

Metadata

Seku Abdullai **Will on marriage**

4 Dec 2008

DKB barrie

Pa Joe Peku, HS, TC

Sound file. Mp3 format sound

The recording took place around 10a in the barrie when we expected the air to be still but there was still a very slight and occasional breeze from the north (land side). The typical pattern is for there to be a land breeze in the early morning that gives way to an ocean breeze a little later in the day. (We always try to record somewhere in between.)

Tried to overcome the possible interference by erecting a barrier on the wind side of the barray, a large piece of cloth indeed prevented most wind from getting by

Pa Seku had travelled by his own means in a very small canoe from Kpangama to visit before our departure – he brought us a dozen or so oranges and ended up spending the night after telling us he would be heading back in the late afternoon – he said he came because he had some new stories, but we put off the recording until the next morning (after he indicated he was staying overnight) when the winds would be at a minimum

A persistent low-intensity noise – comparable to tape hiss – persisted throughout – we tried adjusting the settings on the microphones, moving the microphones, putting on the microphone wind socks, using different sources of power, and pretty much everything we could think of to get rid of the noise but all to no avail – sounded like the noise with the primitive outdoor recordings of British public television

There were loud frogs in the background and the clanging of Janette in the kitchen

Seku Abdullai was as animated as ever, gesticulating wildly to indicate deictic centers, pausing dramatically, varying loudness, and using the odd ideophone

He offered us three stories and something of a narration

1. War story
2. Ghost story
3. Jealous story
4. The old days – we had asked him to tell us something about the old days when he was a small boy (he is now 92), especially how things then were different from what he sees today – we had originally planned to have H and T ask him questions as prompts, but he needed little inducement to do some talking

He was pretty much exhausted after the story telling and soon retired to the hammock – he ended up leaving about 2pm that afternoon “sharp four o’clock”

SYNOPSIS

Pa Sheku Abdulai will on marriage is an account of how he got his first wife. It is a detail description of how some marriages are done in those days.

He told us how his mother saw this woman on her usual travels. She came back and inform her husband about it, and the need to get their son a wife since he is now matured.

She went back to propose to the lady who agreed after enquiring who the man might be. She gave her gifts and money to cement the relationship. So a date was set for the two families to gather after the initial contact with the girl’s family. Preparations were done and the two families met .

As usual, hand shakes and greetings followed, and the young lady was asked if she wants the man. Then they asked them to continue with the process since the woman has consented. There was plenty of food and wine.

Marrying a girl in those days had a lot of hurdles. One hurdle a man had to clear is the attempt from relatives to block your progress through faults. They will say oh our daughter is a thief or wet bed so you can't marry her etc, and you will say no problem. So you have to clear those impediments with money.

At the end of the marriage a hand shake was given for the lady to follow the husband at a later date. Food was prepared in both camps. When the wife was eventually taken to her husband, she was handed over to two old women in the town. They served as what we call "god dady" in krio. They represent the wife's parents there.

Tenago silagba

When you get matured. 0:03

Hana gole yen, cen kegele hun

If it were , but not now. 0:08

ya pamu ke mu, wole

when your father sees you, he said 0:10

(this is said in the context where a father admires his son growing up)

yegi mie lagba ya wo tuna

when my male son gets matured 0:13

ya wo tuna numa

I will find him a woman

kenga yamu wo lei kelen

perhaps your mother will be travelling 0:16

(mother will be on her usual travel)

si ʔ ke wama si ʔ lemala yapa mu
and happened to see a young woman 0: 19

si ʔ lemala yapa mu
she will tell the father

ʔ be hale, hana gole yapaamu mu ʔle bia, ʔ le bia oo.
The she said if your father's name is Bia 0:24

Bia, wama laa ʔ ʔ ʔ mugbato ʔ ʔ ʔ kenin
Bia, there is a young and fine lady at Mugbato 0:26

yana ke ʔ ʔ e yan yale numa yama ʔ ʔ ʔ o ʔ ʔ
But I did not say anything to her because I am a woman. 0:29

ya mu lapen lema 0: 34
I would tell first

ʔle guʔʔʔ
Is it true

ʔle ʔʔ
She said yes

Yi ʔ ʔ ʔ la yegimie yen
Let us go there for our son

Ma sen hale han kue
When we go there first. 0:41

ʔ hale gu ʔ ʔ
He said, Is that true.

Yapaam ʔ cen ʔ o.
The father did not go. 00:43

Yaamu wɔ kɔ ɛ
The mother will go

wɔ kɔna go
when she goes. 0:46

si wɔ weni wɔ, mballe hun
And she called her, lady come. 00:47

Hana gole wɔle bɔi
If she is Boi you said Boi

Si weini wɔ Bɔi oo
Then she called her Boi, oh

Pɛmu hun mballe Wɔle ɛɛ sɛgɛ 0: 52.
she said thank you for coming

ya yema mu vuɪi la yegi miɛ
I really want you for my son.00:59

Yegi mui halɔ?
Which of your son? 01:02

mu wɔn bɛ gbongi ilɛne
she told her the name

Jowɛ ɔ kɔ wɛ?
Is it Joe or Sooh? 1:04

Ya kɔ la balin ye
I accepted (the lady said)

wɔle yegi miɛ wɔ kɔn mu jɛn . wɔle ya kɔla balin

she said my son wants you. she answered yes 1:06.0

igbenan yo-o! cen kεgεε hu, igbenan, o. 1:08

in the old days, not just now, in the old days.

Emphasising the fact that these things take place only in the old days.

(Na di ol eg) krio, meaning old age

o igbenan- kεε

In the old days 1:11

si wɔ can haa, si wɔn bε koi Fee toon kεnga si pens ɔ sin mu hin

she took small amount about six pens or one cent after sitting awhile.

1:20

sin mu ii mbalε bii wɔ doma 1:22

talk to the young lady about love

doma = love

laa doma la ya mu hɔ wε la yegi miε o we.

I am proposing love to you for my son

hana go wɔ ɔn wɔ jεn.

If she loves him 1:27

Na hana go wama laa wɔ ɔn na ,wɔn bε mamda

If the young lady likes him,lady laughs. 1:31

Wɔ hun bε bii, wɔ kɔn wɔ

She came, received, and she went

wɔn kɔn na gon, feyε wε wɔ hu mat o-o

she will hide the money when she goes. 1:35.0

Wɔ ce hun gbongi kala o-o

she will not give it to her mother. 01:37

JP says 'kalaa' means mother

wɔ hu matin gbán

she will hide the money secretly (from her mother)

se-e-e tɛnga si lɔɔ yen. 01:39

Until after two days time

si numa wɔ lɔn bɛ pɛi kɔ, mbalɛ ya mui komu yan

Then the woman (mother) went back, young lady, I have come again

01:43

gbasa hu wɔ yasu, kɛn ga si feyɛ sim mu kɛnga sin tayen,

She gave her head tie, and money about one or two shillings. 01:46

gbasa = 'headtie'

mbalɛ, lani yana hɔɔwɛ,

lady , this is in connection to what I have told you. 01:48

landa ya hunaa.

That's why I came.

wɔ hali, ihi, kɛnga si wɔn bɛ wen nu lelan

She answered, Yes, perhaps she will call another person. 01:53

So mbalɛ, mbalɛ yana hɔ , yana ke wɔ yale yan cɔn wɔ jɛn layegi miɛ

So lady , I saw you and want you for my son , that is why I have come and given the kola nut. 01:57

kɛ landa ya huna, yana hɔ wɔla

that is why I have come to talk about it

alla gbɛn, kɛ hama kɛ wɔni yɛn-o

this is for quiet a long time, but I have given her anything yet. 02:00

landa hun landa ya huna
that is why I have come .02:02

wonɪ wɔ wɔn bɛ yii
he asked her if that is true?

wɔ hale ku lɔ wɔn kuɛ
he said is it true

ɛɛ hana ke wɔ le hun a haa
yes, I saw what did they do. 01:07

Na yema la
Do you want it?

wɔ le a ɛ, ya yema yan cen gbiga kitti
She said she wanted but could not decide 2:13
(the people she is going to meet)

si yan yi kɛn, yapam ni yaam lɔn bɛ pɛm,
I can't decide unless my father and mother do so

kɛi feyɛ sin tayan si wɔ kɛ wɔ Masaa, si wɔ kɛ wɔ, kɛ wɔ
then Masaa gave her one or two shillings, 2:19

wɔn bɛ, a-a-a, wɔ bina hun gbo
after she had received it 2:21

hu gbo ce wɔn yasun kiniŋ, si wɔ kɔ hun gbongi kala wɔ
The money was kept by her, until she went and showed her mother
kiniŋ 'all'

yem yoo numa wɛ wɔ hun kom yan

My mother, that woman came to me here. 2:27

wa le wa yema mu la kajoge
She said, she wants me for her son. 2:30

Feye hun wa kem ye hun yeni, gbasa hu yeni
Look at the headtie and money she gave me

kala won be hale
Then her mother said,

mam da yipa, mam da yipa!
Don't bring it here, don't bring it here. 02:36
'yipa' means bring

yeni hu wa ha lani
the reason why she did that 2:37

lani wa cen kai o le kai masina lan gbo
the woman was afraid , if her father did not know,

si won wa gbigbe kiti
they should not decide. 2:41

Nupoge sina la gbo ho ha wa so le ma ha wa singa
the father will molest her if he knows . 2:46

oo ee si nuwe we won be mun.
Then that person returned. 2:49.

wa kona gbo pei loko haa won be pei muun,
she came back after three days. 2:52

won be hun wa gon kon yon gi nupoge
she went straight to the man when she came. 2:55

Mbalɛ, ya ná hun komu yan, Mbalɛ, ya ná hun komu yan landa huni wei
young lady, I have come here to you, young lady, I have come here to you
2:59

wale uh
she said yes

la jɛnda la ya huna wɔ hale ihii.
I came for the problem. 2:58

Kɛɛ nupogɛ tei lan o
The man heard but, 03:00

kɛ wɔ cen hɔ jɛn o jɛn.
but he did not say any thing. 3:03

ya na hun yan mbalɛ yana hun yan
I came to you young lady, I came to you

ɛ-ɛ, ya na hun yan, mbalɛ, ya na hun yan paagɛ
Yes, I came here young lady, I came here yesterday. 3:06

yɛn ya hun la wɔn wama yɛn, ya na hɔle yema wɔ la yegi miɛ, si la?
I came here for this young girl, I said that I want her for my boy son
do you know about that?

ɔɔ-oo, yan bɛ yama si lan.
I don't know about it. 03:12

yan bɛ ya ma si lan wɛ.
No, I don't know any thing about it.

kεε wɔn bε wein kala wɔ wama yen kala wɔ.

Then she called her mother.the young lady's mother. 03:16

Hεε numa yen wɔ na hun komu yan

This woman came to you, she said

wɔle wɔ na ke likenin wahin yen, la kajogε.

she had seen a beautiful lady (your daughter) for her son. 03:25

Wɔ hale wɔ na hun yan lawɔn, yan wani yana ke wɔ vui yen kε yama si lan
wε hu laa .

I saw her came but I don't know anything about that. 3:28

ɔ wε hu, la ε yana teila

is that true, 03:30

εε, yana teila

eh, I heard about it

wɔ nake wɔ yen

did she give her anything? 03:31

O yale wɔna ke

Oh yes I saw her

a le wana ke wamiε yen ni yɔgam fee ni gbassa kε ya si lan gbi. 3:37

I saw my daughter bring money and head tie to me but I don't any
thing about it.

Yan bε yama bεn hun yoo cen tatεn gɔ humu biyε wamui wε

I did not touched it because she is your daughter. 3:41

Hum muwɔ gbiga kittiε

You are to pass decison on your daughter. 3:43.0

Did you know him at all. she said yes

Mu wɔ yema, wɔle ɛɛ, 4:10:0
He said he wants you, she said yes.

Ha wɔn bɛ biya nuwɛ wɔ yipɛ feyɛ. 4:12
They answered the woman who brought the money

Wɔwɔn bɛ mɔwɔn wɔ gbo mɔgan ihoi yɛ ba kujɛ api. 4:16
she went back feeling cold on her body.
(speaker means that the woman was quite happy as evident in the following line he said in english)

‘Back with happy’

wɔ kɔn yɛ ɔɔ wɔ kɔla lema 4:20
she went to tell

Kapogɛ ɛɛ mba yegi hiyɛ wɛ hɔle. 4:23:0
Her man, (the husband) about their son’s woman

yɔn gu akwɛ o kɛ kasicen hubatogɛ oo. 4:26:0
that she thank God (that she went there

waama laa wɔ ya ke yɛ. 4:28:0
The young lady that I have seen

kaala wɔ vui, kai wɔ vui lawɔ la pɔina mujan. 4:31:0
Even mother felt very happy about the issue

Ha go can loɔɔ kpɛɛ si ha tumapɛ fei ha gon tuna feyɛ lela yenɪ fee yɛ hu
han kui.
We will go and sit for a long time looking for money, this time the money
is plenty.

(they need to work hard to get the money needed for the lady)

Kε masein mawε fee yε nage gbo toon. 4:40:0

but first money is small for the marriage programme

He is saying that the money needed for marriage programmes in the old days was pretty small as compared to now.

Tεnga ha gbo yipi sɔngɔ male ta sin waan 4:42:3

Perhaps they will only bring ten shillings

Ni muima tεnga bosi gu mu. 4:44:0

Sometimes with fresh palm wine about a gourd.

Siha hun siha han, sigi wɔn pia suwε . 4:51:0

Then they will come and tie rope on her hand. (to engage her)
'sek' also to tie.

wɔn pia suwε kpu-u-u. 4:54:0

they will give shake hand right round

ii yen hu kɔi ga mui? 4:57:0

what brought you here? Why do you give shake hands.

cen jεnda lelan hu wa, wa yana ke likεnin yan. 5:00:0

Nothing other than I have found a beautiful thing (lady) with you

εεε le ya yegimiε εε si wɔn bε wein. 5:04:0

Eh, it is for my son, that we have gathered here

Nupogε wɔ wɔn bε wein aa kawε ha digini. 5:07

It is the man (husband to be) who has called the family

ɔ wεε ye cani anuma yen wɔ hunla. 5:11:0

Explain what she has come for.

Si haa yi ye wɔ, wɔ hu laa
They asked is that so

wɔle ɛɛ
she said yes

han bɛ wein wama laa ni yi ke numa yen wɔ huni kofi yan la hun hu
laa.5:17.2
then they called the young young lady, we saw the woman came, how is it?

wɔle ɛɛ, yana ke wɔ ee
yes I saw him

Kɛ labɛ ile la nya
Even now how is it?

cɔn wɔ la jɛn wɔ ha le ɛɛ i yema wɔ le ɛɛ. 5:25
Do you want him or love him. She said yes

Si wamala kenya wɔ wɔnbɛ hɔ yan ya cen yom mun o
Then the lady's uncle said he is not going to agree. 05:29

Yan cen yomun o
I did not agree. 05:32

Wamiɛ wɔnama ken madum
The daughter lack respect
Madum=disrespect

Le yagon hɔwɛ
That is what I am saying. 05:35

Feyɛ hun wɔ yahan
money should come. 05:37

The relatives of the lady will come up with various faults to get money from the other party. One way the speaker mentioned was saying that the lady is disrespectful. Others will say our daughter steals, can wet bed etc.

Nuwe we wɔn be kɔn gbale yɔn gboge kɔilen
People went through the house to the back. 05:40

Leha ke nu wɔwe feye haa ɲipɛwɔ
She gives money to one person to come and beg
ɲipɛwɔ =beg

Hanu wɔwe feye yen wɔn wɔ yɔgi i kɔn
Give the money to this person he is right. 05:45

Soo kɛnga nuwe we wɔn be yomun
Probably he will agree. 05:48

Nge a yomun ni
Yes he will agree

Ha lanbe lema wama wɔle
Then they said to the lady

Ha lema nupoge ni numa yen kajoge hi ye
Did you tell man woman about our son. 05:55

wɔle ɛɛ
they said yes

yi kɔla balin ye ale la yeni, yi lagon lema yani gbɛɛ
we have accepted but as it is we have to tell all the family.06:00

han gbon gɔ wɔ lɔgɔ, so lɔgɔyen , hanagon yi hun yi gbun
it will be on a time we will all gather. 06:05

wɔn bɛ kɔn siwɔ kɔla pɛlem
then she went and say to the others. 06:07

masen, masen, kɛgɛ lɔ huni
that is those days not now.06:09

le wɔ kɔn yɛ le wɔ huni, wɔ gon yipi ma yegipogɛ
when she went she will come back with the man. 06:14

wɔ yema numa wɛ kɛ pogi vui, kɛnga a kɔn a ha ɔ hɔn
they(parents)want the woman,man and three or four people .06:20

si han digini hani gbɛɛ si a digini
they will gather then we will also gather

a hun nago pɛi
when they come back again. 06:24

anina a hun ye
the people came

si han bɛ len han gbɛɛ
then they put the word before them. 06:29

so wɔn bɛ yi lalan yani
they asked what is here (how are people doing). 06:31

si hanbɛ kini ma yigima yɛn o yɛn
there is hunger and other things (other social problems)

yɛn o yɛn kasi cen hobatogɛ
every thing but thanks to God
despite the hunger and others we say thanks to God

Le gbomi yeni

That we met here. 06:37

Gbom =meet

Mun bε pɛi, han bε pɛi wɔn pia la pia gusu goi

Then they requested for hand shake. 06:40

yɔngi naleyε tɛnga waa hun

you left about ten . 06:43

mu bε wɔ pia suwε wε kinin

then you would have made a shake hand for all.

I ken wεwε i piasuwε wɔ han wε yeni.

We have seen all the shake hands you have made. 06:47

Hawε la halɔn?

It is for who?

wɔ hale la waima yen

she said it is for this young girl

mbalε wɔ hun la ya lemu

young girl I refer the matter to you. 06:51

Le wɔ hanle wɔ yema mu, hun la?

They said they want you, how is it?

So jɛnda kitti la gon yε o

So that is a short matter now. 06:58

Ha wɔn bε pɛi sigi, gu bangi wɔn pia.

Then they tied a rope on hand. 07:01

(this is the traditional way of engaging a girl)

I senta hun fe

Big money comes

Si a gbigε ɔɔ

They cut it (the rope). 07:07

Si han bε bi litεmba

They told her about love

Si agbεna bε habi hapε litεmba

They told the parents that they love them.07:11

Lande la lanε laleyε lɔn kinin

There is something left behind. 07:15

Hana cole mende mui a nui hale mboya

In mende they call it 'mboya' offer. 07:20

ɔɔn gi nalelε tεngima pɔn mu

where you left, something like one pound. 07:23

(you still have like one pound more left)

humu kɔile, mula bε pε cui bon

those of you who have gone to hang heads . 07 :30

kɔnε, kuwɔn humu ɔɔgi guwɔn

please do the right thing 07:32

ya oo agbεnan

please my people.

Hakem ansa hee,

Give me answer

ya biε janga talan

I have the responsibility (I m going to take care). 07:35

La ni kɔla balinɛ
That was why we went to go and hang heads

Fe hin mu pɛwɔhin kɛnga sinta raa
The money is left will be like three shillings

Si han bɛ yomun
Then they agreed or answered. 07:40

Mu bɛ pɛ wɔn fe, lilagon yeni
Then you will you will have to pay another money here

Numa yen liya hun la wɔɔni
This woman that I am coming for. 07:45

Han gbongi hin nu, wɔ cen yin tayen
You should show us a go between (mediator). 07:47
There is always what we call a ‘sababu’ a go- between, in the event of
disputes between husband and wife, such a person or persons mediate (s)

Yegipogɛ ni numa
Man and woman

Yi lan bɛ leya agbeni
Then we refer the matter to the parents

Han bɛ han bɛ kɔ cugbon
They also went to hang heads. 07:52

Hale yegipogɛ wɔle komni guɛ
The father is the father- in – law

Wamala wɔle kalajɛn wɛ
The woman is the mother-in-law. 07:57

Muhan can hapiasu muhan bε kεfe
You will join hands with them and give the money

Kumba ni kota
Clothes and lappa (a piece of cloth). 08:01

Mun bε wɔ fesant
Then you will pay plenty money

Han bε hɔ hale yi kɔla balin
Then they say we agree. 08:06

Lela bon yeni yipi fesant ε
As it is now, you should bring a lot of money. 08:10

Oo han bε gɔ cuagbon
Oh they went to hang heads again

Hanago yɔgo hu sinna go ya kɔla balin kinin
They will only agree when you give the remaining money. 08:16

Le a pεm kɔn cugbon kε ha kεm lɔgɔ
we are going to hang heads but you have to give me time

lɔgɔ sina kε lani gbi yen
it is a long time but any how.08:21.

numa wɔ yi hun ceyε
the woman will come ahead

mupe wɔn fe
you will pay (money to collect the woman). 08:25

han bε gu wɔn kɔi
they said it is true

ε numa yikε mu lɔgɔ raa kɔ we
the woman will come after three days. 08:32

wɔ yema nago kɔn, anina haan wɔ yɔyε
people will take or come with her when she is ready

kɔina kɔniε nuwɔ wɔ yɔyε
somebody will take her when she is ready

si han ya ha masɔn ka, yɔgon ma
you will cook a lot of rice and go with it. 08:36

yɔ pεgu ha kɔniε
where you are going

ha gbɔm han bε ha ya han ha masɔm han cei hiyε bεi
you will also meet them cooked their food before you. 08:40

We kinin hunla ha
That is all
mui kεnago nuwε
they will take the woman. 08:44

lehan kɔpεyε hanbε pεn wɔn peya su
they will request for something when they go. 08:49

kinin yɔngi ha yɔgiwε ha pɔε wε
the town where they are taking her. 08:51

so han bε yi kε numa wɔ yipε
they will ask for a woman

I yema le nugben
We want an old woman. 08:55

wɔn wɔ numa yen wɔyi hin pia asu
the woman we will hand over the lady to. 08:57

le han gbale han
for those in the house

si haa gbo ho hin
they show them all. 09:00

so a gbonge nago gbo ha pe wɔn piasu
you will give some money during handing over. 09:03

kenga si mu ɔ sinta tayen
probably one or two shillings. 09:05

numa yen wɔ yi mu kɛɛ
this is the woman we are giving you

muugin yin ceyan
we returned, because we can't stay. 09:10
humulayi, humulayan la yen
you are going to be our representative

wɔn wɔ yi yipe kinin
that's all we brought. 09:14

ce wɔ ken koogo layin o we
please look after her .09:17

so la yin we hale kuwɔn kue
that will be true, they said. 09:20

si haye pɛ sɛm
then we all dispatched

wɛ kini hunla we wɛ
that is all. 09:25