very clear. If someone behaves in an unacceptable way towards a noble or a rich man who has lost his status, people use this proverb to advise him to treat them in a respectful manner.

الما نصحك خانك

Al-ma nas'ah'ak khanak

He who does not advise you has betrayed you (685)

Advice is considered good among the people of the Sudan. Elders are expected to advise youths and children. Relatives and community members should advise each other and share the responsibilities of disciplining children and young people. Your family or people around you might be blamed for not advising you or allowing you to do whatever you like when it is against the social rules, as this proverb emphasises.

من ستر مسلم ستره الله يوم القيامة

Munn satar musliman satarhu Allah yaom al-qiyama

Whoever guards a Muslim will be guarded by God on the day of Judgement (686)

The proverb encourages people not to expose others' affairs or let them be publicly known. In the Sudanese culture, individual's mistakes are considered personal matters and other people should not talk about them to insult or disgrace the person.

المابي الصلح ندمان

Al-mabi al-s'uloh' nadman

He who rejects reconciliation will regret it (687)

This proverb is commonly used to advise peacemaking in the Sudan, especially where tribal conflicts are dominant. In rural areas where people share grazing ground and water resources, conflicts are part of daily life. Tribal leaders or local authorities always try to solve such problems in peaceful ways. Any party that refuses help to find solutions will be blamed or even isolated by others, as peacemaking is essential to the rural community.

المسامح كريم

Al-musamih' kaream

The tolerant one is generous (688)

Tolerance is encouraged by culture and religion. This proverb is used to encourage peaceful relationships within the community.

11.5 Poverty and Wealth

Although money is a dividing line that shapes society, wealth and poverty are represented by Sudanese proverbs as changeable situations. A rich man should not rely on his wealth and forget to establish good relationships with others. A poor man should not be ashamed of his poverty although he is represented by some proverbs as an isolated person. It is not advisable for a woman to marry a poor man or for a man to marry a poor man's daughter. On the other hand, a rich person has many friends and people respect him for his money.

When he utters nonsense, it may be considered as wisdom and people listen to him.

Money is thus an important means to make friends and to gain power.

This section views poverty and wealth as seen by Sudanese proverbs.

كُلْ يَا كُمِّي قَبْلَ فَمِي
kul ya kumi gabul fami
Eat, my dress, before my mouth (365)

In Sudanese traditional stories, people accredit this proverb to *Sheikh Farah wad Taktok*, one of the famous historical characters known for his wisdom. The story says that Sheikh Farah was invited for a feast. When he went wearing the normal clothes of a poor man, the owner of the house who had invited him paid him no attention. He sat with poor people and ate with them. He then returned to his home, put on valuable clothes, and came back to the same place. When the owner of the house saw him this time he welcomed him and honoured him. He invited him to sit where the rich people sat and ordered rich food for him. The man himself was standing to serve the Sheikh. The Sheikh then put his sleeve in the food, and quoted this proverb speaking to his own dress to explain to his host that he . His aim was to encourage him to treat all people equally. People quote this proverb to criticize those who honour the rich and disrespect poor people.

I have found a similar story in Aesop's fables. It seems that many different nations claim that this story belongs to them. This is explained by the fact that people's attitude toward similar situations could be the same.

الفقر ما دايِم والغنى ما دايِم
Al-faqur ma daim wa al-ghina ma daim
Neither poverty nor wealth last long (692)

People use this proverb to comfort the poor and to warn the rich not to count on their wealth, as conditions might change at any time.

الفقر ما عيب
Al-faqur ma a'eab
Poverty is not shame (693)

This proverb is used to comfort poor people.

الما يحمل الفقر ما يحمل الغنى
Al-ma bih'mal al-faqur ma bih'mal al-ghina
He who does not endure poverty will not endure wealth (695)

The proverb observes that a person who cannot be patient in difficulties will not tolerate wealth, as he might change quickly and become too proud of his new life.

الغنى في الغربة وطن
Al-ghina fi al-ghurba watan
Wealth is a home abroad (696)

This proverb notes that if a person has a fortune and has to live away from his home country, his wealth compensates him as he might not need others' help.

الفقرى ضبان جسمو يابا
Al-faqri d'uban jismoo yaba
A poor man is rejected even by his body's flies (697)

This proverb claims that no one likes the poor. There is some exaggeration in it.

يتم عشاءه بالنوم
Yatim a'ashau bi-al-noam
He finishes his dinner by sleeping (700)

This proverb describes the situation of a poor person who does not have enough food for himself and his children. Therefore, he tells stories to his children to get them sleep. This proverb is used to describe extreme poverty.

الفقر في الوطن غربة
Al-faqur fi al-watan ghurba
Poverty at home is estrangement (694)

This proverb observes that a poor person might feel like a stranger in his own homeland, as most of the time poor people do not have so many friends as rich ones.

امسك الدرب ولو كان لطفه وأخذ بت الغني ولو كانت عوجه ولد
Amsik walad al-darib wa lao kan lutfu wa akhud bit al-ghani wa lao kanat a'uja
Keep to the safe road even if it is winding and marry a rich man's daughter even if she is imperfect (698)

A secure winding road is better than a short dangerous one and marrying a woman from a rich family will economically secure your life. People use this proverb to encourage marriage from rich families even if their daughters are not perfectly healthy and polite women.

الما عندو حيل ما ينط بلحيل

Al-ma-a'indu h'aeal ma yanut bilh'eal

He who does not have power should not jump high (701)

This proverb advises that a weak person should not jump very high for he does not have the strength to do so. The word power is used in this proverb to emphasize health on the one hand and wealth on the other hand. The one who does not have wealth should not pretend to have powers to help others or do other things. The proverb might be used to mock a poor person for pretending to be rich.

فقريا من الدين غني

Fagrean min al-dayan ghani

A poor man without debts is rich (703)

If a poor person is content with what he has and nobody asks him to pay a debt, he has to consider himself a rich person.

الفقري ياكل بعينه

Al-faqri yakul ba'yanu

The poor man eats with his eyes (704)

A poor person sees people enjoy themselves with good food and other pleasures of life, but he is not able to have the same things because of his poverty. This proverb describes how the destitute enjoys himself only by looking at things.

الما عنده ما كفن أبوه

Al-ma-a'indu ma kaffan abu

He who has nothing does not enshroud his father (705)

A person who does not have money will not be able to prepare ceremonies or grave-clothes for his father. This proverb is used to excuse poor people when they fail to do things for lack of money.

الما في إيدك يكيدك

Al-maffi ieadak yikeadak

What is out of your hands plots against you (706)

Anything that is out of your reach (money or wealth) acts against you, for you might be compelled to ask other people for it even if they are your enemies. This proverb is used to

show the bitterness of need.

المال يَسْمَحُ الشَّيْئَهُ
Al-mall yisamih al-sheana
Money makes ugly things look beautiful (708)

If a person is rich people consider his bad deeds as good ones. This proverb is used to emphasize that money is more valuable than people are.

المال أخير من سيّدو
Al-mall akhear min siydu
Wealth is better than its owner (709)

The point of this proverb is that if a person has money, he will find many people around him even if he does not give them anything. If the circumstances of the same person change and he becomes poor, people scatter away from him and he will not find them when he needs them. People use this proverb to emphasize the fact that people attracted by wealth rather than by the person's character.

المال قيام سيف
Al-mall giyamm seaff
Money is a sword's prop (710)

This proverb means that as the sword can stand up only with the help of a prop, money also enables a person to stand by himself and supports him to do what he wants. Just as a person can protect himself with his weapon, he can use his money to protect himself for money will make this defense more effective.

وقارك قدر مالك
Waqarak gadur malak
Your respect is according to your wealth (711)

This proverb means that people respect you according to the amount of money that you have. It is used to point out that most people measure others by their material assets.

في الدنيا ما أفتخر وللآخرة ما إُدخر
Fi al- duniya ma iftakhar wa lil akhra ma iddakhar
He was neither proud of his life nor preserved anything for the day after (712)

People quote this proverb to describe a person as one who has wasted his life in this world and has done no good to be rewarded for in his life after death.

قحباة العز مستوره كان جنت يقولوا مسحوره

Gah'bat al-a'iz mastoara kan jannat yagoolu mash'oara

An adulteress from a wealthy family is sheltered and if she goes mad, they say she is bewitched (714)

As rich families are respected in their community, no one dares to talk negatively about them. People might hash up their mistakes and address it as misfortune. This proverb reflects in an ironic way rich people's mistakes. It says that if a woman from a rich family happened to commit adultery, people would try to cover the mistake unlike a woman from a poor family, who would be punished and all her family would have to be named and shamed for her mistake. Moreover, madness in a wealthy family would be concealed as bewitchment. This proverb is used to criticize favouritism toward the rich and to condemn injustice towards the poor.

الكراع الغبشا تجيب الكراع الملساء

Al-kura' al-ghabsha tajeab al-kura' al-malsa

A dusty leg brings a clean soft one (715)

This proverb means that when a poor person visits a rich one, the latter will come to visit him as well. It is used to remind people not to limit their social relationships within their own social status.

الما عندك يعسر عليك

Al-ma-a'indak ya'sar a'leak

What you do not have oppresses you (717)

This proverb means that anything whatever its value becomes a problem for you if you do not have the means to possess it. People use this proverb to apologize for their inability to do something because of poverty.

12.5 Casteism, class polarization and social injustice:

Although Sudanese social life embodies solidarity in economic terms, as the rich are required to help the poor, it is undoubtedly the case that caste, if not racism, remains a reality in Sudan. It is deeply rooted in Sudan's history, which is outside the scope of this research, but one has to say it has a great impact on the current political situation in

Sudan.

It is ironic that it has been claimed that Islam's values are practised in Sudanese society. Islam rejects any type of class polarization and social injustice, as they are essential causes of violence, wars, and hatred. The Quran states clearly that there is no difference between Arabs and non-Arabs except in *taqwa* (God-fearingness) (*Sura* 49, No.13). Prophet Mohammed said that people are the same like the teeth of a comb. Although Islam calls for social equality and humanitarian treatment between social groups, Sudanese divide themselves according to social classes and tribal status. For example, they have very strict rules forbidding intermarriage and concerning family formation. The word *a'bed* (slave) has very high frequency of usage in Sudan. In this section, I will present a few Sudanese proverbs that reflect this claim.

شراء العبد ولا تربيته
Shira al-a'bd wala tarbiyту
Buying a slave is better than bringing him up (718)

This proverb advises that it is better for you to buy a slave than to waste your time and money feeding and fostering him. Slavery existed in some parts of Africa until early in the twentieth century and Sudan was active in the slave trade during the Turkiyah, (Turkish regime 1821-1885).

لا تخاوي العبد, العبد نسائي
La takhawi al-a'bd, al-a'bd nassai
Do not associate as a brother with a slave, as the slave is forgetful (719)

This proverb asserts that a slave has no manners and he always forgets your kindness and good treatment.

العربي لحن له والنوباوي بين له
Al-a'rabi lahlin lu wa al-nubawi bain lu
For an Arab use a gesture and for a non-Arab explain in detail (720)

People who use this proverb mean that it is difficult to communicate with non-Arabs as they do not speak Arabic. In fact sometimes they use it as an insult claiming that non-Arabs are not as intelligent as Arabs, or even stupid.

الغير منزلتو عبد

Al-ghayear manziltu a'bed

He who changes his host is a slave (731)

Some Sudanese prefer to stay with relatives or friends when they travel from one place to another inside the country; they must stay in one place as it is unacceptable that one moves from one host to another. People who use this proverb mean that one who does not understand the tradition of staying with one host is not a noble person.

الكضاضيب تلاتة: عبداً ما ليه سيد وزولاً جاي من بعيد وشايياً ما عنده نديد

Al-kad'adeeb talata: A'bdan ma a'indu seed, wa zolan jai min ba'eed, wa shaiban ma a'indu nadead

Liars are three: A slave without an owner, a man coming from a far land and an old man without a peer (732)

This proverb suggests that those who have no coevals and the ones who are not known by their origins can easily tell lies as they do not have any witnesses to challenge them. People who use this proverb explicitly refer to slavery by using the word owner.

الهملة سوت العبد فكي

Al-hamala sawat al-a'bid faki

Inadvertence has made the slave a jurist (733)

People who use this proverb mean that firmness is required in all situations and suggest that carelessness might give slaves a chance to become ambitious.

جنس عبد منه الخير جبد

Jins a'bid mino al-khear jabad

Goodness is far from the nature of slaves (734)

This proverb says that goodness should not be expected from slaves as good values do not exist in their race.

سجم الحله الدليلها عجمي وفصيحتها رطاني

Sajam al-h'ila al-daleela a'ajami wa fas'eyh'a ratani

What a disaster in a district if its leader is non-Arab and its eloquence is jargonized (735)

People who use this proverb warn that leadership should not be given to those who are non-Arab and speak colloquial Arabic.

عبداً تكفته بلا غيبه

A'bdan takafitu bala ghabeena

A slave whom you slap without prejudice

(You can slap a slave without any reason) (736)

This proverb implies that a slave as an ugly person that you can slap not because he did something wrong or annoyed you, but just for his ugliness.

دبرة الميرم بكورها في الخادم

Dabarat amearam bikoha fi al-khadim

The wound of the princess is cauterized on the maid (725)

This proverb means that if a princess needs a treatment which causes pain, she should not have to endure that pain, so her servant must take it on her behalf. People use the proverb when a person of high status deserves to be punished, but cannot be punished due to their status; others in a lower status take the blame instead.

دبرة قي الحصان قالو جيبوا حمار اكوه

Dabarat al-h'us'an bikoha fi al-h'umar

A horse has a wound, but they ordered a donkey to be cauterized in its place (726)

This proverb means same as the above one. One of my informants visited me one evening; she was very angry when she quoted this proverb. I asked the reason for her anger and why she was quoting that proverb, so she said to me:

There was assassination attempt on the Egyptian leader Hussni Mubarak in Ethiopia and the criminals were from the Egyptian opposition party, but America imposed sanctions against Sudan because of this incident.

غبينة العربية بفشوها في السرية

Ghabeenat al-a'rabeah befishoha fi al-sireah

The anger with the wife from a noble origin is let out on the maid (727)

This proverb similarly comments that if a man has two wives, the one of lower status will be blamed for the mistakes of the one of higher status.

عارية ما بتدوم للخادم أم قدوم

A'areeya ma bedoom lil-khadim um gadoom

A borrowed cloth will not last for the servant with a big mouth (728)

This proverb says that because a maid is poor she does not have good clothes, so she might borrow some, but soon she will return them and keep her ragged clothes.

ما بسوى شعره من راسي
Ma biswa sha'rah min rasi
Not worth a strand of my hair (730)

People who use this proverbial phrase mean that some people are so worthless in terms of their origins that they are inferior even to a strand of their hair.

العربي ما بتعزأ كما مراحه
Al-a'arbi ma bita'aza kama murah'u
A nomad would not be respected were it not for his herd (722)

Nomads are referred to as Arabs; they are considered as uncivilised by urbanites or those who live in cities and towns. People who use this proverb suggest that they respect a nomad only because of the large number of animals that he owns.

كله عند العرب صابون
Kulu a'ind al-a'rab s'aboon
Everything in the eyes of Arabs is only soap (729)

This proverb comments that nomads do not value anything and see all things as equal.

أنا بسيدي وسيدي بسيدو
Ana be seadi wa seadi baseadu
I have a master, but my master has one too (724)

This proverb might reflect a class system in showing that everyone has someone who oversees his actions.

العرق دساس
Al-a'ireq dasas
The root is hidden (723)

Blood and upbringing are believed to influence character. This proverb suggests that no matter how good you are you should be judged by your origins, which might come to the surface even if you try to hide it. People also use it to refer to a bad reputation that ancestors might have.

The above proverbs bear witness to various kinds of social inequality in the Sudan.

Chapter Six

The role of Sudanese proverbs as they are applied in daily life

The focus of the analysis of data in this section is on the role and use of Sudanese proverbs and how they are applied in daily life. A comparison based on the analytical findings will then be made with English proverbs in Chapter 7. The methodologies used consist of experts' recorded comments on proverb role and usage, followed by ten examples.

1.6 Comments by experts on the role and use of Sudanese proverbs

The following are excerpts from interviews with Sudanese experts who are known in the society for their knowledge and ability to understand and use proverbs. To illustrate the role of proverbs, I will also discuss some examples of their use in everyday conversations.

Interview with Dr. Malik Al Zaki:

Researcher: Are proverbs still in use in Sudanese daily life or are they considered to be old norms that do not suit modern life?

Dr. Al Zaki: Proverbs have high frequency among the Sudanese people; they are still in use in our daily life; only the environment that surrounds the people who use them has changed.

Researcher: How is that?

Dr. Al-Zaki: Proverbs are a continuous human experience; they develop according to social changes. Let us examine these proverbs:

اللي ما عنده قديم ما عنده جديد
Al maa'indu qadeam ma a'indu jadead
(He who has no old has no new) (741)

We cannot build the present or the future without the past, we always build on the basis of the past; we just need to develop our views according to modern life.

Researcher: Can you give some examples of that?

Dr. Al-Zaki: In the past the people were surrounded by a primitive environment; they were surrounded by their animals, farms and primitive houses. Examine this proverb:

البشيل سعن مقدود بيل ضيره
Al bisheal sia'in maqdud bibel d'ahru
(He who carries a pierced water bag wets his back.)(742)

In the past people used this proverb when they depended on primitive means like wells or rains to collect water; nowadays we quote the same proverb to those who use cheques without credit to do their business. They may end up in prison as a consequence of their behaviour.

Let us examine some proverbs that emphasise social values. For example Sudanese solidarity is an everlasting social value. When there were no machines and our ancestors used to do all their work manually, they used to gather to build a house or to collect money for the poor. They used a proverb to encourage this value:

إيد على إيد تجدع بعيد
Eid a'la eid tajda' ba'eed
(A hand on a hand throws far). (696)

Nowadays we emphasise this value in our official institutions: we have the Ministry of Welfare that ensures social security.

Respecting others is an unquestioned value in our society, no matter whether inside the country or abroad. It is important to adapt yourself and to interact with the culture of the society that you live in or else you will have to leave that place. It is unacceptable to criticize others' culture or to expect them to behave according to your culture.

بلداً جيتلو يا شيل دلويا فوت خلو

Baladan jeetlu ya sheal dalu ya fout khalu

(In a country you have come to, either do as its people do or leave it). (743)

Contentment is an important value that is emphasised at all times as shown by this proverb:

جراده في اليد ولا ألف طايره

Jarada fi al-kaff wala aliff taira

(One locust in the hand is better than a thousand flying.) (592)

The message of the proverb implies the importance of being content with the little you have in your hand. One should not lose the small thing that he has hoping that he may get more in the future.

People are warned about their deeds, and this applies to our society in the past as well as the present. Like the proverb that tells us that one reaps what he sows:

التسوي تلقى

Al-tisawi talqa

(Whatever you do you will find) (554)

Researcher: What is the general view of one who uses proverbs? I mean what are people's attitudes towards proverb users?

Dr. Al-Zaki: People consider a proverb user as a learned person who is acquainted with the matter that he talks about. They also consider most proverb users as wise people.

Researcher: Do proverbs have a role in solving daily conflicts?

Dr. Al-Zaki: Yes. Problems that people try to solve by holding conferences or negotiations nowadays, we used to solve in small meetings between tribal leaders and wise men from the conflicting parties. By using proverbs and discussing a given matter wisely we could come to an agreement that suited the two parties. Today many people travel to different countries to discuss their internal problems and they do not succeed all the time.

Researcher: What are the educational roles of proverbs?

Dr. Al-Zaki: Proverbs are used to control social behaviour. They are effective means for inculcating educational principles and values that are needed for the development of children and youth.

Researcher: Do proverbs reflect social values in a given society?

Dr. Al-Zaki: Proverbs are reflections of our morals, values, customs and traditions. They are the exact images of our lives and measurements of our development.

Researcher: Do proverbs reflect people's wisdom?

Dr. Al-Zaki: They reflect the way that we view things positively or negatively, therefore, you can measure the level of nations' civilization by their proverbs.

Researcher: Some proverbs are universal; they are used by many nations. How do you explain this point?

Dr. Al-Zaki: It is very difficult to classify proverbs by nationality. Although people are classified as having different origins and races and they vary according to their surroundings, there is oneness in their feelings.

The following proverbs for example are results of people's daily experiences.

السَّوَاي مَا حَدَّاث
Al sawai ma h'addath
(He who takes serious actions never talks.) (346)

A person who threatens others publicly often does not take any action.

Patience is an important value, but it is not easy to be patient, so people consider it as an attribute of the Prophet.

الصَّيْر ضِلُّ النَّبِيِّ
Al s'abur d'ul al-nabi
(Patience is the prophet's shadow) (615)

Livelihood is considered as a matter of fate sent by God.

السُّوق قَدَح النَّبِيِّ
Al-suq qadah' al-nabi
(Market is the prophet's vessel) (695)

That is to say, all the people who come to market get enough for their living regardless of their number; as His message is for all people, the market place is for everyone as well.

Farmers draw their proverbs from their daily observations. In Darfur region for example, where people depend on farming and grazing, they say:

كَانَ الطِّينَ لَيْنَ الْفَقْرِ هَيْيَين
Kan al-teen lain al-faqr haiyeen
(If mud is soft, it is easy to deal with poverty) (602)

That is to say, if farmers can grow their crops and herd their animals, they can be economically secure.

Early initiatives to resolve problems are considered a good policy in Sudanese proverbs:

السعف يكربوها وقت لينه
Al sa'afa bikroboha wakit liyna
(Palm leaves are plaited when they are wet) (535)

This proverb is used to encourage people to solve their problems at an early stage before they accumulate and become difficult.

People often judge things by first impressions. This proverb explains that sometimes we can predict endings from their first signs.

الخريف اللين من شواقيره بين
Al-khareef al-lean min shawagiru bayain
(A wet autumn is known by its signs) (456)

الجواب يكفيك عنوانه
Al-jawab yakfeek a'inwanu
(A letter's address satisfies you) (457)

That means you will understand its contents from the address. Another proverb has a similar meaning:

السيوسيyo النصيح من البيضه بيصيح
Al-siwsiyu al-nasih min al-biyd'a bis'iyh
(A healthy nestling cries as soon as it is hatched.) (543)

From daily experience people have learnt that they can stay safe when they keep their enemies busy. Examine this proverb:

الدابي كان قي خشمه جراده ما بعضي
Al-dabib kan fi khashmu jarada ma bea'd'i
(A snake that has a locust in its mouth will not bite) (480)

They also learn to avoid things that cause them troubles:

أحذر ثلاثة: سفر الخريف وأكل التفاتيف وجيزة بت اللفيف
Ah'dar talata: Safar khareef, akil tafateef wa jezat bit al-lafeaf
(Beware three things: travelling in the rainy season, eating unhealthy food and marrying the daughter of a light-headed man.) (744)

Because outside big cities the roads are unpaved, one should avoid travelling during rainy seasons. Unhealthy food damages your health, and a silly or irresponsible man causes you troubles by interfering in your personal life.

If you have any problems you should examine the causes first, so you can solve them quickly:

الحفرة بدفنها بترابها
Al-h'ufra bidfunoha betraba
(A hole will be buried (filled) with its own sand.) (566)

Another has the same meaning:

البيت ببنيوه بقشاه
Al-beat bibnu begashu
(A hut will be made with its own straw) (600)

The facts or the truth are considered to be like one's shadow; it is impossible for us to ignore them:

الحقيقة مثل الضل ما بتدفن
Al-h'aqiqa mithl ald'ull ma bitendafin
(Truth is like a shadow, it cannot be buried.) (526)

Researcher: I have noticed that many of the proverbs that we have discussed have their equivalents in English; how do you explain that?

Dr. Al-Zaki: People share many things in daily life patterns. They may vary in the ways that they practice these patterns according to their surroundings. For example, the environment that surrounds a British farmer is different from that of a Sudanese farmer and they draw their metaphors, similes and rhetoric accordingly. That is to say they have similar experiences, ideas and wisdom although they live in different cultures. Hence the world is like a small village in the way that people share ideas and experiences.

Let us examine the forgoing interview to find how and why the people of the Sudan use their proverbs and value them. Never absent from Sudanese daily life, they are of immense value in reflecting the Sudanese culture and tradition, as explained by Dr. Al-Zaki. Proverb users depend on the environment to create their proverbs. Therefore, the listener can easily identify the cultural background of the one who created a given

proverb. A filly is a beautiful animal, symbol of prettiness, and the name is applied metaphorically to a beautiful young woman. And a lion is a symbol of strength, so one animal cannot kill a lion, but two can do this job:

مرفعين قتلوا أسد *Marfa'eenean qatalu assad* (Two hyenas killed a lion) (745).

This proverb is said to be used in a context where unity is needed. It tells us weak people can achieve victory when they unite. From these two examples the listener can easily identify that the metaphors are drawn from a pastoral environment.

Other proverbs, like *Al-khareef al-lean min shawaqeeru bain* (A wet autumn (rainy season) is known by its signs) (456), and the proverb *كان الطين لين الفقر هين* *Kan al-t'een lain al-faqr haiyeen* (If mud is wet, it is easy to deal with poverty) (602) clearly reflect their environment and cultural background as being from rural areas dominated by Sudanese farmers. These terms are applied metaphorically to situations where you can judge their endings from the beginning.

Dr. Al-Zaki told me that we can learn about any society through its proverbs. He explained how African and Arab traditions are reflected in Sudanese proverbs. As a mixture of Africans and Arabs, the Sudanese reflect the combinations of their origins in their proverbs.

From analysis of this interview, the roles of proverbs in Sudanese society can be clearly identified. We notice that the Sudanese use proverbs mainly to transmit messages. Dr Al-Zaki stated that they use them metaphorically to praise or to criticize people. He tells us that proverbs could be used to transmit moral and cultural values to youth and youngsters. Some Sudanese principles are considered as very sensitive matters. For example, a

generous man should look cheerful and warm when he helps others. A needy person should not feel that he is the one who needs help, as help should be offered without being asked for. Solidarity is a vital principle held by the people of Sudan. The proverb الشجرة إن مالت تتكي على أختها *Al-shajara inn malat bitaki fi ukhtaha* (When a tree leans it will rest on its sister) (648), explains that people vouch for and support each other.

Proverbs can also be used simply to state a bare fact. One proverb, الحفرة بدفنوها بترابها *Al-h'ufra bidfunoha betraba* (A hole will be filled with its sand) (566), states a fact but may be metaphorically applied to other situations where internal solutions are needed to solve problems.

Proverbs are also used to evaluate situations, like السوسيو النصيح من البيضة *Al-siwsiyu al-nasih min al-biyad'a bis'iyh* (A healthy nestling cries as soon as it is hatched) (543). One addresses this proverb to people to say that he knows about the consequences of a given situation from its first signs.

One has to mention that Sudanese proverbs do not transmit positive messages all the time. Sometimes they convey negative attitudes and encourage bad behaviour. The proverb الدابي الذي خشمه جراده ما بعضي *Al-dabi kan fi khashmu jarada ma ba'di* (A snake that has a locust in its mouth will never bite) (480) encourages bribes, which have become a phenomenon in governmental institutions nowadays. This proverb incites people to give hush money, so they can get away with illegal activities or even to get their normal business done quickly.

Proverbs are used as cautionary devices, for example, the proverb

إحذر ثلاثه: سفر خريف واكل تفاتيف وجيزة بت اللفيف *ahdar talata:safar khareef, akil tafateef wa jizat but al-lafeaf* (Beware of three things: travelling during rainy seasons, eating unhealthy food and marrying the daughter of a light-headed man). (744)

They are also used to help in passing on educational principles. For example they present the cultural value of being considerate to others and respecting other cultures that are different from yours: بلدأ جيتلو يا شيل دلو يا فوت خلو *baladan jeetlu ya_sheel dalu ya fout khalu* (In a country you have come to live in either do as its people do or leave it) (743).

This proverb is calling on us to respect each other's culture. And the proverb جراده في اليد ولا ألف طاييره *jarada fi al-yadd wa alif_tayira* (one locust in the hand is better than a thousand flying) (592) is an appeal for us to be content with what we have and not to lose it hoping that we may get more later on.

Dr. Al-Zaki additionally discussed the function, meaning and use of 50 other proverbs, which I will mention when I discuss the corpus of Sudanese proverbs on which this study is based. The discussion occurred during another interview together with Mr. Al-Taib Mohammed Al-Taib, held in Mr. Al-Taib's house in Omdurman on Tuesday 5th March 2002.

Interview with Professor Awn Al-Shareef Qasim:

This interview was held in Professors Awn's office at the University of Africa in Khartoum on 8 February 2002

Researcher: Where do proverbs stand in relation to Sudanese concerns in daily life?

Professor Awn: Proverbs express people's life in all societies. They summarize their experiences and reflect their customs, traditions and the way they look at their surroundings. Any attempt to study proverbs, whether in respect of educational principles, family and social relationships, economical views or beliefs and religion, is an

attempt to reflect the customs and traditions in a given society. For example, in the Sudanese society we say الخواف ربي عياله *al-khawaf raba a'iyalu* (A coward brought up his children) (743). This proverb explains that caution is important and people should not put themselves in danger. This means that impetuosity is not acceptable in Sudanese society. The conflict in this proverb is that it is not acceptable to be cowardly either; bravery is praiseworthy among the Sudanese, but not at all times.

By studying proverbs, we can understand the mentality of a given society. For example, from people's proverbs we can learn their attitude towards women, their joint responsibilities, the situations when they need solidarity or any other beliefs and values in their society. By analysing proverbs we will be able to know the real characteristics and morals of any society, and what we sometimes try to hide, proverbs usually reveal.

Researcher: Do proverbs have any educational roles?

Professor Awn: Proverbs have very important roles in the educational process. Some proverbs convey specific values; it is essential to go back to the reality of life and include proverbs in our educational curriculum and books. Proverbs are more effective than any other educational means as they are outcomes of people's experiences and related to their daily life. The strength of proverbs is derived from the fact that they are considered as a corner stone of the Sudanese society.

Researcher: From where do people in the Sudan draw their proverbs?

Professor Awn: Most proverbs are drawn from culture, environment and people's experiences. Sudanese proverbs are drawn either from Arab or African cultures.

Researcher: What is the effect of a proverb on the hearer? Does he/she change their behaviour when they hear a proverb quoted to them?

Professor Awn: As I mentioned earlier, proverbs represent nations' wisdom. They comment on deep human experiences in a discursive form that gives a wider perspective in a given matter. Their effect is that they give a remarkable exposition of complex ideas and values in a concise elaborated way to the hearer.

Researcher: Are proverbs still in use to resolve conflicts in Sudanese courts?

Professor Awn: Yes. We use proverbs to solve problems or diminish the level of conflicts or to come to an agreement between conflicting parties. We also use them to console people and support them. Proverbs are people's experiences and they reflect their history; they are even connected to their religion.

Researcher: When do people use proverbs in their conversations?

Professor Awn: Proverbs are used to conclude or summarise a given problem. For example, instead of giving a detailed explanation, you can give a conclusion by using a proverb. When we say الله ما شق حنكاً ضيعه *Allah ma shaqa h'ankan d'ayia'u* (God never

made a mouth and left it) (88), we interpret the long debate about poverty and economic problems, their causes and solutions. That is to say livelihood is arranged by God. Proverbs' occurrence in conversations depends on situations. For example, situations may require that the speaker advise the hearer, apologize to him, console him or even warn him against a danger or a given behaviour.

Prof. Awn's explanation and discussion shows that proverbs reflect all aspects of human life. In examining the first proverb used by him, we notice that there is a conflict of opinions among Sudanese. Although cowardice is said to be an unacceptable attribute in Sudanese society, it is recommended by this proverb.

The discussion suggests that proverbs are considered by Sudanese as effective means of education, especially in matters concerning people's beliefs and values. Educational principles conveyed by proverbs have more power and effect. Proverbs are also considered as reflections of wisdom that summarise the Sudanese ideas and values and simplify them to the hearer.

According to Prof. Awn, proverbs are in use even in courts to solve problems or to reconcile litigants. The Sudanese use proverbs whenever a situation calls for them, to advise, apologize, console, or warn.

Interview with Dr. Ahmed Abdelgadir Arbab

I also interviewed another expert who is considered as one of the living libraries on cultural matters in Sudan, Dr. Ahmed Abdelgadir Arbaba. The interview was held at his house in Omdurman city on Saturday 16 March 2002. Dr. Ahmed supports my claim that proverbs are a cultural heritage that reflects all aspects of social life in a given culture. He emphasizes that proverbs are effective and useful tools for peacemaking in the Sudan.

Some people become very unreasonable during conflicts and they find it difficult to admit their mistakes, as they believe that the other party may think they are weak. A tribal leader or a judge can easily convince disputants to forgive, come to an agreement to solve their problems, or even accept a judgment provided by the proverb user himself.

In Sudanese society, it is unusual to take conflicts between neighbours or tribal groups to formal courts. People resolve their problems in a traditional way without interference by court authorities. Taking simple matters to courts always damages relationships between groups in the Sudanese society. By using the proverb *قوادة الأرنب للفيل نشوف* *nashoof goadat al-arnab lilfeel* (let us see a rabbit that leads an elephant) (747), the speaker means that his big respectable society is capable of solving such problems and taking them to court is overstepping their social norms. That is to say social justice is considered as more effective than justice done by formal courts. Reconciliation made by courts causes stress and other types of conflicts. Disputants have to live with the memory that they stood against each other in courts.

Hence, members of Sudanese society tend to avoid pursuing solutions through courts unless matters are very recalcitrant. I attribute the resolving power that is latent in Sudanese proverbs to the great respect that the Sudanese have for their customs and traditions. There is high awareness at all levels of the society that proverbs promote problem solving more efficiently than courts.

Functions of proverbs are not limited to conflict reconciliation and educational goals.

Proverbs have the power to function as devices for advice. *أتبع طريق الأمان ولو بلو* *Atba' tareeg al-aman wa lao bilo* (Take a safe road even if it is long and winding) (18), is advice to guarantee a safe ending whether in a journey or the consequences of actions.

Proverbs have roles as warning devices; *ألـمـي حـار و لا لـعـب قـعـونـج* *almi h'arr wa la lia'ib gha'oonj* (Hot water is not a playground for frogs) (60) is a warning for a person not to interfere in matters that he is incapable of dealing with. The proverb *إذا أردت أن تُطاع فأمر بالمستطاع* *ida arda ann tuṭaa' fa-amur bilmustataa'* (If you want to be obeyed, ask for feasible matters to be done for you) (85) is advice for people to be reasonable when they request anything if they expect people to respond to them. A proverb like *رَكَّاب سَرَجِين وَقَاع* *rakkab sarjean wagga'* (A rider on two saddles will fall) (506) warns people not to engage in two actions at a time as they will fail to achieve either of them.

And *مد رجليك قدر لحافك* *midd rijlak gader lih'afak* (Stretch your legs according to your cover or your bed) (434) is a message that calls on people to be content with what they have and not to strain themselves by trying to do what they cannot afford.

Proverbs have authority in criticizing human behaviour.

كلام أبو جانقور في الفاشر ما مسموع *Kalama abu jangoor fi al fashir ma masmooa'* (The speech of one with ragged clothes can't be heard) (683) is a criticism of people's attitude towards poor. The proverb means that people do not accept advice from a poor person; they value others' views according to their status in society.

Dr. Ahmed explains the proverb *قديمك ما تجفا* *gadeemak ma tajfa* (Do not abandon your old belongings) (440) as a call for the observance of heritage, customs and traditions. In spite of the rapid changes in Sudanese society, we notice that the Sudanese have emotional attachments to their traditions; they think that they cannot stand without their traditions, as there is no future or present without the past.

2.6 Examples of the roles of proverbs

The three experts quoted above all emphasise the role of proverbs in the Sudanese society in educational and social matters, as well as legislative roles in formal and informal institutions.

a) Educational roles

Proverbs function as educational tools to convey messages and transmit cultural and social heritage. They imply social norms and values; therefore, they are more effective devices to teach good manners than books. Proverbs encourage people to be concerned about their children and start teaching them good morals at an early age. An example is the proverb *Al-a'ilm fi al-s'ighar kelnaqshi fi al-h'ajar* (Learning in youth is like sculpting stone) (3), which means that if a child learns social values when he is very young, when he grows up he will not forget these values.

Another proverb is used to express this idea: *Mann shaba a'la shai shaba a'leahi* (He who used to do a thing when he was young, will do it when he is old) (735). Parents are also encouraged: *Waladak wahu s'agheer rabbi wa inn_kibir khawi* (Discipline your child when he is young, and fraternize with him when is old). (736)

Proverbs are also used to teach children to respect their parents and their elders. For example, *ih'tarim mann shaff al-shamss qablak* (Respect those who saw the sun before you) (25) and *al-akbar minak* أكبر منك بيوم أعرف منك بسنة (25)

biyum aa'raf minak bisana (He who is one day older than you is one year wiser than you). (737)

Proverbs that deal with educational matters are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

b) Social roles:

Family and relatives:

The analysis of this data reveals that proverbs are used to control social behaviour as well as being tools to strengthen social relationships. Some proverbs are used to strengthen family relationships. Within the nuclear family, proverbs are used to advise parents to value their children. As an example, the proverb *هين جلدك ما تهين ولدك* *heen jildak ma taheen wildak* (Humiliate your skin, but not your child) (189) calls on parents to work hard to secure their children's lives and not to let them down by poverty and neglect. In the framework of the extended family, the Sudanese have great respect for kinship and relatives. For example, *عايده العرجاء لمراحها* *a'yida al-a'rja li murah'a* (A lame animal will go back to its herd) (738) is used to encourage people to keep close to their families and to return to them especially when support is needed. And *الغزال يربطو من عصبه* *al-ghazal birbotoo minn a's'abo* (a gazelle will be tied with its nerve) (739) calls for solidarity with family members; the word nerve is used metaphorically to indicate strong unity. The proverb *اللي من دمي ما بخلى من همى* *alli-minn dami ma bikhla min hami* (He that is of my blood will worry about me) (148), explains the emotional attachments the Sudanese have for their blood relationships.

These proverbs state that one has to be more forceful in relations with his relatives as he undoubtedly needs them. However, some kinds of relatives' collaboration may have

negative impacts in respect of justice and equity. The proverb أنا وأخي على بن عمي وأنا وابن عمي على الغريب *ana wa akhai a'la ibin a'mmi wa ana wa ibin a'ami a'la al-ghareeb* (I and my brother against my cousin and me and my cousin against the stranger) (148), shows a blind prejudice among relatives against outsiders. This prejudice is very prevalent nowadays in areas where conflicts have led to serious damage to the Sudan economic and social structure.

Nevertheless, the Sudanese have contradictory views about relatives, because some of them are vicious. They say الأقارب عقارب *al-aqarib a'qarib* (Relatives are scorpions) (181), referring to the kind of relatives who cause harm and trouble. The word scorpion is used metaphorically to describe relatives as harmful; they conduct plots to hurt their own blood.

c) Marriage and children:

The marriage relationship receives a great deal of attention in connection with the social roles of the Sudanese proverbs. Some Sudanese, like their Arab fellows, divest women of their natural right to choose their husbands. The proverb إختار لبنتك وولدك خيرُهُ *Ikhtar lebintak wa waladak khairo* (Choose a husband for your daughter and let your son choose his wife) (234), for example, shows that girls are looked at as incompetent. They are looked upon as incompetent to make decisions even in personal matters. An unmarried woman has to stay in her father's house to preserve the family's honour: البايه أولى *Al-baira awla beyha beat abuha* (It is appropriate for a spinster to remain in her father's house). (740)

In line with the focus on marriage, ancestry is always highlighted when it comes to affinity. For example, أخذ الأصبيلة ولو بارت *ukhud al-as'eela wa lao barat* (Marry a woman of noble origin even if she is an old maid) (741) explains that the Sudanese prefer to build their marriage relationships with good families. There is also a preference for marriage between relatives: أفضل الزول يغطي ماعونه *afd'al al-zoul yighaṭi maa'oonu* (it is better for a person to cover his own pot.) (179) The word pot metaphorically refers to the blood relationship. The proverb, ود عمك كان دقاك في الحر يُجرك في الضل *wad a'mik kan dakak fi al-h'ar yujorik fi al-d'ul* (If your cousin punches you in the heat (hot weather), he will move you to the shade) (742), refers to preference of marriage between cousins. Similarly, ود عمك لو أكل لحمك ما بكسر عضمك *wad a'mik lao akal lah'amik ma biksir a'd'mik* (if your cousin eats your flesh, he will not break your bones) (191), implies the belief that a cousin husband will be more considerate to his wife and will sympathize with her when problems arise.

Having children is considered as an important factor for family stability. Sudanese society places great stress on the importance of having children, as children perpetuate their parents' name, especially that of the father. The proverb اللّي خلف ما مات *al-khallaf ma mat* (He who leaves children never dies) (743), is a common and very well known proverb. People use it specifically to console someone who has lost a dear one who left young children behind.

Having children also strengthens the relationship between a husband and wife. It is important for a wife to have children to secure her marriage so that her husband will not divorce her or marry another woman to have children. For example, جيبني حجار وثبتي *jiybi hajar wathbati*

الدار *jibi h'ijar wa thabiti al-dar* (Oh, bring stones to settle your house) (744) is often quoted to a woman who does not want to get pregnant as soon as she gets married. On the other hand a woman might suffer because of her children. Children may compel their mother to endure an intolerable relationship with her husband because she cannot ask for divorce for the sake of her children. The proverb الجنائز قيد الهوان *al-jana gead al-hawan* (The child is a shackle of humiliation) (745) means that some matters are not tolerated outside the marriage relationship, but within marriage a mother may tolerate them in order to stay with her children.

The gender of the child is another dilemma in the marriage relationship. A wife who gives birth to girls all the time is under threat either of divorce or of her husband marrying another woman. Sudanese express their preference for a male child by using this proverb: الضيكر ولو فوير *al-d'ikear wa lao feywair* (A male is better even if it is a small rat) (187). That is to say that a man is better even if he is small and weak.

d) Friends and neighbours:

Proverbs also have a role in defining the duties and responsibilities towards friends and neighbours. For example, صحكك إن بقى عسل ما تلحسه كله *S'ah'bak in biqa a'sal ma talh'su kulu* (If your friend becomes like honey, do not eat it all) (21) advises people not to take advantage of good friends. Neighbours are considered as closer than relatives. الجار قبل الدار *Al-jar gabl al-dar* (Find the neighbour before the house) (219) states that it is important that you buy or build your house where you can find good neighbours, and جارك القريب ولا ود أمك البعيد *jarak al-gareab wa la wad umak al-ba'eed* (Your close

neighbour is better than your far brother) (220) emphasises the respect that Sudanese have for their neighbours.

e) Solidarity:

In supporting social relationships, solidarity and joint responsibility are the cornerstones of Sudanese social structure. The people of the Sudan successfully use their proverbs to achieve this goal. الشجرة إن مالت تنكي في أختها *Al-shajara inn malat titaki fi ukhtaha* (When a tree leans it rests on its sister (649) implies that one should seek help from family or relatives when crises arise without any embarrassment. Collective effort is more effective than individual work. اليد الواحد ما بتصفق *Al-yadd al-wah'da ma bits'afiq* (One hand cannot clap) (651) shows the collectivist nature of Sudanese society, especially in rural areas where help in farming is needed.

f) Statutory roles:

The statutory role of proverbs can occur in formal or informal conversations. For example, the proverb الجنيءه كلب تابع سيده *al-janeah kalib tabia'sidu* (Crime is a dog that follows its owner) (505) means that whoever commits a crime, cannot escape no matter how long he hides. After he admits his wrongdoing and is punished for that he remains in people's memories as a wrongdoer. The proverb كاتل الروح وين بروح *katil al-rooh' wean biroh'* (The soul killer, where will he go) (523). The word soul is used as metonymy, the proverb means that whoever kills a person and hides, one day will be brought to justice. And لا عُذْرَ لِمَنْ أُنذِرَ *la a'udra liman undir* (There is no excuse for the one who has been given notice) (445) is used to prevent further mistakes from one who has already been forewarned.

Proverbs are used as accusatory tools: مافي دُخان بدون نار *mafi dukhan bedoon nar* (There is no smoke without fire) (484) and العُود لو ما فيه شق ما بقول طق *ala'ood lao ma fiehu shaq ma begul taq* (A stick without a crack in it will not make a sound) (485) are used to strengthen accusations.

Proverbs are also used to regulate business relationships within the framework of statutory roles. For example the proverb أكلوا تجار وأتحاسبوا أخوان *Uklu akhwan wa ith'asbu tujar* (Eat as brothers and settle your accounts as businessmen) (36) calls for people not to mix business and personal relationships.

Indulgence is regarded as the best policy to resolve conflicts. Self-defense is more efficient when it is conducted in a polite and soft way. الكلام الحلو يمرق الثعبان من جُحره *Al-kalam al-h'ilu yamrug al-thua'ban min juh'ru* (soft talk removes a snake from its hole) (629). A snake is known as a dangerous creature; in this proverb, softness affects even snakes. That is to say no matter how strong your enemy is, it is better to settle matters in a soft way, so you can achieve positive results.

g) Advice and Advisory roles:

Proverbs are used as tools for advice in Sudanese society. For example, لا تشيل رأس ميت *La tesheel rass mait tabla beho* (Do not carry the head of a dead person, or you will be entangled) (500). This proverb advises that one should not get involved in matters if he cannot deal with their consequences. And the proverb أدي العجين لخبازه *Addi al-a'jean lakhabazoo wa lao yakul nus'o* (Give the dough to a baker even if he eats half of it) (511) means that one should give work to a specialist, because even if he takes half of it he will finish it in a perfect way. أنظر عيبك قبل عيب غيرك

Ant'ur a'eabak qabel a'eab ghearak (know your own faults before you find fault with others) (309) condemns those who point at others' lapses and overlook their own mistakes.

h) Consultation

Consultation is highly recommended by members of the Sudanese society. Individuals are expected to consult their families, friends and elderly before they take major decisions in their lives. The proverb بيت الشورى ما خرب *bait al-shora ma_khirib* (A house of consensus will never fall apart) (665), is always used to encourage this attitude even when it concerns personal matters like marriage. As the extended family is a cornerstone in the Sudanese social structure, many matters that other societies consider as individual business are considered as family concerns in the Sudan. Issues like marriage, divorce, buying or selling are not individual matters, so discussions might even extend beyond the extended family to distant relatives, family friends or even the elderly and those who are considered as wise in the village or small town. Therefore, the group's decision is considered as a right decision and a person who tries to take a decision individually, may find himself isolated and he may stand by himself when a crisis arises. People often use this proverb to warn against taking individual action: إنما يأكل الذئب من الغنم القاصية: *inama yækul al-deib min al-ghanam al-ghas'iya* (The hyena eats the goat that stands by itself) (746).

i) Other roles of proverbs:

Proverbs play many other roles in Sudanese society. As there are proverbs for any situation, it is impossible to include all their roles in this section. However, I will deal

with some examples to explain other functions that proverbs play. They are used as tools to criticize people or situations. *الجمل ما يعرف عوجة رقبته Al-jamal ma ba'rif a'wajat ragabtu* (The camel is not aware of the crookedness of his neck) (488) is used in a situation when a person criticizes others although he has the same problem or may make the same mistakes.

Proverbs are also used as warning tools. The proverb *أخوك كان زينو بل رأسك akhuk kan zaino bill rasak* (If your brother has had a haircut, wet your own head) (444) warns a person to prepare himself for bad news when another one in a similar situation gets into trouble.

Some proverbs are used to encourage people to stop being lazy and look for work. An example is *قُم نُعِينِكَ مَا تَرْتُدُّ نُهِينِكَ qumm na'eanak ma targud naheanak* (Get moving so we can help you; do not sit down or we will humiliate you) (83). This proverb calls for people to try to help themselves by seeking work, to ensure a good level of living as laziness causes poverty.

Proverbs are also used as tools for sarcasm or mockery, for example *القرد في عين أمه غزال Al-qirid fi a'ean umu ghazal* (A monkey is a gazelle in his mother's eyes) (396). They may be used to express helplessness as result of fate and predestination, for example, *الحمار ما بريح أبوه Al-himar ma breah' ubohu* (The donkey will not release his father from work) (747) as both of them have to work for all of their lives.

Proverbs have therapeutic roles as well. The proverb *نوم مُدْفِي تَقوم مُنْعَفِي Noom mudafi teqoom muta'afi* (Sleep warm and you will get up healthy) (513) is a remedial proverb.

And the proverb *كل المرض من الله الا مرض البطن من سيده Kull al-marad' min Allah ila marad' al-batun min sidu* (All diseases are from God, only stomach pain is caused by the

sick person) (566), emphasises the fact that unhealthy food causes health problems. It encourages people to watch out what they eat.

j) Patience

Proverbs also encourage people to be patient in crisis and difficult situations or when they deal with conflicts in daily life. For example, الصبر مُفتاحُ الفرج *als'aber muftah al-faraj* (patience is the key to relief) (748) is a promise that comfort will come after difficulties, الصبر يهدُّ الجبال and *al-s'abr yihid al-jibal* (patience demolishes mountains) (621) is a consolation for those in difficulties, that they will overcome their problems by being patient.

3. 6 Some examples of the use of proverbs in daily life

This section discusses some examples of proverbs as they are used by some members of Sudanese society. As a member of this society, it is normal for me to hear proverbs in natural conversations in my daily life. In this section, I will illustrate some situations that I have witnessed using the exact literary translations for the words as they were spoken by the people. All the people in these cases are known to me, and some of them have agreed that their names could be mentioned in this research. However, I have immunized the names because of the sensitivity of some situations.

Situation 1

لا يُلدَغ المؤمنُ من جُحرٍ مرَّتين

La yuldagh al-moamin min juhrin maratean

(A believer will never be bitten twice from the same snake hole) (107)

A. is a young lady who came to her aunt to complain about her husband, who treated her very badly. She asked her aunt to advise her how to deal with her husband. Her aunt told her this proverb.

I know that it was not the first time that A. complained about her husband. She had approached her aunt before and told her aunt that she did not want to leave her husband, because she had young children and was worrying about her status in society if she became a divorced woman. She also did not want to return to her father's household with a number of children. At the same time, she could not tolerate her husband's behaviour. She then asked her aunt for advice. The aunt had told her what she should do when she went back to her husband's house. The husband noticed that his wife's behaviour had changed. He tried to find out the reasons behind her changed attitude towards him. She then told him that her aunt had advised her to behave differently. Consequently, the relationship between the husband and the aunt was damaged. When she came to complain for the second time, the aunt quoted this proverb to her. She meant, 'Stop asking me; I gave you my advice before, but you put me into trouble'.

Situation 2 (the previous proverb)

لا يُلدَغ المؤمنُ من جُحرٍ مرَّتين

La yuldagh al-moamin min juhrin maratean

(A believer will never be bitten twice from the same snake hole) (107)

I and A were partners in a small business. They bought and sold coffee and wood between Sudan and the Central Republic of Africa. A settled in a big town and relied on I to do the travelling between the two countries as a trader. A engaged in another business, using all the money without consulting I, and he lost everything, as he was not experienced in that field. I was not happy about what A had done as he expected him to discuss the matter with him beforehand. A wanted to engage in the same business again and this time he asked I to trust him in using his money. I told A that “*la yuldagh al-moamin min juhrin maratean*”.

That is, he told his partner that ‘You used my money before and engaged in the same business, but you failed, therefore, I will not accept that you use my money again to risk another lose’.

Situation 3

كان تجري جري الوحوش غير رزقك ما تحوش

Kan tajri jari al-wh'osh hgear rizgak ma tah'oosh

(Even if you run like a wild animal, you will never get more than your fate) (114)

One of my relatives has quoted this proverb to me on many different occasions. I used to work in one of the Gulf countries and the relative used to try to persuade me to leave that country and go back to the Sudan to live with my family. She told me that she could not

understand why I took the decision to live abroad. When I told her that I had a better job, she said to me that I would waste all the money that I earned in that job. She said livelihood is a matter of fate and it would come to me wherever I am without the need to search for it anywhere. She then quoted this proverb. She said that my natural place is with my family and that is where God arranged for my living. Therefore, according to her, I will never gain abroad more than I would gain in my country.

Situation 4

إبن آدم من طين يعكر ويصفي

Ibn Adam min teen ya'kar wa yas'fa

(The son of Adam comes from mud; he becomes turbid and then clears) (333)

Two women, K and A, were good friends. One day they had an argument and K verbally abused her friend A. A decided to break off her friendship with K and stopped talking to her. K realized that she had made a big mistake and wanted to apologize to A and to explain to her that she did not mean what she said to her; she was just very angry and in a bad mood. She then quoted this proverb to say what has happened was just a human error and should not affect their friendship.

Situation 5

رتني العجلة أؤ

Akharatni al-a'ajala

(It was the haste that delayed me) (335)

The scene was the wedding of a neighbour's daughter. M was the bride's aunt. She was expected to come very early, but she arrived late. When she arrived many women started to blame her for coming late. She said to them *akharatni al-a'ajala* (it was the haste that

made me come late) She said she left her house in a rush and on her way she realized that she had left the gas stove on, so she had to go back to switch it off and that took her extra time.

Situation 6

ود الفار يطلع حفار
Wad al-far ayṭla' h'affar
(The rat's son is a digger) (174)

T is M's grandmother. M's father was a soldier although his mother had not wanted him to work for the military. One day M's told his grandmother that he did not want to finish his studies as he wanted to fulfil his desire to become a soldier. His grandmother tried to persuade him to change his mind, but he told her that he had already made his decision and did not want to argue about it. The grandmother said to him that he wanted to be like his father and then she quoted this proverb.

Situation 7

التور إن وقع تكتر سكاكينه
Al-toor inn waqa' takter sakakeenu
(When the ox falls, the number of his knives will increase) (319)

A group of visitors were gathering in front of the TV listening to the evening news. At that time, a well-known politician had been arrested and news was spreading about his activities and political history. The man had been blamed for many mistakes; one of the visitors repeated the above proverb. He meant that if a strong man falls into a vulnerable position, anyone can criticize him and people sometimes even create stories about him.

Situation 8

الأرضه جريت الحجر

Al-ard'ah jarabat al-h'ajar

(The termite tried to dig the rock) (471)

S. had been sacked from his job. He was very worried that he had no other skills to qualify him to do any other job. A, his friend, asked him to work with him in his shop. S. said he had no idea about business and told S that he might fail. A encouraged him to try, and quoted this proverb. He was reminding S. that it is not necessary to have all the skills and strength to try to do difficult tasks as even a weak insect has tried to dig rocks.

Situation 9

أدوه شير سواه ضراع

Addo shibir sawahu d'ura'

(They gave him a span and he made it a cubit) (336)

O. was a farmer who had a big farm outside the town. He wanted to help I., one of his relatives. He gave him a small piece of land, so he could use it to grow some crops for his family. Then O. fell sick that season and stayed in the town. I. took advantage of O.'s absence and expanded the small area; he grew crops on a very large area of O.'s farm. When O. heard the news from other farmers, he said *addo shibir sawahu d'ura'* to tell people that I. had taken advantage of him.

Situation 10

إذا عُرِفَ السَّبَبُ يَطْلُ العَجَبُ

Ida a'urif al-sabab batal al-a'jab (43)
(If the reason is known wonder will end)

N and B were good friends. They used to spend most of their time together. Suddenly B stopped visiting N, even when she was sick. N then tried to criticise B for the sudden change in her behaviour. B started to cry and implied that she did not feel comfortable to visit N when N's brother was around. One of our neighbours who was with us during the conversation, quoted this proverb. She was saying that if you know the reason you would not be surprised; B had been harassed by N's brother. B had decided to break off her friendship with N because her brother did not respect her friendship with his sister.

The above are only a few examples to illustrate the use of proverbs in everyday situations in private life. The use of large numbers of proverbs is dealt with more briefly in Chapter 5.

In summary, the Sudanese utilize their proverbs to play vital roles in their daily lives; in controlling social behaviour, conveying cultural and educational values, or enabling problem solving they are more effective than any written rules or institutional curriculum.

Chapter Seven

A Comparison of Sudanese and English Proverbs

1. 7 Proverbs as seen by British society

One of the main concerns of this study is to identify similarities and differences between Sudanese and English proverbs as expressions that may differ in culture and wording but can be used in equivalent situations to express similar or opposite ideas. To achieve this goal, intensive investigations have been made during my fieldwork in the United Kingdom.

Proverbs used in this section are drawn from different kinds of textual sources and from British informants in London and Brighton through interviews and questionnaires. Some interviews were tape-recorded; their transcripts were used for analysis. My informants came from different age groups and academic backgrounds; I met them in various places including churches, hostels, universities, and other public places, especially the Speakers' Corner in the Hyde Park, London and the reading rooms in the British Library.

As it was very difficult if not impossible for me to hear proverbs used in daily conversations in British culture, I utilized direct questionnaires to find out people's opinions about proverbs and their attitudes towards them. I also elicited proverbs from

my informants that are equivalent or opposite in their meaning to Sudanese proverbs, either by face-to-face interviews or by using questionnaires completed in their own time. Because my informants varied in their age and knowledge, they had different views about proverbs as reflections of people's values. Some young informants, among them university students, consider proverbs as old-fashioned 'ready-made' expressions that old people sometimes use to justify or encourage a given behaviour. One of my informants described proverb users as lazy and uncreative people, who want to impose their old or odd beliefs on young people living in a different time with different values. On the other hand, they said they understood the meaning of proverbs although they never used them in their daily conversations. Those young informants were interrupted by fellow students who said that proverbs are part of normal life and should not be referred to as old-fashioned, and a very objective discussion followed. C., a maths and history student, said that proverbs keep the past alive; if people use proverbs in the right context, they can be amusing and make people think about their behaviour. Ch. considered proverb users as intelligent people, while M thought they are carriers of the folk wisdom and culture in a given society.

One of my informants, a doctor of philosophy, thought that people who use proverbs are mentally restricted and display extremely restricted imagination unless they use them ironically.

Some other groups had different views, seeing proverbs as effective means of conveying messages to advise, apologize, console or even warn without offending the one to whom the message is addressed. Proverbs were also seen as effective tools in the educational process. One of my informants was a teacher and he said that he uses proverbs effectively

to advise his students and to encourage them. He feels it is a pity that people do not realize how these expressions can be utilized effectively to teach young people some social principles.

In face-to-face interviews, some of my informants said that English society has more proverbs than it is aware of. In a tape-recorded interview on 18 February 2002, L.C., the Head of the Arabic Department, University of Westminster, told me:

Proverbs belong to everyone in the community; if a proverb has a message it comes from the community not from the speaker. If you want to blame someone without directly blaming them, you can use a proverb. For example, 'The early bird catches the worm': suppose I got to work very early and because I was so early the technician gave me a new computer, because there was only one left and he wanted to give it to the first one who came to work. Then my colleague comes and says 'This is unfair; you got a new computer and I did not.' Now I can say 'The early bird catches the worm'...If you want to highlight a problem in a direct way, you need evidence, but by using this proverb, he will accept the message. Proverbs are not random in a conversation; they mark a complete end of a topic or a complete end of the conversation.

People very regularly use proverbs when they are reporting something difficult, or when they are moving from a negative topic to a positive one.

Further discussions with my informants and data collection via questionnaires revealed that proverbs were highly appreciated by old people. Among them one of my informants, who is from Oxford and resides in London, considered proverbs as timeless and suitable at any time as tools to control social behaviours and to teach good morals. In intensive discussions that lasted for many sessions at the Speakers' Corner, my informants talked about the British society in past times, when proverbs had high frequency in people's daily conversations, minds and thoughts, compared with the attitude towards proverbs today. Many of these informants tended to believe that people were more conservative and traditions and values were more respected when proverbs were dominant. One woman informant said that when traditions were respected in her time and people

preferred the marriage relationship or had only one partner, diseases such as Aids were not known in British society.

British people who have a strong commitment to the church also expressed a strong belief in the effectiveness of proverbs as tools to teach good morals and values. My informants from this category were able to draw many proverbs from their memories without hesitation. They were also able to give many equivalent proverbs to the Sudanese proverbs quoted by myself.

On the other hand, some informants thought that the vast majority of British people do not have any knowledge of proverbs. For example, in an interview held on Friday 28 February 2003 in London with Captain E.B., the Coordinator of Marylebone Project and the Minister of Religion of the Church Army, Churches of England, told me:

The majority of British people would have no understanding of proverbs at all, but older people use them for teaching skills, like for example 'A stitch in time saves nine'. My mother used to tell us regularly, 'Cleanliness is next to Godliness' to encourage us to make sure to wash daily, but I do not think they are surviving today in the current generation. I cannot say that they are old-fashioned because they are wisdom handed from generation to generation; I can say that people are not aware of them.

Proverbs are personal experiences at the beginning; then people adopt them through generations. From a Christian point of view, proverbs represent wisdom and wisdom is knowledge of God. The Book of Proverbs is a collection of morals and religious teachings that deal with everyday concerns, common sense and good manners. It shows how a wise person should behave in different situations. It deals with social relationships and the need for social control; and dealing morally in business. However, the culture has changed, for example in the way we look at women today. We used to teach women only how to be good housemaids, which is not the case today. However, proverbs used to have important social roles when communities used to live together; I think if society was closer and had more community and people were more respectful to each other, proverbs would have important roles, but now we have become more individualistic.

The following list shows the questions that I used in the questionnaires:

1. Are proverbs still in use in your society?
2. Do you remember any proverb now? Can you say it?
3. Do you know a proverb equivalent to this proverb? Say it please, or give a contrasting one. a. As you sow, so you will reap. b. Inquire about the neighbours before you choose the house (before you buy a new house, get some information about the people who live there). c. Every man acts according to his own disposition. d. Better to be alone than in bad company. e. If you live with Arabs, either do as they do or leave them. f. He that digs a hole for others falls in it himself. g. All is not gold that glitters. h. Many hands make light work. i. Contentment is a treasure that never perishes. j. He who finds faults with others does worse himself. k. Cast no dirt into the well that gives you water. l. If you try to straighten twigs, they will straighten.
4. Do you know any proverb connected with a story? Please say it.
5. How often do you use proverbs?
6. Do you hear people around you using proverbs?
7. What do you think about people who use proverbs today?
8. Are proverbs interesting or boring?

The proverbs used in the questionnaires are Sudanese proverbs; British informants were asked to try to find equivalent or contrasting proverbs from their society.

My informants numbered a total of 180 people. At the beginning, I divided them into three age groups; each group included 60 informants, both male and female. The first group consisted of informants less than 30 years old, the second group were aged from 31-40 and the third group was above 41 years old. I did not find a significant difference in the way the first two groups viewed proverbs. Therefore, I later decided to put the 180 informants into two age groups (from 18 –40, and above 41).

The majority of the informants in all groups agreed that proverbs are rarely used in daily conversations in British society. Nonetheless, there was an amazing response when they were asked to draw proverbs from their memories, especially when they compared or contrasted Sudanese proverbs to English proverbs.

2.7 Tables

The following tables show the Sudanese proverbs used in the questionnaires and the equivalent or contrasting ones given by my informants, together with the numbers and percentages of responses by the study groups:

Table 1

Proverb A:

Sudanese: *Kama tazra' tah's'id*

(As you sow, you will reap)

English: As you sow, so you will reap

Age	Total number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	66	73.3%
Above 41	90	81	90 %
Total	180	147	81.6%

Table 2

Proverb B:

Sudanese: *asal a'an al-jar gubal al-dar*

Ask about your neighbours before you buy a house

English: Inquire about the neighbours before the house

Age	Total number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	31	34.4%
Above 41	90	46	51.1%
Total	180	77	42.7%

Table 3

Proverb C:

Sudanese: *kulu wahid wa ma yahwa*

(Everyone acts according to his own disposition)

English: Every man to his taste.

Age	Total Number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	35	38.8%
Above 41	90	49	54.4%
Total	180	84	46.6%

Table 4

Proverb D:

Sudanese: *A'raban tanzil janbaha ya sheel dalaha ya arh'al khalha*

If you live with Arabs, either do as they do or leave them

English: When in Rome do as the Romans do

Age	Total number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	35	38.8%
Above 41	90	51	56.6%
Total	180	86	47.7%

Table 5

Proverb E:

Sudanese: *mann h'afar h'ufratan liakhiyi waqa' fiyha*

He who digs a hole for his brother falls in it

English: He who digs a hole for others falls in himself.

Age	Total number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	40	44.4%
Above 41	90	69	76.6%
Total	180	109	60.5%

Table 6

Proverb F:

Sudanese: *laiysa kulu ma yalna' thahan*

All is not gold that glitters

English: Not all that glitters is gold

Age	Total Number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	52	57.7%
Above 41	90	64	71.1%
Total	180	116	64.4%

Table 7

Proverb G

Sudanese: *eid lieid tajda' ba'eed*

A hand on a hand throws far

English: Many hands make light work

Age	Total number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	23	25.5%
Above 41	90	52	57.7%
Total	180	75	41.6%

Table 8

Proverb H:

Sudanese: *al qanaa' khiyrun min al-ghina*

Contentment is better than wealth

English: Contentment is better than riches.

Age	Total number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	33	36.6%
Above 41	90	40	44.4%
Total	180	73	40.5%

Table 9

Proverb I:

Sudanese: *Yitabia' a'ub al-nas wa yansa a'ib nafsu*

He finds faults with others and forgets his faults.

English: Do not cast the first stone

Age	Total number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	29	32.2%
Above 41	90	41	45.5%
Total	180	70	38.8%

The two proverbs may not be equivalent in meaning but they base the same pragmatic import.

Table 10

Proverb J:

Sudanese: *Beeran tishrab minu ma tarmi fihu wasakh*

Cast no dirt into the well that gives you water

English: Do not bite the hand that feeds you

Age	Total number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	40	44.4%
Above 41	90	61	67.7%
Total	180	101	56.1%

Table 11

Proverb K

Sudanese: *Inna al-ghus'oon ida qawamtaha ia'tadalat*

If you try to straighten twigs, they will straighten

English: Learn at a young age

Age	Total number	Number of equivalent answers	Percentage
18-40	90	27	30%
Above 41	90	59	65%
Total	180	86	47%

Although I have left the above tables to express themselves, they make it clear that proverbs are never absent from British people's culture. Proverb use in one culture can be understood by people in another culture either by providing one image for another image or by supplying an abstract thought for a metaphorical expression. However those who had knowledge of proverbs were mostly old people; the younger the age of my informants, the less knowledge of proverbs they had. The informants who had knowledge of proverbs had gained this knowledge by hearing people around them using proverbs. That is to say, the informants' knowledge of proverbs depended on their age and that of the people around them, and whether they used proverbs in daily conversations.

3. 7 Proverbs that are used in similar situations to convey the same messages in Sudanese and English societies:

There is a great difference between Sudanese society and English society in their ideas about concepts like time keeping, family relationships and solidarity. Nevertheless throughout the discussions with my informants, I was amazed to find remarkable similarities in the way that ordinary people in Sudan and UK express their feelings and ideas in similar circumstances and situations.

This section will show some proverbs that differ in their wording but have the same meaning and use among the people of the United Kingdom and Sudan. The proverb use was discussed with my informants throughout the fieldwork period. To enable the reader to understand these similarities, I have written the Sudanese proverbs using English transcription followed by a translation, and the correspondence English proverb under each Sudanese proverb.

1. S. *La yuldagh al-mumin min juh'arin martean*
A believer will not be bitten twice from the same snake hole
E. A fox is not taken twice in the same snare

The above Sudanese proverb is drawn from a religious environment, the person who quoted it used the word believer to refer to Islamic culture, while the English hunter used his surroundings where fox hunting is dominant, to express a similar idea.

2. S. (1) *Rakkab sarjean wagaa'*
He who rides two saddles will fall
S. (2) *A-rass ma besheel jarean*
The head cannot carry two pots at the same time
E. A man cannot serve two masters

The Sudanese herder who is surrounded with his animals used his environment to convey the same idea in the English proverbs that one cannot do two things at a time.

3. S. *Al-kalam al-liyeen yamruq al-dabi min juh'ro*
Soft words get the snake out of its hole
E. A soft answer turns away wars

Proverb users in British and Sudanese society agree that diplomatic solutions are more effective than power.

4. S. *Ma tadafiq moytak a'la al-rihab*
Do not pour out your water because you saw a mirage
E. Do not count your chickens before they are hatched

The Sudanese herder who lives in the desert and the British farmer have successfully used their environment and daily experiences to employ metaphors to warn people not to rely on expectations.

5. S. *Waṭani wa la mali baṭni*
My home is better than a comfortable life abroad
E. East or west, home is best

Emotional attachment to one's homeland is expressed in both proverbs; home is described as the best place by English and Sudanese proverbs.

6. S. *Allahuma akfina shar al-sadeeq*
God protects me from the evil of my friends
E. God defend me from my friends

The same idea is expressed in the form of a statement in the Sudanese proverb and in the English proverb as a wish.

7. S. *Akhartni al-a'jala*
Haste made me late
E. Make haste slowly

The concept of haste is used in different ways, as an excuse in the Sudanese proverb and as advice in the English proverb

8. S. *A'us'for fi al-yad wa la alif tair*
A bird in the hand is worth a thousand flying
E. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush

In both proverbs the word bird is used to represent a small thing to express the meaning that contentment with the little that one has is better than losing it because of expectations that one might get more.

9. S. *Al-a'ad'i al-dabeab bikhaf min al-h'abil*
He who has been bitten by a snake is scared of a rope
E. A burnt child dreads the fire

Proverb users in Sudanese and British society have agreed that if a person has suffered once, he will become continuously suspicious that he might suffer in similar situations.

10. S. *Al-fagur ma a'eab*
Poverty is not shame
E. Poverty is no sin

Although both Sudanese and English societies suggest a sharp contrast between the rich and the poor through their proverbs, they agree that poverty is not shameful or sinful.

In spite of the striking similarity in some situations in the way the two societies express themselves, there are differences in others. For example, one can claim that Sudanese do not value time by saying that *H'abl al-mahala yarbut wa yafd'ul* (the rope of deliberation will tie and remain) and they seem to enjoy this slowness in their daily life. In contrast, the English proverb says 'Time flies', suggesting a different attitude toward timekeeping. Similarly, *Al nisa qadeemu tah* (Whoever forgets his past goes astray), shows the

emotional attachment that Sudanese have for their past; while British people express more openness to the wider world through the following proverbs:

Every one after his fashion

Out of the world out of fashion

(The Oxford *op.cit*, p.192)

However, it is remarkable to find that English proverbs describe the woman's status as similar to her status in Sudan or other Arab cultures in the way that men undermine her. In English proverbs women are even connected with music and wine as a source of pleasure; they also compared to geese, monkeys, and dogs.

Although evidence strongly suggests that proverbs reflect human cultures and traditions, sometimes they fail to represent a single exact image of a given society. This is because in many circumstances the positive proverbs call for ideals that we are supposed to live by, rather than describing the reality.

Appendix A shows other Sudanese proverbs and their English counterparts. In many cases there is only partial equivalent or correspondents.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

The aims of this research have been to examine the meaning, use, and purpose of Sudanese Arabic proverbs in their natural context and compare them with English proverbs as a means of expressing cultural and social values. It has revealed Sudanese and English proverbs as expressions that may differ completely in their cultural derivation and wording but can be used in similar situations to express similar or opposite ideas. Thus, my broad focus has been on meanings and functions of proverbs. Proverbs are cultural signposts in given societies; people express their beliefs, values and attitudes towards their surroundings through them.

Many of the proverbs in Sudanese and British cultures are didactic and their advice is often harsh, painful, and even cruel. Yet they are accepted by people as social interventions for control of behaviour and promotion of various personal values such as resignation to fate, truthfulness, conformism, or opportunism in business. One reason why the proverbs are so influential is that literary devices are used to sweeten the medicine of advice, making it acceptable and even enjoyable for people to swallow. Devices used in proverbs include humour; surprise and exaggeration; defamiliarisation³, which may help the speaker to make a sensitive point to the listener by referring to nature; metaphor and simile, especially in relation to familiar environments and experiences.

For example the proverb *Al girrba tukhur fi s'afh'at a-shayilla* (The water bag leaks on its carrier's back) may be cited by a Sudanese to warn against the consequences of people's actions. He has drawn a metaphor from the desert environment where people travel long distances to collect water. On the other hand, his fellow, the British farmer, used his surroundings and daily observations and experiences to warn against uncertain expectations, saying 'Do not count your chickens before they are hatched'. The Sudanese herder says' *Ma tidafiq muiytak a'la al-rihab*' (Do not pour out your water because you saw a mirage). Hence, people draw on their cultures and environments in depth when they use proverbs to make points in daily conversations.

Repetition, rhyme and rhythm make proverbs easy to remember, for example the English proverb 'No pains no gains' and its Sudanese equivalent, '*mafi safar bala dabar*' (No travel without a wound). In fact, Sudanese proverbs are rich in rhymes and rhythms that show their literary depth and give them fluency and smoothness.

Brevity and condensation occur in both English and Sudanese proverbs, for example the English 'One hand does not clap' and the Sudanese '*al-itih'ad qooa*' (Unity is strength), or 'No haste no waste' and '*al-a'ajala nadama*' (Haste is regret).

Figurative language and imagery in English and Sudanese proverbs show similarities in expressing people's understanding of life's vicissitudes and the worthlessness of earthy gains. '*Al-mutlafih' baih'a a'ryan*' (Whoever is covered by earthy gains is naked) uses clothing as a metonym for wealth; it expresses the same idea as the metaphor in the

³ '...the distinctive effect achieved by literary works in disrupting our habitual perception of the world, enabling us to 'see' things afresh' – Chris Baldick, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

English proverb 'Life is a shuttle' to emphasise that one should not rely on what he has in this life as it will not last for ever.

It appears from the investigation of the usage of proverbs in British and Sudanese culture that both societies emphasise the importance of disciplining children at a young age, and treating the elderly, friends, neighbours, parents and members of family with great consideration. However, due to the collective nature of Sudanese society, Sudanese proverbs show that these relationships are more close and tight than those in British culture. From discussions with my British informants, they appear in reality to be more individualistic than their proverbs suggest.

Behaviour that goes against customs, traditions and social rules is always confronted by direct or indirect criticism among Sudanese; they seem to have a high adherence to their traditions regardless of real social and economic conditions. Nevertheless, both cultures have the same viewpoint on women; both underestimate them and compare them to animals or inferior things.

Although contradictory messages occur in English and Sudanese proverbs, the contradictions themselves have their own particular messages in given situations. In spite of the various differences between the Sudanese society and the English society in their cultures, environment, and geographical location and language characteristics, this study shows similarities between their proverbs, especially on such concerns as education, friends, neighbours, God, and human observations.

Proverbs reveal much about people's inner life and attitudes towards their surroundings, reflecting various cultural values in given societies. Proverbs have high frequency and play a leading role in Sudanese culture, but although less widely used they are never absent from British culture either.

Further study of cultures through proverbs:

This research has revealed some major questions concerning proverbs and the cultural and social values they express, so I would like to end this research with these questions..

1. Why do proverbs in British and Sudanese societies suggest a sharp contrast between the rich and the poor?
2. Why do proverbs in both cultures describe women as evil and weak creatures and inferior in mentality?
3. What is the meaning of the contradiction in Sudanese proverbs between the high social ideals expressed in many proverbs, and evidence in others of class polarization and egregious racism among Sudanese themselves?

These questions demonstrate the need for further study of the social context of the realities they express.

Appendix A:

Sudanese Proverbs and their equivalent English

1. S. *Al-bua'ud jafa*

Absence is alienation

E. Absence makes the heart grow fonder

2. S. *Al-biyan bil al-a'mal*

Deeds not words

E. Actions speak louder than words

3. S. *Laiysa kulu ma yalma' dahab*

Not all that glitters is gold

E. All is not gold that glitters

4. S. *Al-aolu shart akhru noor*

All that starts with conditions ends well

E. All is well that ends well

5. S. *Abui ameer wa abuk muno el-begood al-h'ameer*

My father is a prince and your father is a prince, who will lead the donkeys

E. All men can't be masters

6. S. *T'a'nn al-lisan anfad minn t'a'nn al-seaf*

The stab of the tongue penetrates more than the stab of the sword

E. An acute word cuts deeper than a sharp weapon

7. S. *Al-wah'ada akhear min mujalsat al-sou*

Loneliness is better than bad company

E. Alone is better than bad company

8. S. *Shart al-murafaqa al-muwafaqa*

The condition of companionship is agreement

E. As a man is, so is his company.

9. S. *Al-tazra'u tah's'du*

What you sow, you will reap

E. As you sow, so will you reap

10. S. *Al-tisawi talqa*
 What you do you find
 E. As you sow, so will you reap
11. S. *Al-khabar al-shean biṭear*
 Bad news flies
 E. Bad news travels fast
12. S. *Al-kalib al-nabah' ma bia'd'i*
 A barking dog does not bite
 E. A barking dog seldom bites
13. S. *Al-shah'ad korto ma bititemali*
 The beggar's bowl never fills up
 E. A beggar's purse is bottomless
14. S. *Ma tis'adiq kul ma tasma'*
 Do not believe all you hear
 E. Believe not all that you see nor half what you hear
15. S. *A'doan beain wala s'adiqan munafiq*
 Better an open enemy than a hypocritical friend
 E. Better an open enemy than a false friend
16. S. *Al-jinn al-bita'rifu akhear minn al-jinn
 al-mabita'rfu*
 The devil you know is better than one that you do
 not know
 E. Better the devil you know than the devil you don't
 know
17. S. *Al-tuor a'la ashkaliha taqa'*
 Birds of the same appearance flock together
 E. Birds of a feather flock together
18. S. *Al-dam a'umru ma bibga muyia*
 Blood will never become water
 E. Blood is thicker than water
19. S. *Kulu innain beima fieah yand'ah'*
 Each vessel pours what is in it
 E. By their fruits ye shall know them
20. S. *Ma tamin lamin tiṭamin*
 Do not feel safe until you are buried
 E. Call no man happy until he is dead (or dies)

21. S. *Bearan tishrab minu ma tarmi fihu h'ajar*
Do not drop a stone in the well that gives you water
E. Cast no dirt into the well that gives you water
(Dictionary of European proverbs: volume II, No. 733a)
22. S. *Mata'd'i al-yadd al-timadd leak*
Do not bite the hand that helps you
E. Cast no dirt into a well that you drink from
23. S. *Al-kalib a'indu saba'a arwah'*
A dog has seven lives
E. A cat has nine lives
24. S. *Ma kaffa nass al-beat h'aram a'la al-jearan*
What is not enough for home, is a sin for the neighbours
E. Charity begins at home
25. S. *Inn jattak minn s'ugharah a'iddaha minn kubbara*
If you receive an offence from children, count it from their parents
E. Children, drunkards and fools cannot lie
26. S. *Al-nat'affa minn al-iemann*
Cleanliness is from belief
E. Cleanliness is next to godliness
27. S. *Katarat al-nagir kamalat al-h'ajar*
Constant digging finishes the stone
E. Constant dripping wears away a stone
28. S. *Al-naqatt kamal al-girba*
Constant dribbling has emptied the water bag
E. Constant dropping wears the stone
29. S. *Zidd ghiban tizdad h'uban*
Make your absence frequent and you will be more welcomed
E. A constant guest is never welcome.
30. S. *al-qina-a'a kanzun la yafna*
Contentment is a treasure that does not perish
E. Content is better than riches

31. S. *Mann shaba a'la shai shab a'liyhi*
He who grew up with a custom, becomes his nature in old age
E. Custom in infancy becomes nature in old age
32. S. *Al-moat bisawi bean al-ghani wa al-faqear*
Death makes the rich and the poor equal
E. Death is a great leveler
33. S. *Mann h'afara h'ufratan li akhihi waqa' fiyha*
He who digs a hole for his brother will fall himself in it
E. Dig not a pit, you yourself may fall into it
34. S. *Al-bas'arah ghalabt al-shatara*
Shrewdness conquered bravery
E. Discretion is the better part of valour
35. S. *A'amil al-nass zai ma tah'ib yia'mluk*
Treat others the way you want to be treated
E. Do as you would like be done by
36. S. *A'raban tanzil janbaha ya sheel dalaha ya arh'al khalha*
Arabs that you live with them, either do as they do or leave them
E. Do at Rome as the Romans do
37. S. *la tuajil a'mal al-yaom lilghad*
Don't leave today's work for tomorrow
E. Do not put off today's work for tomorrow
38. S. *Al-ghurab ma bisil a'in akhu*
A crow does not peck out its brothers' eyes
E. Dog does not eat dog
39. S. *As-sawaiyy ma h'addath*
A doer is never a great talker
E. A dog that intends to bite does not bear its teeth
40. S. *Al-mt'ahir khadaa'a*
Appearances are deceivers
E. Don't be deceived by appearances
41. S. *Ma tidafiq muiytak a'la al-rihab*
Do not pour out your water because you saw a mirage
E. Don't count your chickens before they are hatched

42. S. *Al-ghareeq yita'lag bigasha*
A drowning man will hold on a straw
E. A drowning man will clutch at a straw
43. S. *Hajildaiti wala tamur zoal*
My balanite fruit is more worthy to me than others' dates
E. Dry bread at home is better than roast meat abroad.
44. S. *Al-girid fi a;ain umi ghazal*
A monkey is a gazelle on his mother's eyes
E. Each bird is well pleased with his own voice
(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, No.890a)
45. S. *Ukul ya kumi gbbal fami*
Eat my dress before my mouth
E. Eat, my fur coat.
46. S. *Al-birmeel al-fad'i a'iyato shaded*
An empty barrel makes a loud sound
Or:
47. S. *Assia'in al-moytu shawayya jalbagh*
A leather bag with a little water in it shakes frequently
E. Empty vessels make the greatest sound
48. S. *Al-h'asood la yasood*
The envious will never thrive
E. Envy never enriched any man
49. S. *Likuli hamin faraj*
Every worry has relief
E. Every cloud has a silver lining
50. S. *Kulu shatan mua'laqa min a's'abata*
Every goat is hung by its own gut
E. Every herring must hang by its own gill
51. S. *Al-maru h'ayeath yad'a nafsahu*
A man is where he puts himself
E. Every man is the architect of his own fortunes
52. S. *Likuli hamin faraj*
From every setback there is a way out
E. Every night has daylight

53. S. *Kulu a'ugda layha h'alal*
Every knot has one to undo it
E. Every problem has a solution
54. S. *Al-s'abrat rawbih' lao yajan gumah'*
Patient people are winners even if they come with empty hands
E. Everything comes to him who waits
55. S. *Al-jadeed shaded*
What is new is vigorous
E. Everything new is fine
56. S. *A'alimuhum ma tawrithohum*
Teach them, do not bequeath them
E. Example is better than precept
57. S. *Katarat al-mizah' tazeal al-haiyba*
Too much jesting removes dignity
E. Familiarity breeds contempt
58. S. *Labbis al-khus'a tabgga a'roosa*
Dress the *khus'a* and it becomes a bride
E. Fine feathers make fine birds.
59. S. *Al-jamarah tah'rig al-watiyha*
Fire burns the one who steps on it
E. Fire burns the place where it falls
60. S. *Armi ba'dean akhnigo*
Throw him down and then strangle him
E. First, catch your hare
61. S. *Almamnoa' marghoub*
What is forbidden is desirable
E. Forbid it, and we will do it
62. S. *Al-mamnoa' marghub*
What is forbidden is desirable
E. Forbidden fruit is sweet
63. S. *Wagt al-d'eaq yana'arif al-s'adeag*
In hard times, you know your real friend
E. A friend in need is a friend indeed

64. S. *Marfa'een ma bih'arsu ghanam*
A hyena will not be given goats to protect
E. Give never a wolf the wether to keep
65. S. *Gum na'eanak ma targud naheanak*
Get up, we will help you; do not lie down for we will humiliate you
E. God help those who help themselves
66. S. *Ma atlaf ila akhlaḥ*
He never ruins except when he compensates
E. God never shuts one door but he opens another
67. S. *Kul ya kumi qabel fami*
Eat, my sleeve, before my mouth
E. Good clothes open all doors
68. S. *Al-ṭama' wadar ma jama'*
Greed makes loss
E. Grasp all, lose all
69. S. *Shai aḥd' al minn la shai*
Something is better than nothing
E. Half a loaf is better than no bread
70. S. *Al-mal tiltu wa la katiltu*
One third of the wealth is better than total loss
E. Half of a loaf is better than none
71. S. *Al-a'ajala min el-sheyṭan*
Haste is from Satan
E. Haste is from the devil
72. S. *Al-ghurab ma besil a' ein akhu*
A crow will not pick out another crow's eye
E. Hawk will not pick out hawk's eyes
73. S. *Al-a'ibra fi al-khawateam*
Lessons are in the endings
E. He laughs best who laughs last
74. S. *Na'al um gidead wa la mara um welead*
Old shoes with holes are better than a woman who has a son
E. He that marries a widow and three children marries four thieves
(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1189a.)

75. S. *Al-fagran ma a'indu s'ah'ib*

The poor man has no friend

E. He who has no wealth has no friend

76. S. *Al-ghina fi al-qana-a'a*

Wealth is in contentment

E. He who is, content in his poverty, is wonderfully rich

(The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p. 108)

77. S. *Al-bisawi sameh' leragabto wa al-bisawi shean leragabto*

The good that one does is for oneself and so is the bad

E. He, who does evil to others, has done it to himself

78. S. *Al- betu min gizaz, ma yijada' al-nass bel h'jara*

He whose house is made of glass should not throw stones at people

E. He who lives in a glass house should not throw stones at his neighbours

79. S. *Al-tareekh ya'eed nafsuh*

History repeats itself

E. History repeats itself

80. S. *Al-s'ah kan ma najjak al-kid'ib ma binajji*

If telling the truth does not save you, lies will not save you

E. Honesty is the best policy

81. S. *Ta'ib jissmak ma tata'ib balak*

Let your body get tired, not your heart

E. If you want a thing well done, do it yourself

82. S. *Al-mara ma biduha sirr*

A secret will not be given to a woman

E. If you want the world to know, tell your wife.

83. S. *Jaoya' kalbak yatba'k*

Leave your dog hungry; it will follow you

E. If you would like a dog to follow you, feed him

84. S. *Al-h'aram mamh'ug*

What comes by wrongdoing is not blessed

E. Ill gains never prosper

85. S. *Darb al-salama lil h'ul gareab*

A safe road is short even if it takes a year to walk it

E. It is better to be safe than sorry

86. S. *Al-yad al-a'uliya khaurun min al-yad al-sufla*
The upper hand is better than the lower hand
E. It is better to give than to take
87. S. *Al-kharab sahil, s'a'ab al-a'mmar*
It is easy to destroy, but difficult to build
E. It is easier to pull down than to build.
88. S. *Yis'tad fi al-ma el-a'iker*
He fishes in troubled water
E. It is good fishing in troubled water
89. S. *Yasbah' a'kess el-tayar*
He swims against the waves
E. It is ill striving against the stream
90. S. *Al-faqur ma a'eab*
Poverty is not a blemish
E. It is no sin to be poor
(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1337a)
91. S. *La tabki a'la ma fat*
Do not cry for what has passed
E. It is no use crying over spilt milk
92. S. *Al-a'ilm silah'*
Knowledge is a weapon
E. Knowledge is power
93. S. *Ad'ah'ak tad'ah'ak al-duniya ma'ak; abki tabki wah'dak*
Laugh, and the world laughs with you; cry and you will cry alone
E. Laugh and others laugh with you, cry and you cry alone
94. S. *A'limoahum wala tawrithohum*
Teach them do not bequeath them
E. Learning is better than hidden treasure
(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1371c)
95. S. *Jild animir ma bitgheyyar*
The leopard's skin never changes
E. A leopard does not change his spots
96. S. *Al-fat mat wa al-mad'a la yua'ad*
What is gone is dead and what has passed will never come
E. Let bygones be bygones

97. S. *Aba'id a'nn al-sharr wa ghani leu*
Stay away from evil and sing for it
E. Let sleeping dogs lie
98. S. *Al-fi waldak bigaldak*
What is in your father will stick on you
E. Like father like son
99. S. *Wad alwiz a'wam*
The son of the duck is a floater
E. Like father like son
100. S. *Shoaf wean takhut rijlak*
Look where you put your foot
E. Look before you leap
101. S. *Al-h'ub aa'ma*
Love is blind
E. Love is blind
102. S. *Ma tesheal al-hidim wa taba gamlu*
Do not take a dress and reject its lice
E. Love me, love my dog
103. S. *Al-marud ma laho matheal o aa'waj wa darbu a'adeal*
No one is like the beloved: he is not straight, but his way is straight
E. Love turns a blind eye to every fault
(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1429c)
104. S. *Al-h'ayta al-gas'era tula' sahil*
A short wall is easy to climb
E. A low hedge is easily leaped over
105. S. *Azra'i badri wa ah's'di badri shufi kan tinqadri*
Cultivate early and harvest early; and see the result
E. Make hay while the sun shines
106. S. *La kalaf Allah nafsan ila wosa'ha*
God never asks you to do more than what you can do
E. A man can not do more than he can
107. S. *Mann jalass janass*
He who sits with people becomes one of them
E. A man is known by his company

108. S. *Gul lai mean s'ah'bak agul leak mean inta*
Tell me who is your friend and I will tell you
E. A man is known by his company

109. S. *Anta turead wa ana uread wa Allah yafa'al ma yuread*
You will, I will, and God does what He wills
E. Man proposes and God disposes

110. S. *Al-suma'a wala tolat al-a'umur*
Good reputation is better than long life
E. Manners often make fortunes

111. S. *Al-rajil rajil bi akhlagu*
Man is man by his manners
E. Manners make the man

112. S. *Iead Iead li iead tajda' baa'ead*
A hand on a hand helps to throw far
E. Many hands make light work

113. S. *Beat al-shura ma bikhrab*
A house built by consultation will not fall down
E. Many heads are better than one

114. S. *Inn al-mas'aib la ta-ati furada*
Misfortune never comes alone
E. Misfortunes seldom come singly

115. S. *Taj al-mara al-h'aya*
Shyness is the crown of woman
E. Modesty is the beauty of women
(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1257.a)

116. S. *Al-girish biwliid al-girish*
A penny begets a penny
E. Money begets money

117. S. *Al-dunya d'eeqah*
The world is small
E. Mountains do not meet but men do

118. S. *Al-d'arorat tubeah al-mah'torat*
Necessities permit the forbidden
E. Necessity has no law

119. S. *Al-h'aja umm al-ikhtiraa''*
Necessity is the mother of invention
E. Necessity is the mother of invention
120. S. *Al-ta'leam ma a'indu a'umur*
There is no age for learning
E. Never too old to learn
121. S. *Mafi saffar bala dabar*
No travel without a wound
E. No mill, no meal
122. S. *Ma fi warid min ghear shoak*
There is no rose without a thorn
E. No pains no gains
123. S. *A'adoan a'aqil khayrun minn s'adeeqin jahil*
A wise enemy is better than a foolish friend.
E. Nothing worse than a familiar enemy
124. S. *Qadar akhaf min qadar*
One disaster is lighter than another disaster
E. Of two evils choose the lesser evil
125. S. *Masik al-groon wa al-nass tah'lib*
I catch the horns and others milk the cow
E. One man sows and the other reaps
126. S. *Mas'aib qawm a'ind qawmin fawaid*
What is disaster for some is advantage for others
E. One man's meat is another man's poison
127. S. *Al-bas'ala al-wah'da ta'ffin al-shawal*
One rotten onion spoils the whole sack
E. One rotten apple can spoil the whole barrel
128. S. *Al-mal el-saib ya'lim al-sariqa*
Unattended wealth teaches theft
E. Opportunity makes the thief
129. S. *Faqriean bala dain ghani*
A poor man without debt is rich
E. Out of debt, out of danger

130. S. *Ba'id a'an al a'in ba'aid a'an al galib*
 Far from your eyes is far from your heart
 E. Out of sight, out of mind
131. S. *Al-s'aber taib*
 Patience is nice
 E. Patience is virtue
132. S. *Al-girsh al-abead' yanfa' fi al-yum al-asoad*
 A white penny for the black day
 E. A penny saved is a penny gained
133. S. *Afqar min far al- maseed*
 Poorer than a hermitage rat
 E. Poor as a church rat
134. S. *Yamroan al-nass bilbir wa yansoan anfusahum*
 They ask people to do well and forget to do it themselves
 E. Practice what you preach
135. S. *Al-wiqaya hkearun min al-a'ilaj*
 Prevention is better than cure
 E. Prevention is better than cure
136. S. *Wadd al-dour mah'qoar*
A son in his homeland will not be respected
 E. A prophet is not without honour save in his own country
137. S. *Yad'a' siru fi ad'a'f khalgu*
 God put his secret in the weakest of his creatures
 E. A ragged coat may cover an honest man
138. S. *Al-tikrar ya'lim al-h'imar*
 Repetition teaches donkeys
 E. Repetition is the mother of studies
139. S. *Waqarak gadur malak*
 Your respect equals your wealth
 E. Rich folk have many friends
140. S. *Allah khalag al-dunya fi sita ayam*
 God made the earth in six days
 E. Rome was not built in a day

141. S. *Kul siran tajawaz al-ithnean shaa'*
A secret between more than two will be circulated
E. A secret between more than two is no secret
142. S. *Laysa mann ra-a kamann sama'a*
The one who saw is not like the one who heard
E. Seeing is believing
143. S. *Al-sikut a'lamat al-rid'a*
Silence is a sign of consent
E. Silence gives consent
144. S. *Fi al-s'att kalam*
There is speech in silence
E. Silence speaks volumes
145. S. *Waladak bakki wala tabekki a'lei*
Make your son cry do not cry over him
E. Spare the rod and spoil the child
146. S. *Tareana al-sharr li bua'du*
We mention the devil so he will stay away
E. Speak of the devil and he will appear
147. S. *Ida kan al-kalam min fid'a fa al-sikut min dahab*
If speech is silver, silence is gold
E. Speech is silver, but silence is golden
148. S. *Tihta al-sawahi dawahi*
There are disasters under silence
E. Still water runs deep
149. S. *La tuajil a'mal al-yum ila al-ghadd*
Do not leave today's work for tomorrow
E. A stitch in time saves nine
150. S. *Midd rejleanak qadur lih'afak*
Stretch your legs no further than your quilt
E. Stretch your arm no further than your sleeve will reach
(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1443b)
151. S. *Ad'rab al-h'adead wahu h'arr*
Strike while the iron is hot
E. Strike while the iron is hot

152. S. *Li kuli bidaya nihaya*
 There is an end for every beginning
 E. The darkest hour is before the dawn
153. S. *Al-kalib binbah wa al-jamal mashi*
 The dog is barking and the camel keeps walking
 E. The dogs bark but the caravan goes on
 (Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1657.a)
154. S. *Wad al-badri sameen*
 The early one is fat
 E. The early bird catches the worm
155. S. *Likul qaa'ida shawad*
 There are exceptions to every rule
 E. The exception proves the rule
 (Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1659.a)
156. S. *Al-jamal ma bia'rif a'wajat raqabtu*
 A camel does not see its crooked neck
 E. The eye that sees all things else, sees not itself.
157. S. *Al-sawai ma h'addath*
 The greatest doer never talks
 E. The greatest talkers are the least doers
158. S. *Ab sineana bidhak a'la absineantean*
 He who has one tooth laughs at the one with two teeth
 E. The kettle calls the pot black
159. S. *Allah beddi el-h'alaq lel-ma a'indu ad'an*
 God gives earrings to him, who has no ears
 E. The proper man, the bad luck
160. S. *Um s'alumboiti wala kidikai zool*
 My small thin rat is better than others' fat rats
 E. The smoke of man's own house is better than the fire
 of another (Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1690c)
161. S. *Al-a'in baseara wa al-aid gas'eara*
 The eye is sharp, but the hand is short
 E. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak

162. S. *A'indd al-d'eaq yina'arif al-s'adeeq*
 You know your friend when you are in need
 E. The sun shines upon all alike
163. S. *Al-muamin bimsku min lisanu*
 A believer is judged by his tongue
 E. The tongue displays a man
164. S. *Al-lisan a'd'um ma fiho a'dum*
 The tongue is a piece of meat; it has no bone
 E. The tongue has no bones but it breaks bones
165. S. *Mafi dukhan bala nar*
 There is no smoke without fire
 E. There is no fire without smoke
166. S. *Al-waqat min dahab*
 Time is made of gold
 E. Time is money
167. S. *Yakub al-zeat a'la al-nar*
 He pours oil in the fire
 E. To add oil to the fire
 (Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1746.a)
168. S. *Yaqool lel a-a'war a-a'war*
 He calls the one eyed, one eyed
 E. To call a spade a spade
169. S. *Al-suma'a wala tul al-a'umur*
 Better a good name than long life
 E. To die with honour is better than to live dishonest
170. S. (1) *Jala mun la yakheta*
 Supreme He who is not liable to mistakes
 S. (2) *Al-ma ghiliṭ ma ita'alam*
 He who makes no mistakes makes nothing
 E. To err is human
171. S. *Yad'rab a'us'forean beh'ajar*
 To kill two birds with one stone
 E. To kill two birds at one shot
 (Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1752a)

172. S. *Ma bikhali h'ajaran ma beqlibu*
He leaves no stone unturned
E. To leave no stone unturned

173. S. *Al-toyur a'la ashkaaliha taqa'*
Birds of the same features flock together
E. Birds of a feather flock together

174. S. *Yeshur ghaseelu lelnass*
He hangs his washing in public
E. To wash dirty linen in public

175. S. *Yawm leak wa yawm a'leak*
One day is for you, and another is against you
E. Today rich, tomorrow poor

176. S. *Rayseen ghargu al-murkab*
Two captains sink the boat
E. Too many cooks spoil the broth

177. S. *Al jawab minn a'inwanu yakfeek*
A letter is known by its address
E. A tree is known by its fruit

178. S. *Al-h'ageega murra*
Truth is bitter
E. Truth may be blamed, but cannot be shamed (The
The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p. 674)

179. S. *Al-h'aqeeqa zai al-d'ul ma betindafin*
Truth, like a shadow, cannot be buried
E. Truth needs no colors
(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1763a)

180. S. *Al-as'bba' al-wah'id ma bighat'i al-wajih*
One finger will not cover the face
E. Two hands make light work.

181. S. *Al-itih'ad goa*
Unity is strength
E. Two heads are better than one

182. S. *Al-yadd al-wahdda ma bits'affiqq*
One hand will not clap
E. Two heads are better than one

183. S. *Abuwi ameer wa abuk ameer minu elbiqoos al-h'ameer*

My father is a prince and your father is a prince,
who will lead the donkeys?

E. Two Masters will not do

184. S. *Al itih'ad qooah*

Union is strength.

E. Union is strength

185. S. *Al-haytan leyha adan*

Walls have ears

E. Walls have ears

186. S. *Al-Tabia' yaghlib al-tatebua'*

Nature conquers pretence

E. What belongs to nature lasts to the grave

187. S. *Al-biqolu al-qalib insha-allah ma tashufu al-a'in*

I wish the eye does not see what the heart says

E. What the eye does not see the heart does not grieve

188. S. *Kul sirin tajawz al-athnean sha'*

Any secret that goes beyond two will spread

E. What three people know the whole world knows

(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1714h)

189. S. *Mann shabba a'la shayai shaba a'liyehi*

He who grows up with a habit will not forget it
when he is old

E. What youth has learned, age does not forget

190. S. *Al-ghad'ab ya'mi*

Anger blinds

E. When anger comes, wits flee

191. S. *A'raban tanzil janbaha ya sheal taba'ha ya arh'al khalaha*

When you live with Arabs, either do as they do or
leave them

E. When in Rome do as the Romans do

192. S. *Al-qirish yetkalam*

Money talks

E. When money speaks the truth keeps silent

(Dictionary of European proverbs v. II, 1783 b)

193. S. *Ghab abu shanab wa la'ib abu d'anab*
 When the one with the mustache is absent,
 the one with the tail will play
 E. When the cat is away the mice play
194. S. *Al-sikut a'lamet al-rid'a*
 Silence is a sign of approval
 E. When they are silent, they approve
195. S. *al-feek badir behu*
 You suspect others of what you do
 E. Who is guilty suspects everybody
196. S. *Mann a'ashar qaoaman arba'eena yauman s'ar mithlahum*
 Who associates with some for forty days behaves like them
 E. Who keeps company with the wolf will learn to howl
197. S. *Al-a'qel ma a'iz a'umor*
 Wisdom does not need age
 E. Wisdom is not in age, it is in the mind
198. S. *Al-mara ma biwada'oha siyerr*
 A consignment will not be given to a woman
 E. Woman conceals what she knows
 (The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p. 723)
199. S. *Al-mara maksurat janah'*
 Woman has broken wings
 E. Woman is the weaker vessel
 (The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p. 734)
200. S. *Al mara ma a'inda rai*
 Woman has no opinion
 E. Woman will say nothing
 (The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p.726)
201. S. *Al-mara gowata fi lisanah*
 Woman's power is in her tongue
 E. Woman's tongue is the last thing about her that dies
 (The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p. 724)
202. S. *Al-nissa sharun la buda minhu*
 Women are an inevitable evil
 E. Women are necessary evils

(The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p. 725)

203. S. *Al-nissa h'bail al-shiytan*

Women are pregnant by Satan

E. Women are the devil's nets

(The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p. 725)

204. S. *Al- kalma al- ma tas'eab h'asrat s'ahiba*

The word not uttered in the right situation, is a regret to its speaker

E. A Word is yours while it is in your own mouth

(The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p. 728)

205. S. *Al-labeab bil ishara yafham*

A clever person understands by gesture

E. A word to a wise man is enough

206. S. *Jarih' al-seaf bibra lakin jarih' al-lisan ma bibra*

The wound of a sword will heal, but not one caused by the tongue

E. Words cut more than swords

207. S. *Al- kalma al- ma tas'eab h'asrat s'ahiba*

The word uttered in the wrong situation, is a regret to its speaker

E. Words have wings, and cannot be recalled.

208. S. *Al-ta'leam ma a'indu a'umur*

There is no age for learning

E. You are never too old to learn

209. S. *Al-sa'af bukurbu waktu lain*

Palm leaves are plaited when wet (green)

E. You cannot teach an old dog news tricks

Appendix B:

List of Sudanese proverbs

This list contains all Sudanese proverbs discussed in the thesis arranged by topics as discussed in chapter 5.

1. Proverbs concerning Sudanese educational principles

1. الولاده ما قاسيه ، قاسية التربية
Al-wilada ma gasiya, gasiya al-tarbiya
It is not difficult to give birth to a baby, but it is difficult to raise him.
2. ليك اللحم ولينا العضم
Leak al-lah'am wa laina al-a'd'um
His flesh is for you and his bones are for us
3. العلم في الصغر كالنقش في الحجر
Al-a'ilm fi al-s'ighar kalnaqashi fi al-h'ajar
Learning at a young age is like sculpting a stone
4. مَنْ شَبَّ عَلَى شَيْءٍ شَابَ عَلَيْهِ
Mann shabba a'la shayai shaba a'liyehi
He who grows with a thing, grows old with it
5. ولدك شبعه وطبعه
Waladak shabia'u wa tabia'u
Feed your son properly and discipline him
6. علموهم ولا تورثوهم
A'limoahum wala tawrithohum
Teach them, do not bequeath them

Proverbs that warn against lying and encourage the truth:

7. الصح كان ما خُصك الكذب ما بخلصك
Al-s'ah' kan ma khalls'ak, alkidib ma bakhallis'ak
It is better to be punished, lies will not save you
8. الكذب حده قريب
Al-kidib h'adu gareab
A lie's end is near

9. الكذب ملحوق
Al-kidib malh'oag
Lying's end is reachable
10. الكذب يقطع الرزق
Al-kadib yagta al-rizig
Lying stops livelihood
11. دُفِّعْهُ إِن كَذَبَ وَعَلِّمُهُ الْأَدَبَ
Dugu inn kadab wa a'limu al-adab
Punish him if he lies and teach him good manners
12. حبل الكذب قصير
Habl al-kidib qas'ear
Lying's rope is short
13. من حلف بالله كاذب قام جته بلا راس
Mann h'alaf bi Allah kadib gam jita bala rass
He who perjures himself will become a body without a head (on the Day of Judgement)
14. أصلك فعلك
As'lak fia'lak
Your origin is your behaviour
15. الصبح نور
As'ah' noor
Truth is light.
16. مَنْ قَالَ لَا أَعْرِفُ فَقَدْ أَفْتَى
Mann gala la a-a'rifaqd afta
He who says I do not know has given an advisory opinion
17. صَدِّقْ الْقَوْلَ بِالْعَمَلِ
S'adiqq al-qaool bi al-a'mal
Make your words true to your actions
18. اتَّبِعْ طَرِيقَ الْأَمَانِ وَلَوْ بَلَوُ
Atba' tareag al-aman wa lao bilao
Take a safe road even if it is long and winding
19. الَّذِي قَالَ لِيكَ قَالَ عَنكَ
Al-ligal leak gal a'nnak
He who tells you (about other people) will tell others about you
(Also see 805)

Proverbs on various educational issues:

a) Not to use the good nature of others

20. اخوك كان بقى ليك عسل ما تبقى ليه متاخ
Akhook kan biga leak a'sal ma tabga liho matakh
If your brother becomes honey for you, do not become greedy
21. إذا كان صحبك عسل ما تلحسه كله
Ida kan s'ah''bak a'ssal ma talh'asu kulu
If your friend is honey, do not lick him all at once

b) The importance of being honest:

22. اد الامانة الى من ائتمك ولا تخن من خانك
Addi al-amanata ila mun eitamanak wa la takhon mun khanak
Return trust to the person who trusts you and do not betray the person who betrays you.

c) Listening to others' advice

23. اسمع كلام البيكيك ما تسمع كلام البضحكك
Asmaa' kalam al-bibakeek ma tasma' kalam al-bid'h'ikak
Listen to the one whose advice makes you weep, not to the one whose advice makes you laugh

d) Respect for others:

24. اسمع كلام الكبير ولو كان عوير
Asmaa' kalam al-kabeer wa lao a'weer
Listen to an old person even if he is an idiot
25. احترم من راي الشمس قبلك
Ih'tarim mun raa al-shams qablak
Respect the one who saw the sun before you
26. مَنْ عَلَّمَنِي حَرْفًا صَرْتُ لَهُ عَبْدًا
Mann a'lamni h'arfan s'irta lahu a'bdan
He who taught me one letter, I have become his slave
27. إحذر غضب الحليم
Ih'dar ghad'ab al-h'aleem
Avoid the anger of the tolerant
28. عربا تنزل جنبها إما شيل طبعها أو أرحل خلها
A'arban tanzil janbaha imam sheal taba'ha awo arh'al khalaha
When you live with Arabs, either do as they do or move away from them

29. لعب الا قدرمنك بفك صدرك
Lea'ib al-ma gaddrak bifik s'addrak
 Playing with someone that is not your size hurts your chest
30. اخشوشنوا فان النعمة لا تدوم
Ikhshawshanu fa-ina al-nia'mata la tadum
 Be accustomed to hardship, for God's endowment never lasts

e) Respect for the dead

31. أذكروا محاسن موتاكم
Adekuro mah'asin motakum
 Speak about the good qualities of your dead people

f) Hard work, non-interference in others' affairs:

32. لا تؤجل عمل اليوم الى الغد
La tuajjil a'mal al-yawm ila al-ghad
 Do not delay today's work for tomorrow
33. مَنْ تَدخُل فِي ما لا يُعْنِيهِ سَمِع ما لا يُرْضِيهِ
Mann tadakhal fi ma la yua'neahi samia' ma la yurd'eahi
 He who intervenes in matters that do not concern him hears what does not please him.
34. أعمل لدنياك كأنك تعيش أبدا واعمل لآخرتك كأنك تموت غدا
A'mal li-doniaka ka-anaka ta'ieash abdan
wa a'amal li akhiratika ka-anaka tamootu ghadun
 Live your life as though you may live for ever; and make ready for the Hereafter as though you will die tomorrow
35. الما يستحي يفعل ما يشاء
Al-ma yistah'i yafa'l ma yasha
 He who is not ashamed does what he wants

g) Dealing with official business:

36. اكلوا اخوان واتحاسبوا تجار
Uklu akhwan wa ith'asbo tujjar
 Eat as brothers, but settle your accounts as merchants
37. أدخلوا البيوت من ابوابها
Adkholu al-biyoat minn abwabiha
 Enter houses through their doors

h) Facing the consequences of actions:

38. القربة تخر في صفحة الشايه
Al-girrba tukhur fi s'afh'at a-shayilla
The water bag drips on its carrier's flank (waist)

1) Various issues:

39. إتق شر من أحسنت إليه
Itaqi shara mann ah'santa ilyeehi
Beware of evil from him to whom you did a favour
40. الما تريده خاف الله فيه
Al-ma taridu khaf Allah fiyeh
The one whom you dislike, fear God towards him
41. اذا بليتم فاستتروا
Ida buleetum fastatiru
If you are destined by God to sin, hide it
42. الظاهر عنوان الباطن
Al-t'ahir a'inwan al-batin
Appearance is the sign of what is inside
43. إذا عُرف السبب يَطْلَ العجب
Ida a'urif al-sabab batāl al-a'jab
If the reason is known wonder ends
44. اليسوي سمح لرقبتو واليسوي شين لرقبتو
Al-bisawi sameh' leragabto wa al-bisawi shean leragabto
The good that one does is for him as the bad is.
45. مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ
Man ya'mal s'alihan yujza bihi
Whoever does a wrong will be recompensed for it
The Quran Surah, an-Nisaa, verse 123 which reads:
"مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا..."
"Whoever does a wrong will be recompensed for it, and he will not find beside Allah a protector or a helper." (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
46. الشكروا في عينوا نَبَزُوا
Al-shakkaro fi a'aino nabazoo
Whoever is praised in his presence has been offended

47. الشماتة للعدو
Al-shamatah lila'du
Mockery is for the enemy
48. الصقر كان وقع كثر البتابت عيب
Assagur kan waga' kutr albtabit a'aib
When the eagle falls, too much fluttering is shameful
49. الضحك بلا عجب قلة ادب
Ad'h'ik bla a'jab gillat adab
Laughter without reason is indecent
50. كثرة الضحك تُميت القلب
Katharat al-d'ihik tumiyeat al-qalb
Too much laughing kills the heart
51. أبعد عن الشر وغني لو
Aba'id a'an al-sharr wa ghanilo
Keep away from evil and sing to it
52. الطمع فحل العيوب
Al-t'ama' fah'al al-a'uyoob
Greed is the master of shame
53. العارف عزوا كلام الناس ما بهزو
Al-a'rif a'izzu, kalam an-nas ma bihzo
He who knows his honour will not be shaken by people's slander
54. العتره بتصلح المشي
Al-a'tra bits'alih' al-masheah
A stumble improves the pace
55. العجلة من الشيطان
Al-a'jala min al-shiṭān
Haste is from Satan
56. القلم ما بيزيل بلم
Al-galam ma bizeel balam
Literacy does not conquer stupidity
57. قول له في وشه ولا تغشه
Gool lu fi washo wa la teghshu
Speak to him to his face and do not deceive him

58. المبذر شيطان
Al-mubadir sheatan
 The prodigal is a devil
 Derived from the Quran, Surah 17 al-Isra, verse 27 which reads:
 "إِنَّ الْمُبْتَدِرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَمَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا"
Ina al-mubadereana kano ikhewan al-shayatean wa kan al-shaytan lirabihi
kafurah
 "Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful" (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
59. المتلفح بيها عريان
Al-mutlafih' baih'a aryan
 Whoever is clothed by earthy gains is naked
60. المي حار ولا لعب فعونج
Almay h'ar wala lei'b ga'ong
 Hot water is not a playground for frogs
61. النسي قديمو تاه
Al-nisa gadimo tah
 Whoever forgets his past goes astray
62. لا تندم على ما فات
La tandem a'la ma fat
 Do not regret what is gone
63. لكل جواد كبوه
Likuli jawadin kaboah
 Every horse is liable to stumble
64. المايله تقع
Al-maiyla taga'
 That which leans will fall down
65. ما حك جلدك مثل ظفرك
Ma h'aka jildak mithil t'ofrak
 Nothing scratches your skin like your own fingernail
66. شراباً بيد الرجال عطش
Sharaban biyad al-rigal a'tash
 Drinking what is in men's hands is thirst
67. سيد الحق راضي شن نخس القاضي
Seed al-h'aq rad'I shinn nakhas al-qad'i
 The owner is satisfied, so what is bothering the Judge!

68. ما في راحة بدون تعب
Ma fi rah'a bidoon ta'ab
 No rest without hardship
69. من طلب العلا سهر الليالي
Munn talab al-a'ulaa sahirah al-liyali
 Whoever seeks exaltation spends his nights working
70. من كد وجد
Mann kadda wajjada
 Whoever works hard will gain
71. لكل مُجتهد نصيب
Liku li mujtahidin nas'eab
 Every hard working person has a reward
72. ما في حلاوه بدون نار
Mafi h'alawa bidun narr
 There is no sweet without fire
73. العلم بالشيء ولا الجهل به
Al-a'ilm bilshayai wa la al-jahl bihi
 Learning a thing is better than ignoring it
74. هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
Hal yastawi al-lathean ya'lamuwn wa al-lathean la ya'lamuwn
 Are those who know and those who don't know equal?
 Derived from the Quran Surah 39, az-Zumar verse 9 which reads:
 "قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ..."
 "... Say, Are those who know equal to those who do not know? Only they will
 remember {who are} people of understanding."
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
75. ما في سفر بلا دبر
Mafi saffar bala dabar
 There is no travel without wounds
76. ود البدرى سمين
Wadd al-badri sameen
 The early riser is fat
77. وعد الحر دين عليه
Wa'dd al-h'urr dayeanun a'leahi
 An honourable person's promise is a debt

78. الله ما ساوى صوابع اليد الواحده
Allah ma sawa s'awabia' al-yadd al-wah'da
 God did not make the fingers of the hand the same
79. ولا تتنازوا بالألقاب
La tanabazoo bi al-alqabb
 Do not insult one another by nicknames
 (derived from the Quran, Surah 49, al-H'ujurat, verse 11 which reads:
 "وَلَا تَتَّابِرُوا بِالألقابِ يُسِّمِ الأسمِ الفُسُوقَ بَعْدَ الإيْمَنِ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتُوبْ فأولئك هُم الظالمونَ ..."
 "... and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the name[i.e., mention] of disobedience after [one's] faith. And whoever does not repent then it is those who are the wrongdoers."
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
80. أردباً ما هيلك ما تحضر كيلو
Ardaban ma hiylak ma tah'ad'ar kealo
Ardeb that is not yours do not be concerned with its measure
 (Ardab: quantity, equivalent to 150 kg of wheat)
81. مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ المَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لا يَعْنيه
 (Prophetic saying)
Min hussni islam al-mari tarkuho ma layua'neahi
 Among good Islamic characteristics of a man is to ignore what does not concern him.
82. قم نعينك ما ترقد نهينك
Gumm na'eanak, ma targudd naheanak
 Get up, we will help you; do not lie down or we will humiliate you.
83. أسعى يا عبدي وأنا اسعى معاك
Asa'a ya a'bdi wa ana asa'a ma'-ak
 Try, my servant (servant of God), and I will try with you
84. ده الجمل ودي النخلة
Dah al-jamal wa di al-nakhala
 This is the camel and this is the palm tree
85. إذا أردت أن تطاع فأمر بالمستطاع
Ida aridta an tuṭa' femur bil mustataa'
 If you want to be obeyed, do not ask for the impossible (to be done for you)
86. في التأنى السلامه وفي العجله الندامه
Fi a-tani al-salama wa fi al-a'jala al-nadama
 There is safety in slowness and regret in haste

87. شِدِّ وتباطى إِمَّا شَرًّا فأت وأمَّا خَيْرًا أت
Shidd wa tabata ima sharan fatt wa ima khaeran att
Saddle your pack animal and slow down, either evil passed by or good comes to you

2. God and Religious life

88. اللهُ ما شَقَّا له حنكًا ضيعة
Allah ma shagga h'ankan d'aia'u
God never made a mouth and left it
89. العبد في التفكير والرب في التدبير
Al-a'abd fi al-tafkeer wa al-rab fi al-tadbeer
Man has only to think and God will care for him
90. القر بعيوبه غفر الله ذنوبه
Al-garra ba'iyobu ghafar Allah dunubu
He who confesses his faults, God will forgive his sins
91. الفتنة اشد من القتل
Al-fitnah ashadda min al-qatl
Causing discord is worse than killing
Derived from the Quran: Surah 2, 'Al-Baqarah,' verse 191 which reads:
"... and *fitnah* is worse than killing."
(The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
92. الفتنة أكبر من القتل
Al-fitnah akbar min al-qatl
Derived from the Quran: Surah 2, "Al-Baqarah," verse 217) which read:
"And *fitnah* is greater than killing"
(The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
93. لأن شكرتم لأزيدنكم
Lain shakartum lazeedanakum
Derived from the Quran, Surah 14, 'Ibrahim, verse 7 which reads:
"And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favour]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe'.
(The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)

94. لا إكراه في الدين
La ikraha fi al-dean
 There is no compulsion in religion
 Derived from the Quran, Surah 2, Al Baqara, verse 256 which reads:
 There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion.
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
 Also in Adam & Tum No. 1231 P. 148)
95. إمساكٌ بمعروفٍ أو تسريحٌ بإحسان
Imsak bima'roof ao tasreah' bi ih'san
 Derived from the Quran: Surah 2, Al-Baqara, 'verse 229, which reads:
 "The divorce is twice. Then [after that], either keep [her] on an acceptable manner
 or release [her] with good treatment"
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
96. الاعتراف بالذنب فضيلة
Al-ia'traf bil danbi fadhila
 Confessing one's guilt is a virtue
97. المؤمن صديق
Al-mu'amin s'iddeeg
 The believer is trustful of others
98. لا تزر وازرة وزر أخرى
La tazir waziratun wizir ukhra
 No troubled person should bear the troubles of another
 Derived from the Quran Surah 53, Al-Najm, verse 38 which reads:
 أَلَا تَرَىٰ وَآزْرُهُٓ وَزَرَ آخَرَ
 "That no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another"
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
 (Also in Adam and Tum, No. 1241 P 149)
99. طرینا الشر لبغده
Tareana al-sharr li bya'udu
 We mention the devil so he will stay away
100. أنت تُريد وأنا أريد والله يفعل ما يُريد
Anta turead wa ana uread wa Allah yafa'al ma yuread
 You will, I will, and God does what He wills

101. لا تسألوا عن أشياء إن تبد لكم تسؤكم
La tasalu a'nn ashaya inn tubda lakum tasukum
 Do not ask about things which, if made clear to you, may distress you
 Derived from the Quran, Surah 5, A-Ma'idah, verse 101 which reads:
 "O you who have believed, do not ask about things which, if they are shown to you, will distress you".
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
102. لا يحب الله الجهر بالسوء
La yuh'ib Allah al-jahr bil sua
 Allah does not like for evil to be uttered in public
 Derived from the Quran, Surah 4, An-Nisa, verse 148 which reads:
 "Allah does not like the public mention of evil except by one who has been wronged."
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
103. لا يغير الله ما بقوم حتى يغيروا ما بأنفسهم
La yughayeer Allah ma biqaomin h'ata yigheero ma bianfusihum
 Allah never changes the grace He hath bestowed on any people until they first change that which is in their hearts
 Derived from the Quran, Surah 8, Al-Anfal, verse 53 which reads:
 "That is because Allah would not change a favor which He had bestowed upon a people until they change what is within themselves."
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
104. الأعمال بالنيات
Al-a'malu bil-niyyat
 Deeds are by good intention
105. لا يلدغ المؤمن من جحر مرتين
La yuldagh al mu'amin min juh'rin martean
 A believer is not bitten twice from the same snakehole.
106. ما عبد الله بأكثر من جبر الخواطر
Ma a'ubid Allah biakthar min jabr al-khawatir
 Allah has not been worshiped with anything better than comforting people.
107. لكل هم فرج
Likuli hamin faraj
 From every setback there is a way out.

108. ما بعد الضيق إلا الفرج
Ma ba'dd al-d'eeq ila al-faraj
 After difficulties comes relief
109. كل عُقدة ليها حلّال
Kuli a'ugda layha h'allal
 Every knot has someone to undo it
110. ليس على المريض حرج
Laysa a'la al-maread' h'araj
 There is no criticism of a sick person
111. من شاف مصيبتة هانت عليه مصيبة غيره
Mann shaf mus'ebtu hanat a'liyhu mus'eabat ghayru
 He who sees others' misfortune finds his own disaster lighter
112. كان تجرى جرى الوحوش غير رزقك ما بتحوش
K an tajri jari al-wuh'osh ghear rizqak ma bithoosh
 Even if you run around like wild animals you will never earn more than the fortune you are destined to.
113. القدم مُسير ما مُخير
Al-gadam mussiyear ma mukhiyear
 The foot has no power of free choice
114. القدم ليه رافع
A l-gadam layhu raffia
 A foot has a force to make it move
115. الإنسان مُسير ما مُخير
A l-insan mussiyear ma mukhuyear
 Man is propelled and does not have power of free will
116. أنت تشاء وأنا أشاء والله يفعل ما يشاء
Anta tasha wa ana asha wa Allah yafa'l ma yasha
 I wish and you wish, but God makes what He wishes
117. الأعمار بيد الله
Al-a-a'mar biyadd Allah
 Lives are in the hands of God
118. الخير فيما إختاره الله
Al-khiyeer fima ikhtarhu Allah
 The best for us is what God chooses for us

119. الله كان جاب قتالك بجيب حجازك
Allah kan jabb katalak bijeeb h'ajazak
 If God brings your murderer, He will bring your defender
120. ما انتقص مال من صدقة
Ma intagas'a malun minn s'adaqa
 Alms do not diminish wealth
121. العند السيد أقرب من الفي الأيد
Al-a'indd al-siyeed agrab min al-fi al-iyead
 What is in God's hand is nearer to you than what you have in your hands
122. الراح في القيزان ما بروح في الميزان
Al-rah fi al-qeazan ma broah fi al-meazan
 That which is lost in deserts' sand will not be lost in the scales (on Judgement Day)
123. عند الله ما بروح شئ
A'ind Allah ma brah shayai
 Nothing will be lost in God's consideration
124. ما على الرسول إلا البلاغ المبين
Ma a'ala al-rasool ila al-balagh al-mubeen
 The duty of the prophet is only to convey the message
 Derived from the Quran, Surah 5, Al-Ma'idah, verse 99 which reads:
 "Not upon the Messenger is [responsibility] except [for] notification."
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
125. الما في الرزق تقع من الخشم
Al-mafi al-riziq yaqa' min al-khashum
 What is not your fate will drop from your mouth
126. الرزق على الله
Al-riziq a'la Allah
 God bestows livelihood
127. الشكوى لغير الله مزله
Al-shakwa lighiyear Allah mazala
 Complaining to any one other than God is humiliation
128. الإختصار عباده
Al-ikhtis'ar a'ibada
 Frugality is worship

129. الفوائد في العقائد
Al-fawaid fi al-al-a'qaid
Benefit is in belief
130. إِذَا جَاءَ الْقَدْرُ عَمِيَ الْبَصْرُ
Ida ja-aa al-qaddar a'ama al-bas'ar
If fate comes, it blinds the vision
131. الأمل ينهك والأجل يضحك
A l-amal yanhak wa al-ajal yad'h'ak
Hope fatigues you and death laughs at you!
132. من له في الدنيا حاله لم يموت حتى يناله
Mann lahu fi al-dunya h'ala lam yamut h'ata yanalah
He who has livelihood in this world, will never die before he gets it
133. الدنيا ما دايمة
Al-duniya ma daima
The world is impermanent
134. كُلُّ شَيْءٍ لِيهِ آخِرٌ
Kulu shayi layhu akhir
Everything has an end
135. إِتَّقِ دَعْوَةَ الْمَظْلُومِ فَإِنَّهَا لَيْسَ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ حِجَابٌ
Itaqi da'wat al-mat'lum fainha liysa beanha wa bean Allah h'jab
Avoid bringing on yourself the complaint of one you have wronged, as there is no separation between him and God
136. يَوْمٌ لِيكَ وَيَوْمٌ عَلَيْكَ
Yawm leak wa yawm a'leak
One day is for you, and another is against you
137. الدهر يومان، يوم لك ويوم عليك
Al-dahr yawman, yawmon laka wayamon a'leaka
Life is two days, one is for you and the other is against you
138. قم نعينك ما ترقد نهينك
Gumm na'eenak
Wake up and I will help you.

3. Family, blood relationships and relatives

139. متى تن تكبر تشيل حملي
Metean takbar tasheel h'imli
When will you grow up to take my load?

140. جمل شيلي
Jamal sheali
A camel to carry me
141. نُخري
Duhkri
My reserve for future use
142. الجنة تحت أقدام الأمهات
Al-janah tih't aqdam al-umahat
Paradise is under the feet of mothers
143. الما عندك فيه لحمه ما عندك ليه رحمه
Al-ma-a'indak fihu lah'ama ma aindak liahu rah'ma
You do not have mercy to the one who is not your kin
144. أخو أخوك أخوك وراجل أمك أبوك
Akhu akhuk, akhuk wa rajil amuk abuk
Your brother's brother is your brother and your mother's husband is your father.
145. ألامو عريانه ما بكسي خالتو
A l umo a'reanah ma biksi khalto
He whose mother is naked will not clothe his aunt
146. انا واخي على ابن عمي انا وابن عمي على الغريب
Anna wa akhi a'la ibn a'mi wa ana wa ibn a'mi a'la al gharea
My brother and I are against our cousin and my cousin and I are against the stranger
147. الاهل الغابة الضرية
Al- ahal alghabah al dhareah
Relatives are a dense forest
148. اهلك قبل تهلك
Ahlak gubal tahlak
To your relatives before you are destroyed
(Also in Badri NO. 448 p. 111)
149. اهلك كان كلاب سوي ضناب
A hlak kan kilab sawi leek dhanab
If your relatives are dogs, make a tail for yourself

150. حديث الليك سد عليه البيت
Hadeath al –leak sid a'leho al-bab.
 Keep talk of your own relatives behind closed doors
 (Also in Badri NO. 957, p. 222, and from my informants)
151. الحمار ان ولد يستريح
Al- humar kan wild yistreah
 Even a donkey will have rest if she/he has a child.
152. العنْدُه ضَلَالَة يرفعها فوق راسه
al-a'indo dhulalah yarfaa'a fuq raso
 He who has a shade, let him put it over his head
 (Badri NO.712, p. 106)
153. أولو القربى أولى بالمعروف
uli al-qurba awla bil al-ma'rof
 Relatives are more entitled to your kindness
154. العنْده ضهر ما ينضرب على بطنو
A l-a'indo d' ahahr ma bindharab a'la bat'no
 Who has a back will not be kicked on his stomach
155. في جناك ليك داني
F i janak leak dani
 You have a closer one even among your own children
 (Also in Badri P2, NO.1007, p. 151)
156. غضب الوالد مقرون بغضب الرب
Ghad'ab al-walid maqroon bi ghd'ab al rab
 Parents' irritation is connected with God's anger
157. وقضى ربك الا تعبدوا الا اياه وبالوالدين احسانا
Wa qad'ha rabuka ala ta'bdu ila iyaho wa bil walidean ihsana
 Derived from the Quran Surah 17, al-Isra, verse 23 which reads:
 And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents
 good treatment”
 (The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)
158. فقد الاخوان غربه
Faqd al-akhwan ghurbah
 Loss of brothers is estrangement
 (Badri 2nd ed. P. 144)
159. الفى والدك بقالدك
A l fi waldak biqaldak
 Your father's habits will stick to you

160. هذا الشبل من ذاك الأسد
Haḍa al-shibl minn ḍaka al-asad
 This cub is from that lion
161. القريب لقريبو والغريب تندخر له
A- l qareeb laqareabo wa al-ghareab tindakhirlo
 Each relative to his relative, but a stranger's mistakes are not forgiven
162. قلبي على ولدي وقلب ولدي على حجر.
Ga lbi a'la waladi wa qalb waladi a'la hajar
 My heart goes to my son but my son's heart is like a stone
163. قلع ايده
Gal'a eidu
 He pulled his hand [from his family]
164. الليك ليك كان لبن عشر سويه في عينك .
A l-leak leak kan labn a'ushar d'ari fi a'eaneak
 Yours (relative) is yours, even if he is *a'ushr* milk (toxic herbs) put it in your eyes
165. ما عنده خال يهديه.
M a a'indu khal yahdie
 He does not have a maternal uncle to advise him
166. ما مثل ابوك لكن بربيك
Ma mithil abuk lakin berabeak
 He is not like your father, but he will bring you up
167. أحن من الوالد خاين
Ah'anna minn al-walid khayin
 More softhearted than a parent is a deceiver
168. الوالد سيس
Al-walid sayis
 A father is a diplomat
 (Badri NO.928, p. 151, vol.3)
169. الوالد يستر اربعة واربعين عوره
Al-walid yastur arba' wa arba'in a'ora
 The father covers forty-four mistakes for his children

170. ولد الوز عوام
Wad al-wiz a'wam
 The son of the duck is a floater
 (a good swimmer)
171. ود الفار حفار
Wad al-farr h'affar
 The son of the rat is a digger
172. الفي والدك بقالدك
Al-fi waldak bigaldak
 You will get what your father has
173. الولد هلال البيت
A l-walad hilal al-beat
 The son is the crescent of the house
174. ضهر الوالد ما بجيب عدو
D'ahar al-walid ma bijeab a'adou
 Your father's back will not bring you an enemy
175. اولى الزول يغطي ماعونه
A wla al-zul yaght'I maa'uno
 Better to cover one's own pot before those of other people
176. ان شاء الله في كل بلد ولد
In shaa Allah fi kili balad walad
 With God's will, may one have a son in every country!
177. الاقارب عقارب
Al-aqarib a'qarib
 Relatives are scorpions
178. اليامو ما بهمو
A-bi umo ma bihimo
 He who has a mother around does not worry (Adam & Tum N0. 152, p. 19)
179. الغراب ما بسل عين اخيو
Al-g hurab ma bsil a'in akhiu
 A crow never pecks the eye of its brother
180. وليدا ما وليدك ما بقول ابو ، مرفعين ما بوالف كان جريم ربو
Wileadan ma wileadak ma biqool abu, marfa'een ma biwalif kan jeario rabo
 A boy who is not your son will not call you daddy, and a hyena cub will never be tamed even if it is reared from babyhood

181. ود الدور محقور
Wadd al-dour mah'qoor
 A son of home will not be respected
182. الضكير ولو فوير
Al-d'ikear wa lao fiwear
 A male even if he is a small rat
183. الراجل إن بقى رخمه قدام البيت رحمه
Al- rajil inn biqa rakhama fi al-beat rah'ama
 A man is a blessing in front of the house even if he is a vulture
184. هين جلدك ما تهين ولدك
Heen jildak ma teheen wildak
 Humiliate your skin; do not humiliate your offspring
185. الولد حزام امه
Al-walad h'izam umo
 A son is a belt for his mother
186. قريبيك كان أكل لحمك ما بكسر عضمك
Gareebak kan akal lah'amak ma beksir a'd'mak
 If your relative eats your meat, he will never break your bone
187. قريبيك زاوروه لا تجاوره
Gareebak zawro la tijaw
 Visit your relative, but do not be his neighbour
 (Badri's collection, No. 1143, p. 171)
188. علم الاخو محقور
A'ilm al-akhu mah'gor
 A brother's knowledge is unacknowledged
189. الاخذ أمك كلو ابوك
Al-akhadd ummak kulo abook
 Whoever marries your mother becomes your father

4. Companionship and Friendship

190. من جالس جانس
Mann jalass janass
 He who sits with people becomes one of them

191. شرط المرافقه الموافقه
Shart al-murafaqa al-muwafaqa
 The condition of companionship is agreement
192. صاحبك إن ما جيته على خاطره خسرتو
S'ah'bak in ma jitu a'la khatru khisirtu
 If you do not agree with your friend, you will lose him
193. ألف صاحب ولا عدو واحد
Aleff s'ah'ib wa la a'adoo wah'id
 A thousand friends but not one enemy
194. عدو عاقل خير من صديق جاهل
A'adoan a'aqil khayyrun minn s'adiqqin jahil
 A wise enemy is better than an ignorant friend
195. الصاحب المخسر هو العدو البين
Al-s'ah'ib al-mukhsir hu al-a'du al-biyeen
 The friend who spoils your life is a clear enemy
196. صاحباً في الشده ما تلقاه العدو أخير منه
S'ahban fi al-shidda ma talga al-a'adu akhear minnu
 Your enemy is better than a friend whom you can't find in adversity
197. ربك وصاحبك ما عليهم مدسه
Rabak wa s'ah'bak ma a'leahum madassa
 There are no secrets from your God and your friend
198. صاحبك إن أباك قلل عليه الحوم
S'ah'bak inn abak galil a'liahu al-hoam
 If your friend is not happy to see you, do not visit him
199. الصاحب منحه
Al-s'ah'ib minh'a
 A friend is a gift from God
200. صاحبك إن بقى عسل ما تكملو
S'ahbak inn biga a'ssal ma takmilu
 If your friend becomes honey, do not finish it (eat it all)
201. صُحبة فلان زي القرش
S'uhbat fulan zai al-girish
 His friendship is like a penny

202. الصديق لوقت الضيق
Al-s'adeeq liwaqat al-d'eeq
 A friend in need is a friend indeed
203. مافي رفيق إلا في الضيق
Mafi rafeaq ila fi al-d'ieaq
 There is no real friend but a friend in need
204. الصديق قبل الشقيق
Al-s'adeeq qabl al-shaqeeq
 A loyal friend is before a real brother
205. عند الضيق ينعرف الرفيق
A'indd al-d'eaq yina'arif al-s'adeeq
 You know your friend when you are in need
206. قيم راسك وأعرف ناسك
Qaiyeam rasak wa a-a'rif nasak
 Use your mind and know your people
207. إتلم التعيس على خايب الرجا
Itlama al-ta'eas a'la khaib al-raja
 The unlucky and the hopeless got together
208. الطيور على اشكالها تتع
Al-ttyoar a'la ashkaaliha taqa'
 Birds of the same features flock together
209. الما يبلع ريق على ريق ما يمسك صديق
A l-ma yabla' reaq a'la reaq ma yamsik s'adeaq
 He who does not swallow spittle after spittle will not keep a friend
210. محل ما تامن خاف
Mahal ma tamin khaf
 Wherever you trust you need to fear
211. خصام الرجل الضكر ولا صُحبة الرجل الأضينه
Kh is'am al-rajil al-d'akar wala s'uhbat al-raji al-ud'eana
 Dispute with a wise man is better than friendship with an ignorant and weak one
212. مَنْ باعك بيعة ولو بعد حين
Mann ba'ak biya'u wa lu ba'd h'iyeen
 The one who sells you, sell him even if after a while

5. Neighbourhood Relationships

213. الجار قبل الدار
Al-jar gabl al-dar
Seek a neighbour before you get a house
214. جارك القريب ولا ود أمك البعيد
Jarak al-gareab wa la wad umak al-ba'id
Better your close neighbour than your distant brother
215. أحفظ مالك ولا تخون جارك
Ah'fad malak wa takhawean jarak
Keep your possessions and do not accuse your neighbours
216. إن جار عليك جارك حول له دارك
Inn jar a'leak jarak h'awil lo darak
If your neighbour oppresses you move from your house for his sake
217. الجار ما جار عليه الزمان
Al-jar ma jar a'laihu al-zaman
Let no neighbour be oppressed by life
218. من صبر على أذى جارو ورثه الله دياره
Mann s'abar a'la ada jaru warathu Allah daru
He that is patient in tolerating his neighbour's harm, God will bequeath him his neighbour's house

6. Marriage and Women:

219. الزواج نصف الدين
Al-zawaj nis'f al-dean
Marriage is half of religion
(from the Prophet's sayings)
220. الزواج سُتْرُه
Al-zawaj sutra
Marriage is protection
221. أم الدرفون ولو مدفون
Umm al-darfun wa lao madfun
Avoid the mother of a child even if it is dead

222. طيب الحديده والضرب نصيب
(B.NO. 437, p. 62)
Taib al-hadeadah wa al-dharib naseeb
Choose a good wife from a good family; having children is a matter of luck
223. طيب الخال وخال الخال شوف كان يحي بطل
Taieb al khal wa khal al-khal shoof kan yaji batal
Let the maternal uncle and his maternal uncle be good and see if you will get a bad child
224. لا تلد الحيه إلا حيه
La talid al-h'ayia ila haiya
A snake will have snake children
225. العاقل يتزوج لاولاده
al-a'qil yitzawj li awlado
He who is wise marries for his children
226. إياكم وخضراء اليمَن فإن العرقَ دساس
'Iyakum wa khadh'ra al-dimen, qaloo wa ma khadhra al-dimen? Qala: al-h'asna fi manbati al-suo".
(from the prophet's speech)
'Be aware of *khadhra al-dimen*. They said, and what is *khadhra al-dimen* ? He said, a pretty woman of evil origin.'
227. ادوهن أعينوا عليهن
Adohin wa a'aeno a'leahin
Let your daughters get married and help their husbands
228. ولدك خيرو وبتك اختار ليها
W aladak khauro wa bitak ikhtar liyha
Let your son choose his own wife but choose a husband for your daughter
(Also in A&T NO. 1418 p. 171)
229. أخذت أخيكَ ليكَ ما ابتبقي ليكَ
A khddat akhiyak leak ma betabga leak
A marriage based on your brother's opinion will not be suitable
230. المره مكسورة جناح
Al-mara maksurat janah'
Woman has broken wings
231. عاقلة النسوان قلبها مثل حبة الدخن
A'aqlat al-niswan qalbaha zi h'abat al-dukhun
The brain of the wisest woman is like *durra* seed in its size

232. النسوان عقلهن قدر راس الشوكه
Al-niswan a'aqlahin zai ras al-shoaka
 Women's minds are as small as the head of a thorn
233. ما تتحزم بالنسوان فزعهن زغاريد وسلاحهن بكاء
Ma tith'azam bil-niswan, faza'in zagharead wa silah'in buka
 Do not depend on women as their support is trilling and their weapon is crying
234. النساء حبايل الشيطان
Al-nissa h'bail al-shiytan
 Women are pregnant by Satan
235. من سواهن تجارتُهُ يا خسارتُهُ
Mann sawahin tijartu ya khasartu
 How great is his loss that he made women his business
236. أم قمبور شين بتسوي
Um gamur shin bitsawi
 A woman, what does she do?
237. المتحزم بالنسوان عريان
Al muth'azim belniswan a'riyan
 He who dresses himself with women is naked
238. ضربة الإنتايه زي مسح الدهنايه
D'arbat al-intaya zai mash'at al-dihmaya
 Punishing a female is like rubbing butter over the body
239. أفجخ البصله قبال تبقى أصله
Afjakh al-bas'ala gubal tabga as'ala
 Crush the onion before it becomes a cobra
240. المره قربة دم إن شلتها خرَّت وإن خليتها وعَّت
Al-mara girbat damm inn shiltaha kharat wa inn khalayta waa'at
 A woman is a leather bag full of blood: if you carry it, it pours out and if you leave it, it becomes pus
241. المره إن بقت فاس ما بتكسر الراس
Al-mara inn bigat fass ma bitakesir ar-ras
 Even if the woman were an axe she would not break a head
242. النسوان كان بقن كور ما بطردن البعشوم
Al-niswan kan bigan kur ma bitrud'an ba'shoam
 If women were stones, they would not help to escape a fox

243. المره العاقر ضيفه في البيت
Al-mara al-a'agir d'eaafa fi al-beat
 A barren woman is a guest in the house
244. ما تامن السحابه ولو ضلت ولا تامن المره ولو صامت وصلت
Ma tamin al-sih'aba wa lao d'alat wa la tamin al-marah wa lao s'amat wa s'alat
 Do not trust the cloud even if it has darkened and do not trust a woman even if she has fasted and prayed
245. الراجل كلو ولي المره
Al-rajil kulu wali al-mara
 Whoever a man is, he is the woman's guardian (caretaker)
246. المره كان اخدت راجل هم وكان قعدت في بيتك هم
Al-mara kan akhadat rajil hamm wa kan ga'dat fi biyeatak hamm
 A woman is a burden whether she is married or stays at her parents' home
247. هم البنات للممات
Hamm al-banat lilmamat
 Worries about girls last to death
248. المره كان قلت أديها دُفها باختها
Al-mara kan galat adabah dugaha bi ukhutah
 If a woman shows disrespect, punish her with another woman
249. سعد البنات نور البيت وقعاد البنات حُقره للبيت
Saa'ad al-banat noor al-beat wa gua'ad al-banat h'ugra lilbeat
 Girls' marriage is a light in the house and their staying in their parents' house is oppression to the house
250. الرجال يزِيلوا الغبار
Al-rijal yizeelu al-ghubar
 Men remove the dust.
251. أم الضكور محبوبه
Um al-d'ukur mah'booba
 The mother of male babies is well beloved
252. أم الضكور أضانها بارده
Um al-d'ukur ad'ana barda
 The mother of boys has peace of mind
253. جيبى حجار وتكلي الدار
Jeabi h'ijar wa takeli al-dar
 Give birth to male babies to support your house

254. المره شعر تابع رقبه
Al-mara sha'ar tabia' ragaba
 A woman is hair that follows the neck
255. المره النفاقه قاطعة مال وقاطعة رزق
Al-mara al-nagnaga gata'at mal wa gata'at riziq
 A nagging woman is a money loser and livelihood stopper
256. المره ما بدوها الرسن
Al-mara ma badawha al- rasan
 A woman will not be given a leash
257. تلاته ما ترفع منهم عصا مرة ونقاره وحماره
Talata ma tarfa' minahum a's'a mara wa nugara wa h'umara
 Do not take your stick away from three things: a woman, a drum and a female donkey
258. زيناً للرجال تلقى وزيناً للنسوان المي خطى مجراه
Zeanan lilrijal talga wa zeanan lilniswan almi khiṭa majra
 Doing a favour to men brings you a good turn and doing a favour to women is water that has missed its stream
259. المره ما يوادعوها
Al-mara ma biwada'oha
 A consignment will not be given to a woman
260. رأي المره قربة إنقذت في الخلاء
Rai al-mara girba ingadat fil khala
 Woman's opinion is like a leather bag full of water that has been punctured in the desert
261. اليسمع كلام المره يرجع لوراء
Al-basma' kalam al-mara barja' liwara
 He who listens to women's opinion will go backward
262. نعال أم قديد ولا مره ام وليد
Na'al um gidead wa la mara um welead
 Old shoes with holes are better than a woman who has a son
263. نار ومره ما عندهم صغير
Nar wa mara ma a'indahum s'aghear
 Fire and women never have a small stage

264. أسعى الدابة السريعه وأخذ المره المطيعه كلها للعمر تمتيعه
Asa'a al-daba al-sarea-a' wa akhud al-mara al-mutiya' kulha lila'umur tamtiya'a
 Keep a fast animal and marry an obedient woman, as they are the enjoyment of your life
265. إحذر البلد الجيعانه والدابه الكسلانه والمره الكثرانه كلها للعمر مهانه
Edar al-balad al-jia'ana wa al-daba al-kaslana wa al-mara al-kashrana kulha lila'umur mahana
 Avoid living in a famished land, keeping a lazy animal and marrying a frowning woman as they cause humiliation
266. المره قوتها في لسانها
Al-mara gowata fi lisanah
 Woman's power is in her tongue
267. الراجل عين البيت والبنيت سند البيت
Al-rajil a'in al-bait wa al-bint sanad al-bait
 The man is the eye of the house and the girl is the support of the house
268. الراجل برجاله والكريم بأمر عياله
Al-rajil birijalu wa al-karim bi um a'iyalu
 The brave man is with his men and the generous one is with his wife
269. الرجال قبائل والنسوان نفايل
Al-rijal gabail wa al-niswan nafayil
 Men are with their tribes and women are with their good deeds
270. المره يقولوا مره من العتبه ووراء
Al-mara al-bigoalo mara minn al-a'taba li wara
 The woman that they can call a real woman is behind her doorstep

7. Sudanese experiences and wisdom

271. النسي قديمو تاه
Al nisa qadeemu tah
 Whoever forgets his past goes astray
272. القلب يشوف قبل العين
Al- galib yashoof gabel al-a'yan
 The heart sees before the eyes
273. كان سلم العود اللحم يعود
Kan silm al-a'udd al-lah'am bia'ood
 If the wood (bone) is safe, the flesh will be restored

274. كان كترت عليك الهموم ارفد نوم
Kann kitrat a'leak al-himoom, argudd noom
 When pressure proves difficult to handle, lie down and sleep
275. كترة النقة للطلاق وكترة المرض للموت
Katarat al-nigga lil talag wa katarat al-marad' lil-moat
 Too much nagging leads to divorce and too much sickness causes death
276. كترة المزاح تجيب النطاح
Katarat al-mizah' tajeab al-nitah'
 Too much joking causes fighting
277. كترة الطلا تمسخ خلق الله
Katarat al-talla timasikh khalag Allah
 Too frequent visits make one boring
278. كتلوك ولا جوك
Kataloak wa la joake
 Killing you is better than scaring you
279. الكراع تدب محل القلب ما يحب
Al-kuraa' tadib makan al-galib ma yah'ib
 The foot goes where the heart likes
280. المريد ما له مثيل هو أعوج ودربه عديل
Al-marud ma laho matheal huo aa'waj wa darbu a'adeal
 No one is like the beloved: he is not straight, but his way is straight
281. كل تغييره ليها خيره
Kullu taghyeera laiha khiera
 Every change has its goodness
282. الكبر حسنات
Al-kubur h'asanat
 Old age is a blessing
283. ناره الاوقدها يدفاها
Naru al-ugda yadfaha
 Let him get warm with the fire that he lighted
284. كل حركه ليها بركه
Kullu h'arka laiha baraka
 Every movement has its blessing

285. المرسل إن ریح رجليك ما يريح بك
Al-mursal in raih' rijlak ma yareah' balak
 If the courier gives rest to your legs, he will not give rest to your mind
286. كل شهامة ليها ندامة
Kullu shahama laiha nadama
 Any magnanimity has some regret following it
287. كل شئ بتمنه
Kull shayi bi-tamanu
 Everything has its price
288. همأ يبكي وهمأ يضحك
Haman yibakki wa haman yid'ah'ik
 Some worries make you cry and some make you laugh
289. كل زمن له رجال
Kullu zaman laho rijal
 Every time has its men
290. الغيبات للرجال هيئات
Al-ghiybat lilrijal haibat
 Absence is dignity for men
291. مالاً توادعه وادعه
Malan tiwadia'u wadia'u
 Money that you consign, say farewell to it
292. هين قرشك ما تهين نفسك
Heen girshak ma tiheen nafssak
 Humiliate your penny, do not humiliate yourself
293. كل كتير يرخص إلا ابن آدم كلما كتر يغلى
Kullu katear yarkhas's' ila ibn adam kullma kitir yaghla
 Too much of anything makes it cheap, except for people who become more valuable
294. كلام القصير ما بتسمع لمان النهار يحمى
Klam al-gis'ear ma bitsamia' laminn al-nahar yahma
 The words of a short person are never heard until the day gets hot
295. زلة الجاهل مستوره وزلة العالم مشهوره
Zalat al-jahil mastoara wa zalat al-a'alim mash-hura
 The ignorant's mistake is hidden and the scholar's mistake is famous

296. لا انكسرت قِزازه ولا إندفق عسل
La inkassarat gizaza wa la indafaq a'asal
 The bottle is neither broken nor its honey spilt
297. الحلم سيد الأخلاق
Al-hilm sayeed al-akhlaq
 Tolerance is the master of all good manners
298. لا خلقه ولا اخلاق
La khilga la akhlag
 Neither beauty nor good manners
299. الجمال جمال الأخلاق
Al-jamal jamal al-akhlaq
 Beauty is beauty of manners
300. يضع سره في أضعف خلقه
Yad'a' siru fi ad'a'f khalgu
 God put his secret in the weakest of his creatures
301. ترى الرجل الهزيل فتزدريه وفي أثوابه أسدٌ هصور
Tara al-rajul al-hazeala fatazdreahi wa fi athwabihi asdun has'oar
 You see a weak person and condemn him, but he has a lion under his clothes
302. تحت السواهي دواهي
Tih't al-sawahi dawahi
 There are great disasters beneath silence
303. أنظر عيبك قبل عيوب غيرك
Ant'ur a'abak gabul a'iyooob al-nass
 Know your mistakes before you follow others' mistakes
304. الملان ما بجلبغ
Al-malan ma bijalbig
 The full vessel does not make any noise
305. ما كلو برکه بتجيب ولد
Ma kullu barka bitjeeb walad
 Not every labour is rewarded with a baby boy
306. ما بخلي حجرا ما بقلبو
Ma bikhali h'ajaran ma yaglibu
 Leave no stone unturned

307. يا حافر محافر السوء وسع مرأقذك فيها
Ya h'afir mah'afir al-soo wassia' maragdak fiha
 You, who dig holes for evil, make your space in it wider
308. لا يرحم ولا يخلي رحمة ربنا تنزل
La yarh'am wa la yakhli rah'mat raban tanzil
 He neither gives mercy to others, nor allows God to have mercy on them
309. أخرج من الجراد
Akhrab min al-jarad
 He causes more havoc than grasshoppers
310. ما في شجرة ما هزاها ريح
Ma fi shajrah ma hazaha reeh'
 There is no tree that is not moved by the wind
311. أبيض جناح وأسود مراح
Abead' janah' wa aswad murah'
 Having a white wing and a black pasture
312. أبوي أمير وابوك أمير مين بسوق الحمير
Aboi ameer wa abook ameer mean bisoq al-h'ameer
 My father is a prince and your father is a prince; who will look after the donkeys!
313. التور إن وقع كترت سكاكينه
Al-toar inn waga' taktar sakakeenu
 If the ox falls knives will increase (it will be easy to stab it)
314. إن غاب الكديس لعب الفار
Inn ghab al-kadees la'b al-far
 When the cat is away, the mice will play
315. إدين وإتباين
Iddaiyann wa ittбайyann
 Borrow to show off
316. الدين ولو درهمين يسود الخدين
Al-dean wa lao derhamean yasoid al-khadean
 Debt darkens the face even if it is only two dirhams.
317. أطول منك باع لا تماشي وأحلى منك ملاح لا تعاشي
Atwal minnak ba-a' ma tamashi wa ah'la minnak mulah' la ta'ashi
 Do not walk with one who walks faster than you, and do not eat dinner with one whose food is more delicious than yours

318. أغنى منك لا تعاشي واقوى منك لا تماشي
Aghnna minnak la ta'ashi wa agwa minnak la tmashi
 Do not dine with one who is richer than you and do not walk with one who is stronger than you
319. إن جاتك في مالك سامحتك
Inn jattak fi malak samah'atak
 If it came in your wealth, it forgave you
320. المال ضل الضحى
Al-mall d'ull d'uh'a
 Wealth is a forenoon shadow
321. المودر يفتح خشم البقرة
Al-moadir biftah' khashm al-bagarra
 He who has lost a valuable thing, might open the cow's mouth
322. الغريق يتعلق في قشه
Al-ghareag yita'lag fi gashah
 A drowning man may clutch at a straw
323. العين بصيره والأيد قصيره
Al-a'in bas'eara wa al-aid gas'eara
 The eye is perceptive, but the hand is short
324. كل مكروبا يترخي
Kulu makroaban yitrakhi
 Every tie will be loosened
325. إبرته ما تشيل خيطين
Ibrato ma tasheel khetean
 His needle never carries two threads
326. أبقى سواي وكواي الناس تريدك
Abga sawai wa kawai al-nas tareadak
 Be open-handed and revengeful; people will like you
327. ابن آدم من طين يعكر ويصفى
Ibn adam minn teen ya'kar wa yas'fa
 Man comes from mud; he becomes turbid and then clears
328. الفى قلبي في لساني
Al-fi galbu fi lisanu
 What is in his heart is on his tongue

329. أَخْرَتْنِي الْعَجَلَةُ
Akharatni al-a'ajala
 It was haste that delayed me
330. أَدُوهُ شَبِيرٌ سِوَى ضِرَاعٍ
Addo shibir sawa d'ura'
 They gave him a span and he made it a cubit
331. عَيْنُ ابْنِ آدَمَ مَا يَمْلَاهَا إِلَّا التُّرَابُ
A'in abin Adam ma yamlaha ila al-turab
 Only sand fills Adam's son's eye
332. جِلْدُ النَّمْرِ مَا يَتَغَيَّرُ
Jild animir ma bitgheyyar
 The leopard's skin never changes
333. الْمَاعُونَ إِنْ كَالُوهُ يَبْدِفِقُ
Al-ma-a'oan inn kalou bidaffiq
 The container will overflow when it is overfilled
334. الْمَا تَعْرِفُ أَصْلَهُ دَلِيلُهُ فَعَلُهُ
Al-ma ta'rif as'lu dalealu fia'lu
 If you do not know a man's origins, his deed is the indication
335. الطَّبِيعَةُ جِبَلٌ
Al-tabaia' jabal
 Human nature is a mountain
336. الطَّبِيعُ يَغْلِبُ التَّطَبُّعَ
Al-taba' yaghlib al-tatabua'
 Nature conquers pretence
337. الطَّبِيعَةُ حَيْدٌ يَبْقَى سَيِّدٌ
Al-tabau jayead yabqa sayead
 He who has good manners becomes a master
338. الطَّغْيُ يَزِيلُ النِّعْمَةَ
Al-tagha yazeal al-nia'ma
 Pride eliminates blessing
339. أَظْلَمُ مِنْ حَيَّةٍ
At'lam min h'aiya
 More oppressive than a cobra

340. أداني أمان الكديس للفار
Addani amann al-kadees lifarr
 He gave me the peace that the cat gives the rat
341. السواى ما حداث
As-sawa'iy ma h'addath
 A doer is never a great talker
342. الشحاد كورتو ما بنتملي
Al-shah'add korto ma bititmali
 The bowl of the beggar never fills up
343. الشينه منكورة
Al-sheana mankoora
 A dishonourable thing is denied
344. الممنوع مرغوب
Al-mamnua' marghoob
 Everything that is forbidden is desired
345. لاجدع لا يجيب حجار
La bijadia' la bijeeb h'ujar
 He neither throws stones nor brings them to the one who uses them
346. لا بجل لا يربط
La bih'il la birbut
 He neither loosens nor ties
347. أصلع ما بخاف من قوب
As'la' ma bikhaff min goob
 A bald-headed man is not scared of scabies
348. الإضيئه دقه واعتذر له
Al-id'iynah dugoo wa a'tathir loo
 Punish the weak man and apologize to him
349. من دقنه وأقتل له
Minn dignu wa aftil lu
 Give twine for him from his own beard
350. أطلب الفضل من أهل الفضل ولا تطلب الفقري بعد يتمول
Aṭlub al-fad'l minn ahal al-fad'l wa la ṭatlub al-fagri ba'dd yitmawal
 Ask a favour from those who have favour, and do not ask a poor man after he becomes rich

351. أطلبوا حوائجكم من أحاسن الوجوه
Atlibu h'awaijkum min ah'asin al-wajoh
 Ask your needs from those who have pretty faces
352. الأعرور في بلد العمي يقدل
Al-a-a'war fi bala al-a'imi yagdil
 In the land of the blind the one-eyed man is swaggering
353. الأعرور في بلد العمي مفتح
Al- a-a'war fi balad al-a'imi mufattih
 In the country of the blind the one-eyed man is not blind
354. الطشاش في بلد العمي شوف
Al-tashash fi balad al-a'imi shoaf
 Half blind is seeing in the land of blindness
355. حلم الجيعان عيش
H'ilem al-jiya'an a'eash
 A hungry man dreams of bread
356. في العين حقرة وفي القلب نقره
Fi al-a'in h'ugra wa fi al-galib nugra
 He has contempt in the eye and leaves his prints in the heart
357. الحقيقه مره
Al-h'ageega murra
 Truth is bitter
358. كان ليك حاجة عند الكلب قوله يا سيدي
Kan leak h'ajah a'indd al-kalib goolo ya sidi
 If you need something from a dog, call it my lord!
359. الباب البجيب الريح سيده وأستريح
Al-bab al-bijeab al-reah' sidu wa istreeh'
 If the door brings wind, shut it and relax
360. عينه في الفيل يطعن في ضله
A'aino fi al-feel yata'an fi d'ulu
 He looks at the elephant and stabs its shadow
361. ابلاى برقيتو بربطو من صلبه ماله
Abalai biragabtu barbotu minn s'ulbu malu
 A monkey has a neck, why has it been tied by its waist?

362. أكلنا عيش وملح
Akalnna a'eash wa millih'
 We ate bread and salt together
363. جرح الملاح أمضى من جرح السلاح
Jarh' al-mulah' amd'a min jarh' al-silah
 The wound inflicted by trusted associates is deeper than a weapon's wound
364. أكل يا كمي فبال فمي
Ukul ya kumi gbbal fami
 Eat my dress before my mouth
365. إن بقيت رايح كثر الفضايح
Inn bigeet rayih' kattirr al-fad'yih'
 If you want to move away, make more shame
366. إن قمت ساير كثير العواير
Inn gumtta saiyer kattir al-a'wayir
 If you want to move a away, make more scandals
367. إن جاتك من صغارها عدها من كبارها
Inn jattak minn s'igharah a'iddaha minn kibbara
 If you are offended by children, count the offence as coming from their parents
368. الرجل ضررس بحمل الحلو والمر
Al-rajl d'urru' bih'mal al-h'iloo wa al-murr
 A man is a molar tooth; he tolerates the sweet and the bitter
369. العين ميزان
Al-a'ain meazan
 The eye (sight) is a scale
370. التكرار يعلم الحمار
Al-tikrar yia'lim al-h'imar
 Repetition teaches a donkey
371. العطشان يشوف الرهاب مويه
Al-a'tshan yashoof al-rihab moya
 A thirsty person sees mirage as water
372. ما تدفق مويتك على الرهاب
Ma tidafiq muiytak a'la al-rihab
 Do not pour out your water because you saw a mirage

373. القلب كان غاب الجته بالخراب
Al-galib inn ghabb al-jitta belkharab
 If the heart (mind) has gone, it is ruination for the body
374. الفى ايدى القلم ما بكتب نفسو شقى
Al-fi ido al-galam ma bektib nafso shagi
 He who has a pen in his hand will never write of himself as unfortunate
375. عذر أقبح من الذنب
A'udr agbah' minn al-danb
 His excuse is worse than his sin
376. الليل والنهار واحد على العميان واللوم والشكر واحد على السجمان
Al-leil wan-nihar wah'id a'la al-a'miyan wa-loam wa al-shukur wah'id a'la al-sajman
 Day and night are the same to a blind person, as are blame and praise to an idle one
377. النجىع ولا الوجىع
Al-najeea' wala al-wajeea'
 Leaving home is better than staying and being miserable
378. أرنب السلطان تقود الفيل
Arnab al-sultan tagoad al-feel
 The Sultan's rabbit leads the elephant
379. لوفىها خير ما أباهها الطير
Law fiyha khear ma abaha al-tayear
 If there were any good in it, birds would not have rejected it
380. خير وسيلة للدفاع الهجوم
Khear waseela lildifa' al-hujoom
 Attack is the best means of defence
381. الباباك فى البحر يقول لىك ملبتنى عجاج
Al-babak fi al-bah'ar yigul leak maleatni a'ajaj
 He who hates you will say that you threw dust at him even if you were in the middle of the sea
382. إتمسكن لمن تتمكن
Itmaskan lamman titmakan
 Pretend to be humble until you have power (to get what you want)

383. الولف كتال
Al-wilif kattal
Familiarity is a great killer
384. تلصيق الطين في الكرعين ولا ببقى نعلين
Tilis'iq al-ṭean fi al-kira'ean wala bibga na'lean
Mud stuck on the feet will not become shoes
385. بليلة مباشر ولا ضبيحة مكاشر
Balilat mubashir wala d'abih'at mukashir
It is better to offer boiled millet with a smile than a slaughtered animal with a frown
386. بعيد عن عينك بعيد عن قلبك
Ba;eed a'n a'ynak ba'eed a'n galbak
Far from your eyes, far from your heart
387. جلد ما جلدك جر فيه الشوك
Jildan ma jildak jur fiho ashoak
Skin that is not yours, stick thorns on it
388. الجمره تحرق الواطيهها
Al-jamra tah'rig al-waṭiyha
Firebrands burn the one who treads on them
389. مال البلاش كثر منه ولو يأذيك
Mal al-balash katir minu wa lao ya-azeak
Take as much as you can that is free even if it harms you
390. القرد في عين امه غزال
Al-girid fi a'ain umu ghazal
The monkey is a deer in his mother's eyes
391. ضحك الرجال بكاء
D'h'ikk al-rijal bukka
Men's laughter is crying
392. مصائب قوم عند قوم فوائد
Mas'aib gawom a'inda gawom fawaid
Misfortune for some is advantage for others
393. نايم في نومه جاهو كومو
Naim fi noamu jahu komu
He was asleep when he received his share

394. عميان ومسكوه عصا
A'miyan wa masakoho a'as'a
 He is blind and they gave him a stick
395. شكار نفسو إبليس
Shakkar nafso iblees
 The one who praises himself is a devil
396. عشم إبليس في الجنة
A'sham iblees fi al-janna
 Devil's hope in Paradise
397. عايره وادوها صوت
Ayra wa addoha s'oaṭ
 Racing and being lashed
398. وقع الفاس في الراس
Waga' al-fass fi al-ras
 The axe has fallen upon the head
399. الفات حده ينقلب لصدده
Al-fatt h'adu yingalib lid'idu
 That which goes beyond its limit will turn to its contrary
400. كان غلبك سدها وسع قدها
Kan ghalabak sadha wassa' gadaha
 If you failed to patch a puncture, enlarge it
401. كريم اد غشيم
Karim adda ghasheem
 A generous person has offered a gift to an undeserving one
402. اللئيم إن أكرمته هانك
Al-laim inn akramtu hannak
 If you honour a villain, he will humiliate you
403. لا خيرا منك ودخانك يعمي
La khairan minnak wa dukhanak ya'mmi
 No benefit comes from you, and yet the smoke you make causes blindness
404. لا قيني ما تعاشيني
Lageeni ma ta'asheeni
 Better to meet me with a warm heart than offer me dinner

405. لو طقو في كوعو ما تنزل دموعو
Lao tagoo fi kua'o ma tanzil dumoa'o
 Even if they hit him on the elbow, he will never shed tears
406. النفس اولى من الصاحب
Al-naffess awla min al-s'ah'ib
 One's own self is worthier than a friend
407. كل إنسان في نفسه سلطان
Kulu innsan fi nafsu s'ultān
 Everybody is a sultan to himself
408. شجرة الصندل تعطر فاسه
Shajarat al-s'andal ta'tir fasa
 A sandalwood tree perfumes its axe
409. صمت دهرًا ونطق كفرا
S'amat dahran wa nataq kufran
 Paused for a year and then spoke nonsense
410. القشة التي قصمت ظهر البعير
Al-qasha alti qas'amat t'ahar al-ba'ear
 The straw that broke the camel's back
411. طولو طول النخلة وعقلو عقل السخلة
Tolu tool al-nakhala wa a'glu a'gl al-sakhala
 As tall as a palm tree with the mind of a baby goat
412. عضم حوت لا يتبلع ولا يفوت
A'd'um h'utt la bitbalia' wala bifutt
 A fishbone in the throat can neither be swallowed nor expelled
413. سادي دي بطين ودي بعجين
Sadi di biteen wa di ba'jeen
 He blocks one ear with mud and the other with paste
414. علمته الرماية فلما اشدت ساعده رمانى
A'llumtahu al-rimaya fa-lama ishtadda sa'idahoo ramani
 I taught him to shoot, but when his arm got stronger, he shot me down
415. علمته نظم القوافى فلما قال قافيته هجاني
 وأعلمه الرماية كل يوم فلما أشدت ساعده رمانى
A'lamtahu nat'm al-qawafi falama qal qafitahu hajani
Wa ua'limahu al-rimaya kula yawmin falama ishtadda sa'idahu ramani
 I taught him how to write poetry, and when he wrote his poetry he lampooned me
 and I taught him how to shoot; when his arm got stronger he shot me down

416. علمته الشحده سبقني على الابواب
A'lamtu al-shih'ida, s'abagni a'la al-abwab
 I taught him begging and he got to the doors before me
417. كثرة جعجه بلا طحين
Katarat ja'ja'h bala tah'een
 Much noise and no flour
418. في النهار يسبح وفي الليل يضبح
Fi al-nahar yisabbih' wa fi-leil yid'abbih
 He prays all the day, but he slaughters (people) at night
419. كر عيه في البحر وفاتح خشمو لموية المطر
Kira'eaho fi al-bah'ar wa fatih' khashmo limoayat al-matar
 His feet are in the sea and he opens his mouth for raindrops
420. الشقي في الزبده يلقى عضم
Al-shaqi fi al-zibdda yalqa a'ad'um
 An unfortunate person finds a bone in the butter
421. عُمر الشقي بقي
A'umur al-shagi bagi
 The miserable one has a long life
422. شماتة الأعداي أحرُّ من سكرات الموت
Shamatat al-a-a'adi ah'arra min sakarat al-moat
 Enemies' gloating over your grief is harder to bear than the agony of death
423. شماتة الأعداي أحرُّ من حُرقة الحشا
Shamatat al-a-a'adi ah'arra min h'urgat al-h'asha
 Enemies' gloating over your sadness is harder to bear than the loss of your children
424. الصفراء تَنَحَّتْ
Al-s'afra tinh'att
 The yellow leaf will fall down
425. ضرب عصفورين بحجر
D'arab a'us'forean beh'ajar
 He hit two birds with one stone
426. من عقولنا ما نُشدت أصولنا
Min a'ugoalna ma nushidat us'olna
 For our wisdom nobody asked about our origins

427. الدنيا بالمنافع والآخرة بالأعمال
Al-duniya bil-manafia' wa al-akhra bi-ala a'mal
 Life's benefit is in its opportunities, but afterlife's benefit is gained with good deeds
428. ما هكذا تورّد الابل
Ma hakatha toordu al-ibil
 That is not the way to take camels to the water pool
429. مد رجليك قدر لحافك
Mid rijlak a'la gadur lih'affak
 Stretch your leg according to your mattress
430. من تابع الناس مات هما
Munn tabba' an-nass mata hammann
 Whoever chases people's affairs is bound to die of solitude
431. من حفر حفرة لآخيه وقع فيها
Munn h'afar h'ufratan liakhiyihi waqaa' fiyaha
 He who digs a hole for his brother falls in it
432. من عاشر قوما اربعين يوما صار منهم
Munn a'ashara qawman arba'ean yawman s'ar mithlahum
 He who lives with a group for forty days becomes one of them
433. دنيا دبنقا دردقي بشيش
Dunia dabanga dardigi bishaish
 Life is brittle as *dabanga* (a clay pot), roll it slowly
434. الدنيا ما بتبقى جنة
Al-duniya ma bitabaga janna
 Life will never be paradise
435. قديمك ما تجفا لو كان عود نار ادفا
Gadeemak ma tajaffa lao a'udd narr adaffa
 Do not abandon your old belongings; even if it is only firewood get warm with it
436. قدم السبت تلقى الاحد
Gaddim al-sabit talga al-ah'ad
 Offer Saturday and you will find Sunday
437. ما تامن لامن تطامن
Ma taamin lamin tat'amin
 Do not feel safe until you are buried

438. كان اخيك زينو بل راسك
Kan akhook zayyano bil rasak
 If your brother has his hair cut, wet yours
439. لا عذر لمن أُنذر
La a'udra limann undir
 No excuse for one who has been warned
440. الكلام الما كلامك ما تتصدر ليه
Al-kalam al-ma kalamakk ma tits'adar liyyaho
 Do not stand up for words that are not yours
441. لا ناقة لي فيها ولا جمل
La naqat li fiyha wa la jamal
 I have neither a she-camel nor a he- camel in this matter
442. إذا كان المتكلم مجنون فالمصطنت يكون عاقل
Ida kann al-mutakalim majnoon fa-al-mustamia' yakoon a'agil
 If the speaker is mad, the hearer should be wise
443. ليس من رأى كمن سمع
Laysa mann ra-a kamann sama'a
 The one who saw is not like the one who heard
444. بلدا ما بلدك امش فيها عريان
Baladan ma baladak amshi fiha a'rian
 Walk naked in a country that is not yours
445. من خلى داره قل مقداره
Mann khala daru galla migdaru
 He who leaves his home loses his dignity
446. أقتل البلد بالولد
Aqtul al-balad bilwalad
 Kill the land with its own sons!
447. اكل البعجبك والبس البعجب الناس
Ukkl al-bia'gbak; wa albas al-bia'ajb an-nas
 Eat whatever you like and wear what other people like
448. السمعه ولا طولة العمر
Al suma'a wala tolat ala'umur
 Good reputation is better than long life

449. كلبا ما ساعيه عند القنيص ما تلقاه
Kalban ma saa'iyho a'indd al-ganeas' ma talgaho
 If you did not bring a dog you will not find it when hunting
450. بيعة في سعين
Biya'a fi sia'yyan
 Sale in a sack
451. الخريف اللين من شواقيروا بين
Al-kharif al-liyyin min shawageeru biyyin
 Wet autumn is known by its signs
452. الجواب من عنوانو يكفيك
Al-jawab min a'nwano yakfeek
 A letter's address satisfies you
453. لكل قاعده شواذ
Likuli qa-a'da shawad
 Every rule has its exceptions
454. المال الما مالك ما تحسبه في راس مالك
Almal al-ma malak ma tah'sibo fi rass malak
 Wealth is not yours; do not count it as your capital
455. الشهر الما عندك فيه نفقة ما تعد ايامو
Al-shahar alma a'indak fiho nafaga ma tiaid ayyamu
 Do not count the days of a month for which you have no pay
456. الما ليها ضنّب الله بحاحي ليها
Al-ma liyha d'anabb Allah bih'ah'I liyaha
 That which has no tail, Allah will drive insects away from it
457. الله براعي للما عندو راعي
Allah braa'I lilma a'indo raa'i
 God watches for those with no guardians
 (Adam and Tum, NO. 550, p. 548)
458. ما تشكر لي راكوبه في الجريف
Ma tashakkir liye rakoba fi al-khareef
 Never recommend a thatched hut in the rainy season
459. بيت القش بدسك، ما بدس حسك
Biyat al-gash bidisak ma bidiss h'ssak
 A thatched hut will hide you, but not your voice

460. الراس ما بشيل جرین
Al ras ma bisheel jarrean
 The head cannot carry two pots
461. الجري والطيران غلب النعام
Al-jari wa al-tayran ghalab al-na'am
 Running and flying at the same time proved impossible for the ostrich
462. قلت تور قال أحلبوه
Qulta toar qal ah'libu
 I told him that it is an ox, but he said milk it
463. حبل الكضب قصير
H'abeil al-kid'ib gas'eer
 Lying's rope is short
464. جقلو ولا مشي عرجا
Jagloo wa la mashi a'urruja
 An unpaved or muddy road is not a path for lame people to walk
465. الارضه جربت الحجر
Al-ard'a jarrabat al-h'ajar
 The termite tried the rock
466. أسأل مُجرب ولا تسأل طبيب
Asal mujarib wala tasal tabeeb
 Ask an expert, do not ask a doctor
467. أدي العجين لخبازو ولو ياكل نصه
Adi al-a'jeen likhabazu wa-lau yaku nus'u
 Give the dough to a baker even though he may eat half of it
468. المطر يركب الصعب
A l-mud't'ar yarkab al-s'a'ab
 The desperate will take the difficult path
469. النصيحة ضرب سوط
Al-nas'eaha d'arib s'oat
 Advice is as painful as lashing
470. النصيحة نور
Al-nas'eaha noor
 Advice is light

471. الني مرجوع للنار
Al-nai marjoa' lilnar
The raw food goes back to the fire
472. اليتيم ما بوصوه على البكاء
Al-yateem ma biwas'oho a'la al-bikka
One should not advise an orphan to cry
473. كترة الولادات بكسرن رقبة الجنا
Katarat al-waladdat biksiran ragabat al-jana
Too many midwives will break the child's neck
474. ديبب كان في خشمو قعونجه ولا بعضيك
Dabeeb kan fi khashmu ga-a'unja wa la ba'd'eeek
A snake that has a frog in its mouth does not bite you
475. الدابي كان قي خشمه جراهه ما بعضي
Al-dabib kan fi khashmu jarada ma bea'd'i
A snake that has a locust in its mouth will not bite
476. الأيد الما تقدرها حبها ملوية
Al-iead al-ma taqdara h'ibaha malwiya
A hand if you cannot oppose it, kiss it even if it is turned against you
477. شجره كان هوززت ولا وحيدوا يا ابلاي يا هبوباي
Shajara kan hozazat wala weheado ya habobai ya ablai
A tree cannot shake by itself; if a tree shakes, either a monkey or the wind shakes it
478. ما في دخان بلا نار
Ma- fi dukhan bala narr
There is no smoke without fire
479. العود لو ما قيه شق ما بقول طق
Al-a'uoad lao ma fiyho shaq ma biqool taq
A stick without a crack in it will not sound
480. ما شتمك إلا اللي بلغك
Ma shatamak ila ali balaghak
The one who reported to you was the one who insulted you
481. الحبل بنقطع محل رقيق
Al-habil bingatia' mah'al rigayeag
A rope will break where it is thin

482. الجمل ما يعرف عوجة رقبته
Al-jamal ma bia'rif a'wajat ragabtu
 The camel does know the crookedness of its neck
483. إذا حضر الماء بطل التيمم
Ida h'ad'ar al-ma baṭla la-tayammum
 If water is available, one must not use sand for washing
484. وليد دابي ومرقد وادي وبوياي سلطان ما منهم امان
Welead dabi wa margadd wadi wa bobai s'ultān ma minahum amann
 One cannot feel secure with a baby snake, a riverbed and a sultan's fallow land
485. الماسك الدرب بلقى رفيق
Al-masik al-darib bilga rafeeg
 He who takes the road will find a companion
486. كلو شوکاي بسلو بقدايتو
Kulo shokai bisilo bigadayato
 Each thorn is withdrawn through its own hole
487. اكل مع الجيعان وبيع مع الصرمان
Ukul ma' al-jia'ann wa biya' ma' al-s'arrman
 Eat with the hungry one and buy from the needy
488. اتبع الدرب ولو كان عاير وتزوج بت الحله ولو باير
Atbaba' al-darib wa lao a'yir wa tazawj bit al-h'ila wa lao bayir
 Follow the road even if it is winding and marry a woman from your area even if she is old
489. (الجيزة النكدانه والدار العطشانه والدابة الكسلانه ديل اجري منهم ما تلوانا (بلا تأنى)
Al-jeeza al-nakdana wa al-dar al-a'tshana wa al-dabah al-kaslana, deal ajri minahum ma talwana
 An unhappy marriage, a thirsty land and a lazy pack animal, escape all these
490. الحي بلاقي
Al-h'ai bilagi
 Whoever is alive will meet (his relatives or friends)
491. الحي بشوف
Al-h'ai bishoof
 The living person will see (what will happen)

492. الحي رزقو حي
Al-h'ai rizgo h'ai
 Whoever is alive, his sustenance is alive
493. الفي قلبك يغلبك
Al-fi galbak yaghalbak
 What is in your heart will defeat you
494. لا تشيل راس ميت تبلى بيه
La tasheel rass meit tabla biyho
 Do not carry a dead head for you may entangle yourself
495. الجراد تابع اوله
Al-jarad tabia' awalo
 The locust will follow its leader
496. الحكم ضل الضحى
Al-h'ukum d'ull d'ah'a
 Authority is a forenoon shadow
497. طاقيه كان وقعت من الراس، تقع في الكتف
At-t'agiyyaa kan waga'aat min ar-as bitaga' fil-katif
 When a hat falls from the head it falls on the shoulder
498. الوجيعه تولد العقر
Al wajea'a tiwalid al-ua'qar
 Prejudice makes the barren give birth to babies
499. الجنيه كلب تابع سيدو
Al-janiya kalib tabia' sido
 A crime is a dog that follows its owner
500. أضرب الحجر وهو حار
Ad'rab al-h'adead wahu harr
 Strike while the iron is hot
501. ركاب سرجين وقيع
Rakkab sarjean wagga'
 Who rides on two saddles will fall
502. الدنيا تجيك والناس ما تخليك
Al-duniya tajeak wa al-nas ma takhaleak
 Life oppresses you and people blame you

503. أضحك تضحك الدنيا معك أبكي تبكي وحدك
Ad'h'ak tad'h'ak al-duniya ma'k, abki tabki wah'dak
 Laugh and the world will laugh with you: cry and you will cry alone
504. السلطان كان صباعو شاركو في الحكم بقطعو
Al-s'ultan kan s'ubaa'o sharko fi al-h'ukum biqata'o
 The sultan would cut off his finger if it shared his power
505. إتعلم الزيانه في روسين اليتامى
Ita'alm al-ziyana fi rosean al-yatama
 Learn haircutting on orphans' heads
506. ارجى سفيه ما ترجى خايب
Arja safeeh ma tarja khayib
 Rely on a prodigal rather than a hopeless person
507. ارقد متدفي تقوم متعافي
Argud mudaffi tagum muta'ffi
 Sleep warm and you will get up healthy
508. ام العشرة تموت تحت الشجره
Umm al-a'shara tamut tih't al-shajara
 The mother of ten (children) dies under a tree
509. البتريدو لا تحاسبو لا تناسبو
Al-bitreedo la-tah'asbo la tinasbo
 Neither share a business, nor enter into marriage alliance with the person you love dearly
510. البخاف طلوع الجبال بيقضي عمره في الكراكير
Al-bikhaf tuloo' al-jibal bigad'I a'umro fi al-karakeer
 Whoever fears climbing mountains will live forever in caves
511. البرميل الفاضي عياطو شديد
Al-birmeel al-fad'i a'iyato shaded
 An empty barrel makes a loud sound
512. السعن المويينو شويه جلباغ
Assia'in al-moytu shawayya jalbagh
 A leather bag with a little water in it shakes frequently
513. الحسنه في الما بسواها مغصه للسواها
Al-h'asana fi ma biswaha maghas'a lilsawaha
 A favour to one who does not deserve it is an annoyance to the doer

514. البشيل قرية مقدوده بتخر على راسه
Al-bisheel girba magdoda bitkhur fi rasu
 He who carries a punctured water bag will spill it on his head
515. لا تامن بامانك ولا تخون بخوانتك
La ta-amin biamana wala takhwain bikwantak
 Do not trust others to have your honesty and do not accuse them because you are dishonest
516. اليشكر بالكلب ينيزك بالكلب
Al-yashkurak bi-al-kadib yinabizak bi-al-kadib
 He who lies to praise you will lie to criticise you
517. كاتل الروح وين بروح
Katil al-roah' wean biroah
 The soul killer has nowhere to go
518. الحسود لا يسود
Al-h'asud la yasud
 The envious will not rise
519. دقاني بكى وسبقني إشتكى
Daqani baka wa sabaqni ishtaka
 He slapped me and wept; he went before me and complained
520. الحضر ابو يعرف كلام جدو
Al-h'id'ir abu ba'rif kalam jidu
 Whoever lives to know his father, knows the wisdom of his grandfather
521. الحقيقة مثل الضل ما بتندفن
Al-h'ageega mithal al-d'd'ull ma bitindafin
 Truth is like a shadow, it cannot be buried
522. أترك من قل خيرته تلق غيرهُ
Atruk mann gala khiyro talga ghearo
 Abandon the one whose benefit is diminished and you will find someone better
523. الما ضاق إيدك ما يبقى رفيقك
Al-ma d'aq iedak ma bibqa rafeaqak
 He who does not suffer from your hand will not become your friend
524. إذا كان كبير البيت للطبل ضارباً فلا بأس على الصبيان فيه من الرقص
Ida kana kabear al-biyet liltabl d'arban fla bas a'la als'biyan fiyhi minn al-raqas'i

If the head of the house is a drummer, boys are allowed to dance

525. إذا كان ربُّ لبيت بالدف ضارباً فلا تلم الصبيان فيه على الرقص
Ida kan rab al-beati a'la al-duffi d'arban fala talum al-s'ibyan fiehi a'la al-ragsi
If the head of the family beats on the drum, do not blame the children when they dance.
526. كالمستجير من الرمضاء بالنار
Kalmustajeari minn al-ramd'ai bilnar
Like one who seeks protection from scorching heat by fire
527. شرد من الحفرة وقع في البئر
Sharad minn al-h'ufra waqa' fi al-bear
He escaped from the hole, but he fell in the well
528. أرسل حكيماً ولا توصية
Arsil h'akeeman wa la taws'ih
Send a wise man and do not advise him
529. أعمل معروف وارمي في البحر
A-a'mal ma'roof wa armi fi al-bah'ar
Do a favour and throw it into the sea
530. السعف بكربو وكت لين
As-sa'aaf bekurboo wakit layyinn
Palm leaves are plaited when wet
531. الضلام بغطي الجبال
Al-d'alam bighata al-jibal
Darkness covers the mountains
532. الدنيا تلد الأوجاع
Al-duniya talid al-awja'
Life gives birth to pain
533. المال السائب يعلم السرقة
Al-mal assaib ya'lim al-sarigga
Unattended money teaches theft
534. الغايب حجته معاه
Al-ghaib h'jatu ma'ahu
The absentee might have his reasons
535. اللقى أحبابه نسي أصحابه
Al-liqa ah'babu nisa as'h'abu
The one who met his loved ones forgot his friends

536. نعم المؤدب الدهر
Nia'm al-muadib al-dahar
Time is the best discipliner
537. القوي ياكل الضعيف
Al-gawi yakul al-d'a'eef
The strong one eats the weak one
538. السوسيو النصيح من البيضه بيصيح
Al-siwsiyu al-nasih min al-biydh' a bis'iyh
A healthy nestling cries as soon as it is hatched
539. العجله من الشيطان
Al-a'jala minn al-shiyytan
Haste is from the devil
540. مال البلاش كثر منو
Mal al-balash katir minu
That which you get free, take plenty of it
541. الوادي ما بنسى دربو
Al-wadi ma binsa darbo
The wadi does not forget its pathway
542. شوف الرهاب ما بنفع العطشان
Shoaf al-rihab ma binfa' al-a'tshan
Looking at a mirage will not benefit a thirsty person
543. شوف العين ما بقتل غزال
Shoaf al-a'ain ma bigtul ghazal
You cannot kill a deer by looking at it
544. النقاط كمل القربة
Al-naggaṭ kammal al-girba
Constant dripping has emptied the water bag
545. القرش بلد القرش
Al-girish bilid al-girish
Money breeds money
546. الوقاية خير من العلاج
Al-wiqaya khairun min al-a'ilaj
Prevention is better than cure

547. باب النجار مخلع
Bab al-najar mukhllaa'
The carpenter's door is falling apart
548. ميته وخراب ديار
Meatah wa kharab diyar
Death and ruination of homes
549. التسوي تلقى
Al-tisawi talqa
He who makes will find
550. قليل العرفه يدخل بين العصا والقرفه
Galeal al-a'irfa yadkhul bean al-a's'a wa al-girfa
He who has little knowledge interferes between the stick and its bark
551. حار تقول مال يتيم
H'ar tugoal mal yateem
As hot as an orphan's wealth
552. حبل المهله يربط ويفضل
Habl al-mahala yarbuṭ wa yifad'ill
A rope of slowness will tie and stay
553. كل تأخيره فيها خيره
Kul ta-akhiyrah fiyha khiyrah
In everything that is late, there is good
554. كل شئ بأوانه
Kuli shayi bi-awanu
Everything has its time
555. درب الامان امشيها بالزمان
Darb al-amman amsheeho ba-izamman
Take the safe road even if it takes ages to walk it
556. ريسين يغرقوا المركب
Risyeen ghargoo al-murkab
Two captains in a boat will sink it
557. سماحة الضنديه البطنها مليانة دود
Samahat al-d'und'ubah al-baṭuna malyana dud
The beauty of the *tund'uba* (tropical fruits) that is full of worms

558. سماحة جمل الطين
Samah'at jamal al-tiyeen
 The beauty of a mud camel
559. في العجلة الندامة وفي الثاني السلامة
Fi al-a'ajala al-nadama wa fi al-ta-ani al-salama
 Regret is in haste, safety is in caution
560. كل المرض من الله الا مرض البطن من سيدو
Kul-al-marad' min Allah illa marad' al baṭun min sidu
 All diseases are from God except the disease of the stomach, which is from the patient
561. الحفرة بدفنها بترابها
Al-h'ufra bidfunoha betraba
 A hole will be buried (filled) with its own sand
562. السفر قطعة من جهنم
Al-safar gita'a minn jahnam
 Travelling is a piece of hellfire
563. ما في سما عقب النار
Mafi siman agab al-nar
 No poison survives fire
564. ما في مستحيلا تحت الشمس
Mafi mustah'eelan tih't al-shamss
 Nothing is impossible under the sun
565. اللي يعيش يشوف
Al-liyea'eash yashuf
 He who lives will see
566. الكلب لما يسعر اول ما يعضي ناس البيت
Al-kalib lama yasa'ar awal ma ya'd'i nas al-beat
 When a dog has rabies, it starts to bite its owners
567. الكلب يريد خانقه
Al-kalib biread khangu
 The dog likes his throttling
568. محل ما تخطت راسك خت رجلك
Mah'al ma tukhut rasak khut rijleak
 Where you put your head, put your feet

569. الضايق قرصة الدبيب يخاف من مجر الحبل
Al-d'aiq gars'at al-dabeab yakhaf min majar al-h'abil
 He who has been bitten by a snake is scared of ropes
570. إذا حضرت الملائكة ذهبت الشياطين
Ida h'at'ratt al-malaika dabat al-shayateen
 If the angels come, the devils will leave
571. النية البيضاء تغلب السوداء
An-niyya al-bid'a taghlib al-soda
 White intentions conquer black ones
572. النية زاملة سيدها
An-niyya zamlat sidah
 Intention accompanies its intender
573. بياض النية يصلح الذرية
Biyad' an-niyya yas'lih al-duriya
 Whitening the intention makes progeny more virtuous
574. اليد العليا خير من اليد السفلى
Al-yad al a'uliya khaerun min al-yad al-sufla
 The upper hand is better than the lower hand
575. بارك الله فيمن زار وخف
Bark Allah fi mann zara wa khaffa
 God bless the one whose visit is short
576. إن أكل عَفً وإن زار خَفً
Inn akal a'affa wa inn zar khaffa
 When he visits he makes it short and when he eats he is virtuous
577. كثرة الطلة تمسخ خلق الله
Katrat al-talla timasikh khalg Allah
 Too frequent visits make one boring
578. بارك الله فيمن نفع وأنتفع
Barak Allah fi mun nafa' wa antafa'
 God bless the one who benefits himself and others
579. باصرو ما تعاصرو
Bas'ro ma ta'as'ro
 Deliver it gently, do not force it through

580. الحَجَّاز يموت اول الناس
Al-h'ajjaz yamut awal al-nas
 The peacemaker dies before others
581. لا تبك علي ما فات
La tabki a'la ma fatt
 Do not cry for what has gone
582. أخذَ الثَّارَ يَنْفِي العَارَ
Akhadd al-tarr yanffi al-a'arr
 Taking revenge wipes out dishonour
583. كُلَّ غايِب ادوه حقه
Kullu ghaib ado h'agoo
 Give every absentee his right
584. الغائب عذره معاه
Al-ghaib a'uzru ma'ahu
 The absentee has his own justification

8. Contentment and Patience

585. الغنى في القناعة
Al-ghina fi al-qana-a'a
 Wealth is in contentment
586. القناعة كنز لا يفنى
al-qana-a'a kanzun la yafna
 Wealth is a treasure that does not perish
587. جراده في اليد ولا الف طايره
Jarada fi al-yadd wala alif tayira
 A locust in the hand is better than a thousand flying
588. كان صفت النية العنقريب يشيل ميه
Kan s'ifat al-niyah al-a'ngreab yisheel miyeah
 If people's intention is sincere towards each other, one bed is enough for a hundred of them
589. لقمه هنيه تكفي ميه
Lugma haniya takfi miyeah
 A pleasant happy meal is enough for a hundred people

590. غداء إثنين بغدي ثلاثة
Ghada ithnean bighadi thalatha
 Two people's dinner is enough for three
591. لالوبنا ولا تمر غيرنا
Laloobnna wala tamur ghiyrna
 Our balanite fruits are better than others' dates
592. هجلدايتي ولا تمر زول
Hajildaiti wala tamur zoal
 My balanite fruit is worth more to me than others' dates
593. ام صلومبايتي ولا كديكاي زول
Um s'alumboiti wala kidikai zoal
 My small thin rat is better than others' fat rats
594. قليلي ولا كثير غيري
Galeali wa la katear gheari
 The few that I have is better than the plenty that others have
595. الفارغه يملها الله
Al-fargha yamlaha Allah
 That which is empty God will fill it
596. دابر تعيش
Dabir ta'eash
 Work your own way and you will live
597. كان الطين لين الفقر هين
Kan al-teen lain al-faqr haiyeen
 If mud is soft, it is easy to deal with poverty
598. من حقر بقليله ضاع
Mann h'agar bigalealu d'aa'
 He who disparages the little that he has will lose it
599. الفي نصيبك يصيبك
Al-fi nas'eabak yas'eabak
 Whatever is your destiny you will have it
600. من رضى بقليله عاش
Mann rid'a bigalealu a'ash
 He who is satisfied with the little that he has will live

601. القل ولا القماح
Al-gil wa la al-gamah'
 Something is better than nothing
602. المال ثلثه ولا كتلته
Al-mall tiltu wal katiltu
 One third of your wealth is better than losing it all
603. من حمده زاده
Mann h'amdu zadu
 He who praises Him will be given more
604. الصابرات روابح ولو يجن قماح
Al-s'abrat rawabih' wa lao yajan gumah'
 Patient souls are winners even if they come back with empty hands
605. الصابر جابر
Al-s'abir jabir
 Who is patient is a settler
606. الصابر في خير
Al-s'abir fi khair
 Who is patient is in blessing
607. الصابر حبيب ربه
Al-s'abir h'abeab rabu
 Who is patient is beloved by his God
608. الصبر طيب
Al-s'abur t'aib
 Patience is virtue
609. الصبر دل النبي
Al-s'abur dull an-nabi
 Patience is the prophet's way
610. مَنْ صَبْر نال
Mann s'abar naal
 He who is patient will get what he wants
611. الصبر مفتاح الفرج
Al-s'abur muftah al-faraj
 Patience is the key to relief

612. الصبر ولو مر ما بضر
Al-s'abur wa lao mur ma bid'ur
 Patience will not harm even if it is bitter
613. العكر يوصل الصافي
Al-a'ikir yiwass'il al-s'affi
 Troubled water will lead you to clear water
614. الصبر يهدّ الجبال
Al-s'abr yihid al-jibal
 Patience demolishes mountains

9. Silence, speech and the tongue

615. إذا رأيتم المؤمن صموتاً وقوراً فأدنو منه فإنه يُلقن الحكمة
Ida raitum al-mu'amin s'amutan waqoran fa- adnu minho fa-inhu yulaqin al-h'ikma
 If you see a sedate, silent believer, approach him as he teaches wisdom
616. أندم على سكوتك ولا تندم على كلامك
Andam a'la sukutak ma tandem a'la kalamak
 Regret after silence is better than regret after speech
617. أندم على اللي قلتو ما تندم على اللي ما قلتو
Andam a'la al-gultu, ma tandem a'la al-magultu
 Regret what you have said, but do not regret what you did not say
618. إذا كان الكلام من فضة فالسكوت من ذهب
Ida kan al-kalam minn fid'ah fa-al-sukoot minn dahabb
 If speech is made of silver, silence is of gold
619. الكلام لو داير تكملو هملا
Al-kalam lao dair tikamlu hamilu
 If you want to put an end to talk, ignore it
620. السكوت علامة الرضا
Al-sukoot a'lamat al-rid'a
 Silence is the sign of consent
621. الكلام بركته في قلته
Al-kalam barakto fi gilato
 The blessing of a conversation is in its shortness
622. الكلام اللين يمرق الثعبان من جحرو
Al-kalam al-liyyean yamrug al-thua'ban min juh'ro
 Soft words get the snake out of its hole

623. كلام اول ما بتحول
Kalam awal ma biteh'aowal
 The first word uttered cannot be changed
624. الكلام أوله سكرات وأخره فكرات
Al-kalam aowlo sakkarat wa akhro fakkarat
 Talk is inebriety at the beginning and thought at the end
625. الكلام الحلو بخور الباطن
Al-kalam al-h'ilo bakhoor al-bat'inn
 Sweet talk is incense for one's inside
626. الكلمة أطول من العمر
Al-kalma atwal min al-u'mur
 One's word lasts longer than one's life
627. الكلمة لما تصيب حسرة صاحبها
Al- kalma al- ma tas'eab h'asrat s'ahiba
 The word not uttered in the right situation, is a regret to its speaker
628. الكلمة التقماك اقماها
Al-kalma al-tagmak agmaha
 Do not utter a word that disgraces you
629. لسانك حصانك ان صنته صانك وان هنته هانك
Lisanak h'isanak inn s'unto s'anak wa inn hinto hannak
 Your tongue is your guard: if you preserve it, it preserves you and if you humiliate it, it will humiliate you
630. اللسان آفة سيدو
Al-lisan afatt siddo
 The tongue is an epidemic to its owner
631. اللسان جباد البلاء
Al-lisann jabbadd al-bala
 The tongue is a bringer of affliction
632. لسانه زي المقص
Lisano zai al-magas'
 His tongue is like scissors
633. لسانه سنين
Lisano saneen
 His tongue is sharp

634. لسانه طويل
Lisano taweel
He has a long tongue
635. لسانه غالبه
Lisano ghalbo
He is controlled by his tongue
636. اللسان لحمه ما فيه عظم
Al-lisan lahmah ma fiho a'dum
The tongue is a piece of meat; it has no bone
637. لسان من رطب ويد من خشب
Lisano min rotab wa ieado min khashab
He has a tongue of mist and a hand of wood
638. جرح السيف ببرا لكن جرح اللسان ما ببرا
Jarih' al-seaf bibra lakin jarih' al-lisan ma bibra
The wound of a sword will heal, but not one caused by the tongue
639. طعن اللسان انفد من طعن السيف
Ta'nn al-lisan anfad minn ta'nn al-seaf
The stab of the tongue penetrates more than the stab of the sword
640. أعتر برجلك ما تعتر بلسانك
Aa'tar birjilak ma taa'tar bilisanak
Stumble with your foot; do not stumble with your tongue
641. أب سماحاً جوه
Ab samah'an jooah
Having internal beauty

10. Solidarity

642. شجره كان مالت بتكي في اخيو
Shajara kan malat bitaki fi akhiyo
When a tree falls, it leans on its sister
643. الأصبع الواحد ما بغطي الوجه
Al-as'bba' al-wah'id ma bighat'i al-wajih
One finger will not cover the face
644. اليد الواحده ما بتصفق
Al-yadd al-wahdda ma bits'affiqq
One hand will not clap

645. البركه في اللمه
Al-barraka fi al-lama
Blessing is in being many
646. الناس بالناس والكل برب العالمين
An-nas bel-nas wal-kul berab al-a'lameen
People support one another, but all together are supported by God
647. الناس اولاف ما أجناس
Al-nass awlaff ma ajnass
People are companions not relatives
648. العين الواحدة تكرم الف عين
Al-a'yn al-wah'da takrim alf a'yn.
One eye respects a thousand eyes
649. على شان البحر يُكرم القيف
A'la shan al-bah'ar yukram al-geaf
For the sea's sake, the beach is honoured
650. العين ما بتعلى على الحاجب
Al-a'yn ma bita'la a'la al-h'ajib
The eye never stands higher than its eyebrow
651. المكر السيء يحيط باهله
Al-makrul sayyio yah'itu bi-ahlihi
Malice surrounds its perpetrators

Derived from the Quran, Surah 35, Faṭir, verse 43 which reads:

أَسْتَكْبَارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَكْرَ السَّيِّئِ وَلَا يَحِيقُ الْمَكْرُ السَّيِّئُ إِلَّا بِأَهْلِهِ فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا سُنَّتَ الْأَوَّلِينَ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَحْوِيلًا

[Due to] arrogance in the land and plotting of evil; but the evil plot encompasses only its own people. Then do they await from the way [i.e., established method] of Allah any change, and you will never find in the way of Allah any change.

The Quranic word *يحيق* is replaced by the word *يحيط* in the proverb

(The Holy Quran: Arabic Text and English Translation)

652. المال بروح وتبقى الوجوه
Al-mal biroah' watabqa al-wojoh
Wealth will go and faces remain
653. ما ينبح في مكانه إلا الكلب
Ma yanbah' fi makanu ila al-kalib
Only the dog barks in its home

654. البيت بنوه بقشه
Al-beat bibnu begashu
 A hut will be made with its own straw
655. الفات مات والمضى لا يعاد
Al-fat mat wa al-mad'a la ua'ad
 What is gone is dead, and what has passed cannot be recalled
656. في قبورهم شايلين حمولهم
Fi qoaborum shailean humoalum
 Even in their graves, they take their responsibilities
657. الشورى كتاب وسنه
Al-shura kitab wa sunna
 The Quran and the Sunna prefer consultation
658. بيت الشورى ما بيخرب
Bait ashura ma khirib
 A house of consensus never falls apart
659. الشورى عند راعي الغنم تتلقي
Al-shura a'ind ra-a'I al-ghanam titlagi
 You might find good consultation even with a shepherd
660. كل واحد عقله في راسه يعرف خلاصه
Kulu wahid a'glu fi rasu ya'rif khalas'u
 Every one has brain in his head, so he ought to be able to get out of his troubles
661. ما بكتل ضوي لضوك
Ma baktul d'awi lid'awak
 I will not put out my light for your light
662. ما عبُد الله باكثر من جبر الخاطر
Ma a'ubid Allah bi akter min jabr al-khatir
 God has not been worshiped with anything greater than comforting others
663. أرحموا من في الأرض يرحمكم من في السماء
Arh'amo mann fi al-ard' yarh'mkum mann fi al-sama
 Show mercy to those who are on earth: He who is in heaven will have mercy upon you

664. من ضر الناس ضره رب الناس
Mann d'ara al-nass d'aru rab al-nas
 He who hurts people, God will hurt him
665. النسب حسب
Al-nasab h'asab
 Where one marries determines one's honour
666. الما دارك ما لامك
Al-ma darak ma lamak
 He who does not like you, would not blame you
667. ما تمسكه من ايده البتوجعو
Ma tamsiku min idu al-bitawja'u
 Do not hold him by the hand that pains him
668. عامل الناس زي ما تحب يعاملوك
A'amil al-nas zay matih'ib yaa'milook
 Treat people in the way you want to be treated
669. المصارين في البطن يضاربو
Al-mas'areen fi al-batun yid'arbu
 The entrails in one's belly quarrel with each other
670. كان اتنين قالو ليك راسك مافي المسو
Kan itnean galoo leak rasak mafi almasoo
 If two people tell you that your head is not there, touch it
671. كل شاتا معلقه بعصبتنا
Kullu shatan moa'laqa bi a's'abata
 Every sheep is hung from its own gut
672. خير البر عاجله
Khiyear al-birr a'ajilho
 The best charity is the quickest charity
673. ياكلوا ويقشوا في طرفه
Yaklu wa yigushu fi tarfu
 They eat and clean their hands on his clothes
674. لا تبخل بموجود ولا تتكلف بمعدوم
La tabkhal bimawjoad wa la titkalaf bima'doam
 Do not be stingy with what you have and do not burden yourself with what you do not have

675. عفا الله عما سلف
A'afa Allah a'ama salaf
God has condoned the past
676. كثرة العتاب جفا
Katarat al-a'itab jaffa
Too much admonition is disinclination
677. كلام أبو جانقور في الفاشر ما مسموع
Kalama abu jangoor fi al fashir ma masmooa'
The speech of one with ragged clothes can't be heard
678. مال دمعته ومُخاطه
Mall dama'a wa mukhata
His wealth is made from tears and snot
679. المجالس بالأمانات
Al-majjaliss bil-amanat
Councils are based on trust
680. من فش غببته إنهدت مدينته
Mann fasha ghabeantu inhadat madeantu
He who revenges himself destroys his land
681. الياكل مال النصراتي ينضرب بسيفه
Al-yakul mall al-nas'rani yend'arib biseafu
He who betrays an unbeliever will be punished with his sword
682. الإتحاد قوة
Al-itih'ad qoa
Unity is strength
683. الظلم إن عمَّ هان
Al-t'ulum inn a'ama hann
If injustice prevails, it becomes easy
684. أكرموا عزيز قوم دُلُّ أو غني إفتقر
Akrimo a'zeez qawmin d'ull awo ghani iftaqarr
Honour a noble who has become low or a rich man who has become poor
685. لما نصحك خانك
Al-ma nas'ah'ak khanak
He who does not advise you has betrayed you
686. من ستر مسلم ستره الله يوم القيامة
Munn satar musliman satarhu Allah yawm al-qiyama

Whoever guards a Muslim, will be guarded by God in the Day of Judgement.

687. المايبى الصلح ندمان
Al-mabi al-s'uloh' nadman
He who rejects reconciliation will regret it
688. المسامح كريم
Al-musamih' kaream
The tolerant is generous
689. السوق قدح النبى
Al-suq qadah' al-nabi
Market is the prophet's vessel
690. إيد على إيد تجدع بعيد
Eid a'la eid tajda' ba'eed
A hand on a hand throws faraway
(gets work done quickly)

11. Poverty and Wealth

691. الميت دفنهكر اما
Ikram al-mayyit dafnu
To honour a dead person is to bury him
692. الفقر ما دايم والغنى ما دايم
Al-faqr ma daim wa al-ghina ma daim
Neither poverty nor wealth last long
693. الفقر ما عيب
Al-faqr ma a'eab
Poverty is not shame
694. الفقر فى الوطن غربة
Al-faqr fi al-waṭan ghurba
Poverty in the home is estrangement
695. الما بحمل الفقر ما بحمل الغنى
Al-ma bih'mal al-faqr ma bih'mal al-ghina
He who does not endure poverty will not endure wealth
696. الغنى فى الغربة وطن
Al-ghina fi al-ghurba waṭan
Wealth is a home abroad

697. الفقري ضبان جسمو يابا
Al-faqri d'uban jismoo yaba
 A poor man is rejected even by his body's flies
698. امسك ولد الدرب ولو كان لطفه وأخذ بت الغني ولو كانت غوجه
Amsik walad al-darib wa lao kan lufa wa akhud bit al-ghani wa lao kanat a'uja
 Keep to the safe road even if it is winding and marry a rich man's daughter even if she is imperfect
699. ما تاخذ بت الفقري
Ma takhud bit al-fagri
 Do not marry a poor man's daughter
700. يتم عشاءه بالنوم
Yatim a'ashau bi-al-noam
 He finishes his dinner by sleeping
701. الما عندو حيل ما ينط بلحيل
Al-ma-a'indu h'ayea ma yanut bilh'eal
 He who does not have power should not jump high
702. الفقيران ما عندو صاحب
Al-fagran ma a'indu s'ah'ib
 The poor man has no friend
703. فقريا من الدين غني
Fagrean min al-dayan ghani
 A poor man without debt is rich
704. الفقري ياكل بعينو
Al-faqri yakul ba'yoanu
 The poor man eats with his eyes
705. الما عندو ما كفن أبو
Al-ma-a'indu ma kaffan abu
 He who does not have (money) does not enshroud his father
706. الما في إيدك يكيدك
Al-maffi Ieada; yakeadak
 What is out of your hands plots against you
707. المال يسوي للاضينه بال
Al-mall yasiwi lilid'eana bal
 Money makes a miserable person like important ones

708. المال يَسْمَحُ الشَّيْئَةَ
Al-mall yisamih al-sheana
 Money makes ugly things beautiful
709. المالُ أَخْبَرَ مِنْ سَيِّدِهِ
Al-mall akhear min siydu
 Wealth is better than its owner is
710. المالُ قِيَامُ سَيْفٍ
Al-mall giyamm seaff
 Money is a sword's prop
711. وَقَارَكَ قَدْرُ مَالِكَ
Waqaral gadur malak
 Your gravity is according to your wealth
712. فِي الدُّنْيَا مَا أَفْتَخَرَ وَلِلْآخِرَةِ مَا إِذْخَرَ
Fi al- duniya ma iftakhar wa lil akhra ma iddakhar
 He was neither proud of his life nor preserved anything for the day after
713. لَا دُنْيَا لِآخِرِهِ
La duniya la a-khrah
 Neither this world nor the hereafter
714. قَحْبَاءُ الْعِزِّ مَسْتَوْرَةٌ كَانَتْ يَقُولُوا مَسْحُورَةٌ
Gah'bat al-a'iz mastoara kan jannat yagoolu mash'oara
 An adulteress from a wealthy family is sheltered and if she goes mad, they say she is bewitched
715. الْكَرَاعُ الْغَبْشَا تَجِيبُ الْكَرَاعَ الْمَلْسَاءُ
Al-kura' al-ghabsha tajeab al-kura' al-malsa
 A dusty leg brings a clean soft one
716. الْمَا عِنْدَكَ يَعْسِرُ عَلَيْكَ
Al-ma-a'indak ya'sar a'leak
 What you do not have oppresses you
717. الْمَالُ عِنْدَ سَيِّدِهِ وَالنَّاسُ تَرِيدُوهُ
Al-mall a'ind sidu wa al-nass taridu
 Money is with its owner and people like it

12. Proverbs that reflect casteism, class polarization and social injustice

718. شراء العبد ولا تربيته
Shira al-a'bd wala tarbiytu
Buying a slave is better than bringing him up
719. لا تخاوي العبد, العبد نسائي
La takhawi al-a'bd, al-a'bd nassai
Do not associate as a brother with a slave, as the slave is forgetful
720. العربي لحن له والنوباوي بين له
Al-a'rabi lahhin lu wa al-nubawi bain lu
For an Arab use a gesture and for a non-Arab explain in detail
721. العين ما تعلي علي الحاجب
Al-a'in ma ta'la a'la al-h'ajib
The eye never stands higher than the eyebrow
722. العربي ما يتعزا كما مراحه
Al-a'arbi ma bita'aza kama murah'u
A nomad would not be respected were it not for his herd
723. العرق دساس
Al-a'ireq dasas
The root hides
Blood influences character
724. أنا بسيدي وسيدي بسيدو
Ana be seadi wa seadi baseadu
I have a master, but my master has one too
725. دبيرة الميرم بكوها في الخادم
Dabarat amearam bikoha fi al-khadim
The wound of the princes is cauterized on the maid
726. دبيرة قي الحصان قالو جييوا حمار اكوه
Dabarat al-h'us'an bikoha fi al-h'umar
A horse has a wound, but they ordered a donkey to be cauterized in its place
727. غبينة العربية بفشوها في السرية
Ghabeenat al-a'rabeah befishoha fi al-sireah
The anger of a wife from a noble origin is let out on the maid

726. عارية ما بتدوم للخادم أم قدوم
A'areeya ma bedoom lil-khadim um gadoom
 A borrowed cloth will not last for the servant with a big mouth
729. كله عند العرب صابون
Kulu a'ind al-a'rab s'aboon
 Everything in the eyes of Arabs is but soap
730. ما بسوي شعرة من راسي
Ma biswa sha'rah min rasi
 Not worth a strand of my hair
731. الغير منزلتو عبد
Al-ghayear manziltu a'bid
 He who changes his host is a slave
732. الكضايب ثلاثة: عبداً ما ليه سيد وزولاً جاي من بعيد وشايباً ما عنده نديد
Al- kad'adeeb talata: A'bdan ma a'indu seed, wa zolan jai min ba'eed, wa shaiban ma a'indu nadead
 Liars are three: A slave without an owner, a man coming from a far land and an old man without a peer
733. الهملة سوت العبد فكي
Al-hamala sawat al-a'bid faki
 Inadvertence made the slave a jurist
734. جنس عبد منه الخير جبد
Jins a'bid mino al-khear jabad
 Goodness is far from the origin of slaves
735. سجم الحلة الدليلها عجمي وفصيحتها رطاني
Sajam al-h'ila al-daleela a'ajami wa fas'eyh'a ratani
 What a disaster in a district that its leader is non-Arab and its eloquent man jargonizes
736. عبداً تكفته بلا غيبينه
A'bdan takafitu bala ghabeena
 A slave whom you slap without prejudice

Miscellaneous proverbs

737. اللي ما عنده قديم ما عنده جديد
Al maa'indu qadeam ma a'indu jadead
He who has no old has no new
738. اللي يشيل سيعن مقدود ببل ضهره
Albisheal sia'in maqdud bibl d'ahru
He who carries a pierced water bag wets his back
739. بلدأ جيتلو يا شيل دأويا فوت خلو
Baladan jeetlu ya sheal dalu ya fout khalu
In a country you have come to, either do as its people do or leave it
740. أحذر ثلاثة سفر الخريف وأكل التقاتيف وجيزة بت اللفيف
Ah'dar talata: Safar khareef, akil tafateef wa jizat bit al-lafeaf
Beware three things: travelling in the rainy season, eating unhealthy food and marrying the daughter of a light-headed man
741. مرفعينين قتلوا أسد
Marfa'eenean qatalu assad
Two hyenas killed a lion
742. الخواف ربي عياله
al-khawaf raba a'iyalu
A coward brought up his children
743. نشوف قوادة الأرنب للفييل
Nashoof goadat al-arnab lilfeel
Let us see a rabbit that leads an elephant
744. مَنْ شَبَّ عَلَى شَيْءٍ شَابَ عَلَيْهِ
Mann shaba a'la shayai shaba a'leahi
He who used to do a thing when he was young, will do it when he is old
745. وَاذَكَ وَهُوَ صَغِيرٌ رَبِّهِ وَإِنْ كَبُرَ خَاوِيَهُ
Waladak wahu s'agheer rabbi wa inn_kibir khawi
Discipline your child when he is young, and fraternize with him when he is old
746. أَكْبَرُ مِنْكَ بِيَوْمٍ أَعْرَفَ مِنْكَ بِسَنَةِ
Al-akbar minak biyum aa'raf minak bisana
He who is one day older than you is one year wiser than you

747. عايدته العرجاء لمراحها
A'yida al-a'rja li murah'a
 A lame animal will go back to its herd
748. الغزال يربطو من عصبه
Al-ghazal birboto minn a's'abo
 A gazelle will be tied with its nerve
749. البايه أولى بيها بيت أبوها
Al-baira awla beha beat abuha
 It is appropriate for a spinster to remain in her father's house
750. أخذ الأصيلة ولو بارت
Ukhud al-as'eela wa lao barat
 Marry a woman of noble origin even if she is an old maid
751. ود عمك كان دقاك في الحر يُجرك في الضل
Wad a'mik kan dakak fi al-h'ar yujorik fi al-d'ul
 If your cousin hits you in the heat (hot weather), he will move you to the shade
752. اللي خلف ما مات
Al-khalaf ma mat
 He who leaves children never dies
753. جيبني حجار وثبتي الدار
Jibi h'ijar wa thabiti al-dar
 Oh, bring stones to secure your house
754. الجنأ قيد الهوان
Al-jana gead al-hawan
 The child is a shackle of humiliation
755. إنما يأكل الذئب من الغنم القاصية
Inama ya akul al-theib min al-ghanam al-ghas'iya
 The hyena eats the goat that stands by itself
756. الحمار ما بريح أبوه
Al-himar ma breah' ubu
 The donkey will not release his father from work
757. المره ما عندها رأي
Al mara ma a'inda rai
 Woman has no opinion

758. تراه إذا جنته منهلاً كأنك نطلبه الذي أنت سأله
Trahu ida jiatahu mutahlilan, kanaka ta't'iyhu al dai anta sailhu
 You find him jubilant when you ask him for a favor, as if you are the giver
759. الحيطان ليها أذان
Al-haytan leyha adan
 Walls have ears
760. ما في ورد من غير شوك
Ma fi warid min ghear shoak
 There is no rose without a thorn
761. إذا سكن الإنسان تحرك الفلك بنصيب غيره
Ida sakana al-insann tah'arak al-fulkk bi nas'eeb ghayrihi
 If one subsides (calms down), his orbit moves with others' fate
762. غاب أبو شنب ولعب أبو ضنب
Ghab abu shanab wa la'ib abu d'anab
 When the one with the mustache is absent, the one with the tail will play
763. القرين بالمقارن يقتدي
 As a man is, so is his company.
764. البيقولو القلب إنشاء الله ما تشوفه العين
Al-biqolu al-qalib insha-allah ma tashufu al-a'in
 I wish the eye does not see what the heart says
765. لكل بداية نهاية
Li kuli bidaya nihaya
 There is an end for every beginning
766. اللي تزرعه تحصده
Al-tazra'u tah's'du
 What you sow, you will reap
767. كل واحد وما يهوي
Kulu wahid wa ma yahwa
 Everyone acts according to his own disposition
768. الوحدة خير من جليس السوء
Al wah'da khiyrun min jalees al-sou
 Better to be alone than in bad company
769. كان داير تعيش مع العور أفلع عين
Kan daiyr ta'eesh ma'a al-a'uour aqla' a'eanak
 If you want to live among one eyed-people, pluck out one of your eyes

770. ليس كل ما يلمع ذهب
Laiysa kulu ma yalna' dahab
 All is not gold that glitters
771. يتبع عيوب الناس ويسوي الأسوأ
Yitabia' a'ub al-nas wa yisawi al-aswa
 He who finds faults with others does worse himself
772. بيراً تشرب منه لا ترمي فيه حجر
Beeran tishrab minu ma tarmi fihu wasakh
 Cast no dirt into the well that gives you water
773. إن الغصون إذا قومتها إعتدلت
Inna al-ghus'oon ida qawamtaha ia'tadalat
 If you try to straighten twigs, they will straighten
774. عصفور في اليد ولا ألف طائر
A'us'for fi al-yad wa la alif tair
 A bird in the hand is worth a thousand flying
775. الكلب عنده سبعة أرواح
Al-kalib a'indu saba'a arwah'
 A dog has seven lives
776. صاحب بالين كذاب
S'ah'ib balean kadab
 He who has two hearts is a liar
777. لا كلف الله نفساً إلا وسعها
La kalaf Allah nafsan ila wsa'ha
 God never asks you to do more than what you can
778. قول لي مين صاحبك، أقول ليك مين أنت
Gul lai meann s'ah'bak agul leak meann inta
 Tell me who is your friend and I will tell you who you are
779. كل سرّاً تجاوز الأثنين شاع
Kul sirin tajawaz al-ithnean shaa'
 A secret between more than two will be circulated
780. اللبيب بالإشارة يفهم
Al-labeab bil ishara yafham
 A clever person understands by gesture

781. البعدُ جفا
Al-bua'ud jafa
 Absence is alienation
782. البيان بالعمل
Al-biyan bil al-a'mal
 Deeds not words
783. اللي أوله شرط آخره نور
Al-li aolu shart akhru noor
 All that starts with conditions ends well
784. الكلب النباح ما بيعضي
Al-kalib al-nabah' ma bia'd'i
 A barking dog does not bite
785. ما تصدق كل ما تسمع
Ma tis'adiq kul ma tasma'
 Do not believe all you hear
786. عدواً بين ولا صديقاً منافق
A'duan beain wala s'adiqan munafiq
 Better an open enemy than a hypocritical friend
787. الجن اللي بتعرفه أخير من الجن اللي ما بتعرفه
Al-jinn al-bitarifu akhear minn al-jinn al-mabitarifu
 The devil you know is better than one that you do not know
788. الدم عمره ما بيبقى مويه
Al-dam a'umru ma bibga muya
 Blood will never become water
789. كل إناء بما فيه ينضح
Kulu innain bima fieah yand'ah'
 Each vessel pours what is in it
790. الموت بساوي بين الغني والفقير
Al-moat bisawi bean al-ghani wa al-faqear
 Death makes the rich and the poor equal
791. النظافة من الإيمان
Al-nat'affa minn al-iemann
 Cleanliness is from belief

792. كثرة النقر كملت الحجر
Katarat al-nagir kamalat al-h'ajar
 Constant digging finishes the stone
793. عامل الناس زي ما تحب يعاملوك
A'amil al-nass zai ma tah'ib yia'mluk
 Treat others the way you want to be treated
794. وطني ولا ملي بطني
Watani wa la mali batni
 My home is better than a comfortable life abroad
795. المرء خيثما يضع نفسه
Al-maru h'aeath yad'ai nafsahu
 A man is where he puts himself
796. الله خلق الدنيا في ستة أيام
Allah khalag al-dunya fi sita ayam
 God made the earth in six days
797. كثرة المزاح تزيل الهيبة
Katarat al-muzah' tazeal al-haiyba
 Too much jesting removes dignity
798. أرمي بعدين أحنقه
Armi ba'dean akhnigo
 Throw him down then strangle him
799. اللهم أكفني شر الصديق
Al-lahuma akfini shar al-sadeaq
 God protect me from the evil of my friends
800. الطمع ودر ما جمع
Al-tama' wadar ma jama'
 Greed makes loss
801. العبرة في الخواتيم
Al-a'ibra fi al-khawateam
 Examples are in the endings
802. اللي ما غلط ما إتعلّم
Al-ma ghilit ma ita'alam
 He who makes no mistakes makes nothing

803. التاريخ يعيد نفسه
Al-tareekh ya'eedu nafsihi
History repeats itself
804. الصبح كان ما نجاك الكذب ما بنجيك
Al-s'ah kan ma najjak al-kid'ib ma binaji
If telling the truth does not save you, lies will not save you
805. تَعَب جسمك ما تتعب بالك
Ta'ib jissmak ma tata'ib balak
Tire your body, not your mind
806. مال الحرام محوق
Mal al-h'aram mamh'ug
What comes by wrongdoing is not blessed
807. الخبر الشين بطير
Al-khabar al-shean biṭear
Bad news flies
808. درب السلامة للحول قريب
Darb al-salama lil h'ul gareab
A safe road is short even if it takes a year to walk it
809. العلم سلاح
Al-a'ilm silah'
Knowledge is a weapon
810. شوف وين تخت رجليك
Shoaf wean takhut rijlak
Look where you put your foot
811. الحب أعمى
Al-h'ub aa'ma
Love is blind
812. ما تشيل الهدم وتابي قمله
Ma tesheal al-hidim wa taba gamlu
Do not take a dress and reject its lice
813. أزرعى بدري وأحصدي بدري شوفي كان تنقدرى
Azra'i badri wa ah's'di badri shufi kan tinquadri
Cultivate early and harvest early; no one can harm you

814. الرجل راجل بأخلاقه
Al-rajil rajil bi akhlagu
 A man is a man through his manners
815. الوقاية خيرُ من العلاج
Al-wiqaya hkearun min al-a'laj
 Prevention is better than cure
816. إن المصائب لا تأتي فرادي
Inn al-mas'aib la ta-ati furada
 Misfortune never comes alone
817. الضرورات تُبيح المحظورات
Al-d'arorat tubeah al-mah't'orat
 Necessities permit the forbidden
818. الحاجة أمُّ الإختراع
Al-h'aja umm al-ikhtra'
 Necessity is the mother of invention
819. التعليم ما عنده عُمر
Al-ta'leam ma a'indu a'umur
 There is no age for learning
820. قدر أخف من قدر
Qadar akhaf min qadar
 One disaster is lighter than another disaster
821. اللي بتيته من قزاز ما يجذع الناس بالحجار
Al-beatu minn gizaz ma yijadia' al-nass bil-h'ijar
 He who lives in a glass house should not throw stones at people
822. يأمرون الناس بالبر وينسون أنفسهم
Yamroan al-nass bilbir wa yansoan anfusahum
 They ask people to do well and forget to do it themselves
823. عامل زي أطرش في الزفه
A'mil zai al-atrash fi al-zafa
 He acts like a deaf person in a procession
824. الكحه ولا صمة الخشم
Al-kuh'a wala s'amat al-khashum
 Cough and not a closed mouth

825. حيطه قصيره
H'ytā ges'eara
A short wall
826. ما يضيق الزريبه إلا النعجه الغريبه
Ma yid'eeq al-zariyba ila al-na'ja al-ghareeba
Only a strange sheep makes the corral small
827. شافت الملك وطلقت راجلها
Shafat al-malik wa talgat rajilha
She saw the king and divorced her husband
828. شاوروهن وخالفوهن
Shawirohinna wa khalifohinna
Consult them and disagree with them
829. لو جادت بحبل العنكبوت تنقاد
Lao jadat beh'abel al-a'nekabot tingad
If it becomes easy it can be led by a spider's thread
830. اللي تسوي كريت في القرض تلقى في جلدھا
ali tesawi kreat fi algard' talqa fi jilidah
What the goat does with *garad'* (a kind of tree) you will find it on her skin
831. البتریده لا تحاسبه لا تناسبه
Al biterido la teh'asboo la tenasboo
The one that you like, do not settle an account with him and do not relate to him by marriage
832. زي سحابه صيف
Zai sihabat s'eaf
Like summer clouds
833. تقول راميه جمل
Tagul ramiyhu jamal
You'd say a camel has thrown him off its back
834. إذا سكن الإنسان تحرك الفلك بنصيب غيره
Ida sakana al-insann tah'arak al-fulkk bi nas'eeb ghayrihi
If one subsides (calms down), his orbit moves with others' fate

Index

This index adopts Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases to facilitate for the reader an easy access to the proverbs. Key-words of each proverb have been assigned to one of the thousand terminal categories found in Roget's Thesaurus. The numbers refer to the proverbs in the text and in Appendix B.

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Notes

*Hadith** means “narrative” or “talk” With the definite article al it is used in the special sense meaning a’ Tradition of the Prophet Mohammed”.

The *Hijira**, “Migration”, refers to the Prophet Mohammed’s escape from Mecca to Medina in 622 C.E The Islamic calendar dates from that time.