Paul Newman. *A Hausa–English Dictionary.* 2007, x + 243 pp. ISBN 978-0-300-12246-6. New Haven/London: Yale University Press. Price: £40.

Hausa (Chadic/Afroasiatic) is a major world language, spoken by more than 40 million people who are mostly found in northern Nigeria and the Republic of Niger. A sizeable number reside in other parts of Nigeria and the major cities of West Africa (Accra, Kumasi, Douala, Cotonou) and beyond. The history of its documentation dates back more than 150 years, with the most comprehensive grammars of any African language (see Wolff 1993, Jaggar 2001, for example). In the context of dictionary making, the language has also been the subject of lexicographic interest for more than a century, ranging from the pioneering work of Robinson (1899) to the large and accurate dictionary by Bargery (1934). Hausa has also had the benefit of more than a dozen other dictionaries, including Abraham (1962), Newman and Newman (1977), Mijinguini (1987), Newman (1990), Caron and Amfani (1997), Awde (1996) and more recently CNHN (2006). All these efforts have been acknowledged by the author in his introductory remarks. And it is against this comprehensive treatment of Hausa lexicography that the proper place of Newman's *A Hausa–English Dictionary* needs to be examined.

The aim of *A Hausa–English Dictionary* as spelt out in the introductory remarks (p. ix) is to serve as a counterpart to R.M. Newman's excellent *An English–Hausa Dictionary*, with the target group being 'language learners and practical users', particularly those with 'familiarity and grasp of the fundamentals of Hausa grammar'. In the practical user group, it must be assumed, are not only 'Hausa-language scholars and students', as the blurb points out, but also native Hausa speakers, particularly speakers of non-standard varieties. It can even be argued that anyone interested in African language documentation and description will benefit from the concise grammatical sketch provided in the introduction (pp. ix-xxii) as well as in the appendices (pp. 237-243). These 'notes', it should be pointed out, are the outcome of a lifelong passion for and study of Hausa language and linguistics, which had earlier seen the appearance of *The Hausa Language: An Encyclopedic Reference Grammar* (Newman 2000).

A Hausa–English Dictionary is based on a highly systematized lexical database of some 12 000 head entries, encompassing not only 'new … terminology … of the modern world', but also a unique and unparalleled interest in the contextual use of these entries in idiomatic, figurative and specialized usage. I will say more on these later. Although the major Hausa-speaking assistants who participated in the project came from the major Hausa dialect areas (Kano, Sokoto and Niger), the entries themselves are overwhelmingly based on (standard) Kano Hausa, the written variety encountered as every-day Hausa. Taken together, these elements help to make this work an outstanding contribution to Hausa scholarship, even by Paul Newman's exacting standards.

In addition to its excellent typeface, with its bold head entries and column-based presentation, a number of useful innovations are noticed. The introduc-

tion consists of more than ten pages of detailed explanation of the nature and description of the dictionary entries. These are not just stylistic issues related to alphabetization and the transcription system (p. x), but also substantial information concerning the nature of the language. Thus, plurality (p. xiv, par. 5.1.3) is dealt with not only as a specific (dictionary) issue, such as how plural nouns are coded (e.g. *jàakii* 'donkey', m. (f. -aa) ⟨-una⟩), but also as an aspect of the language system, analyzing how Hausa plurals and their varying forms are formed as a step-by-step process. The same detailed and analytical description is also evident from such Hausa peculiarities as verbal nouns and the grade system. Thus, even in these introductory pages, Newman exhibits his 'facts count' formula on how to practise linguistics as a science (see Newman 1991, Newman 2000a and Newman 2007).

Another very useful indicator is the introduction of additional lexicographic labels to accompany the standard abbreviations and symbols table. Thus, the labels are employed to highlight context of use, cultural nuances and appropriateness. Labels such as erudite (e.g. *alfyàn* the number '2 000'), polite (e.g. *nàjasàa* 'excrement'), pejorative (e.g. *ìnyaamuri* 'Igbo') and vulgar (e.g. *gatòo* 'vagina') are not ordinarily stressed in African language lexicography, and this must be taken as signalling the coming of age of dictionary writing in these languages. Hausa society, with its stress on 'kunyàa' (embarrassment, shame, modesty, propriety) in public discourse, employs a large vocabulary of euphemisms, often Arabic-based, to speak about sex and related bodily functions, so it is useful that these are documented (and there are many more in this dictionary!), but labelled to indicate the degree of sensitivity towards their usage. (Curiously, the most recent monolingual *Kamusun Hausa* (CNHN 2006) dictionary from the Centre for the Study of Nigerian Languages [CSNL] exhibits no such objections even to some of the most taboo words in Hausa, e.g. *tseelee* 'cunt' [not in my Word 2004 for Mac English dictionary and thesaurus, nor in *A Hausa–English Dictionary*!].)

Similarly, dialectal variants, such as *hànwaawàa* = *hàwainìyaa* 'chameleon', *jìiɗa* = *sàuka* 'descend, come down' and alternative usages, such as *'hakkìi* = *haƙ-ƙîi* 'right, entitlement', *bàree* = *bàllee* 'let alone', *fùròofeesàa* = *fàrfeesàa* 'professor', and *wàatòo* = *wàatàu* 'in other words, that is to say', are indicated, since the fairly homogenous nature of Hausa means that there is a fine line to be drawn between standard (written) Hausa and its dialectal variants in the core Hausa-speaking north-west of Nigeria (but see further comments below). One of the ways in which these variations manifest themselves in everyday Hausa is in the metaphorical extensions of core meanings, an area ably treated in *A Hausa–English Dictionary*. Two examples will show how Newman handles these descriptions.

The verb CI is defined as 'eat' (pp. 33-35), followed by its standard exemplification in *wutaa taa ci rùmfaa* 'fire consumed the shed'. Then follows a long list of more than fourteen derivative (cognitive/figurative/idiomatic) meanings, such as (abrade) *igiyàa taa ci ƙafàr àkuyàa* 'the rope burned the goat's leg';

(win, overcome) *ci nasaràa* 'be victorious', *ci jarràbâwaa* 'pass an examination'; (enjoy, experience) *ci kàasuwaa* 'have a successful day at the market', *ci duuniyàa* 'enjoy life'; (idiom) *ci àmaanàa* 'breach trust'. Related compound forms are also entered independently, as they occur, e.g. *cî-baaya* 'regression', *cî-gàba* 'progress', *cîn-hancìi* 'bribery', *cìi-raani* 'migrant labour' (see Jaggar and Buba 2007).

Similarly, the highly productive *ɗan* diminutive modifier has over sixty independent entries (pp. 50-52). The entries describe its various adjectival functions, including familiar usages such as *ɗan-adàm* 'human' (cf. *haƙkîn-ɗan-adàm* 'human rights' (p. 84)), *ɗan-giyàa* 'drunkard', also its journalistic appropriation, as in *ɗan-gudùn-hijiraa* 'refugee', *ɗan-taakaraa* 'candidate', *ɗan-tà-kifèe* 'risk-taker', as well as the relatively more recent (post-R.M. Newman 1990) *ɗan-àcaaɗàa* 'motorcycle taxi driver', *ɗan-à-moorèe* 'vandal' (but not the much older *ɗan-à-waarèe* 'secessionist' usage) (see McIntyre and Meyer-Bahlburg 1991).

These entries are a measure of the breadth and depth of *A Hausa–English Dictionary*, making it unassailably 'the dictionary of choice for Hausa-language scholars', as William R. Leben of Stanford University correctly underscores in his comment on the back cover. They also show the high level of accuracy in Newman's tone and vowel length transcription, hence underscoring the essential role of tone and vowel length in extracting pragmatic information from Hausa dictionary entries.

Now it is a fact that these detailed descriptions may not be useful or even necessary for all languages. It is possible, for example, that for the less well-documented languages of the world, basic lexical entries with a short and concise meaning are enough, but for Hausa, with its over 40 million first and second language speakers and excellent grammars and dictionaries, this dictionary has succeeded in achieving the right balance between those learners interested in basic definitions and the academic and teaching communities whose focus is much more technical. In a recent web posting, a seasoned Hausaist sought help on how to translate 'choices/options/elections' into Hausa, since Newman has (correctly) pointed out in his dictionary that *zàaɓèe* is commonly used generically. It is for the benefit of professionals such as these that a detailed and extended explanation is desirable. Extended meanings and erudite usage, as exemplified in *A Hausa–English Dictionary,* will ensure that a greater democratization of knowledge continues to be paramount in the minds of lexicographers and (language) policy makers. It is instructive, however, that a number of words labelled as erudite by the compiler turned out to be unfamiliar to many of my bilingual university linguistics undergraduates (see below). It may be imagined that instead of using these words in speaking about and describing technical information, students will resort to English equivalents leading to the common phenomenon of Hausa-language code-mixing, popularly known as *Ingausa* i.e. English-Hausa (see Madaki 1983).

In this respect, the compiler deserves commendation for his large inventory of modern and modernized Hausa words currently making their impact within modern Hausa society. Localized terms such as *bùrookàa* 'Pidgin Eng-

lish', *goo-sùlô* 'traffic jam', *màjooratèe* '[political] majority', *ògaa* 'boss, chief executive officer', *cîf-joojì* 'chief judge of a high court', *galàn* 'pot hole; gallon', not to forget local terms such as *Bùhàariyyàa* 'austerity period' (during Gen. Buhari's military regime in the 1980s), *'yar-Gùsau* '1940s famine, feeling hungry', *gidan-gàba* 'front seat of car' and *gidan-baaya* 'back seat of car' (but not *tà-zarcèe* 'self-succession at all cost') as well as transitional words such as *eejèn* 'agent', *têf* 'tape recorder, measurement tape', *daftàn* 'Dr.' (= Ph.D.), *naasàrêe* 'nursery', *tîi* 'tea', and *ii-mèl* 'e-mail' (but not *intàneetì* 'internet', *tùurîs* 'imported second hand car', *ànkôo* 'uniformed wedding party dressing', or *tiibìi* 'TV') have been documented, as are the extended meanings of common terms, such as *ɗanyee* 'intern/fresh', *ɗan-kooree* 'hustler', and *ɗan-baarikìi* 'city slicker'.

Ironically, aspects of its strength may turn out to be a weakness in other respects. Erudite terminology forms a large class of the vocabulary in this dictionary. This is essential for anyone seeking to localize the specialized education, health, policy and communications register. As I remarked earlier, this helps to avoid the choice of unassimilated English loanwords, some of which may never become localized, e.g. 'mobile' (but see *hansìt* 'handset' and *sàluulaa* 'cellular'). The problem with this class of specialized terms, however, is that a number of native speakers do not seem to be familiar with them, let alone use them. The following is an example from a list of randomly extracted vocabulary (in A–C), that neither I nor my final year (Hausa) linguistics students recognized initially: *àlàtuurèe* 'protest', *àlayyàdii* 'oil from palm kernel', *àlgàràagîs* 'type of small ring-shaped sweet bread, *àlhiinii* 'sad thoughts, meditation', *akumàarii* 'pad for pack animal', *àzàlzalàa* 'pestering', *azarɓaaɓii* 'overeagerness', *bàɗooɗaraa* 'slovenly woman with big buttocks', *baagarwaa* 'mere show; matter of unimportance', *câssaa* 'bowleggedness', *ceeɗàa* 'vomiting'. Nor are some of these items either in the most recent monolingual *Kamusun Hausa* (CNHN 2006) (e.g. *àlàtuurèe, àzàlzalàa*), or in Bergery's classic *Hausa–English Dictionary* (1934) (e.g. *azarɓaaɓii, bàɗooɗaraa*). Many of these obscure forms are of Arabic origin, and have been a major source of (specialized) Hausa loanwords. Thus, it is not so much a matter that words in this category are undocumented, but that they are no longer in current usage, perhaps because of their association with an older material culture. It could also be caused by the fact that much of the unfamiliar terminology originate from the dictionary's heavy reliance on a 'standard' Kano dialect database. I say 'standard', because the number of these unfamiliar terms in *A Hausa–English Dictionary* leads me to the conclusion that the colloquial *Kananci* dialect continues to be (erroneously?) equated with standard (written) Hausa in dictionaries and grammars. Note however that the author has acknowledged the Kano connection of the database from the outset. Nor should this observation invalidate the comprehensive array of dialectal (*d.v.*), alternative and colloquial variants in this dictionary.

During the eight months of an intensive use of *A Hausa–English Dictionary* in an advanced Hausa class, there have only been a few occasions where my students and I have failed to find forms we came across during the course of

our classes (see below). Even vocatives such as *hêe!* 'hey you!, pay attention!' *hoohòo!* 'what a pity!, what bad luck!', *kayya!* 'expresses doubt', and female-specifics, such as *àhâyyee!* 'expression of pleasant joking between women', *ayyururui!* 'the sound of shrilling … esp. at a wedding', *làalee!* 'welcome!', and *bàmbu* 'invitation or command to a baby for it to be carried on the mother's back' have been presented. On many occasions, my students and I were impressed by the large number of *Sakkwatanci* (and other dialect forms) that we have found in the dictionary, and perhaps more importantly for me, some have no dialectal (*d.v.*) labelling (see *bùƙwii* 'bare', for example). Also, typographical errors are so few that only the most painstaking detective work could uncover **attakaa* (*àtakkàa* 'energy'), **bàbambaɗee* (*bàbambaaɗee* 'professional cadger'), **islaamà* (*ìslaamà* 'islamic') and **bil-hakkì* (*bìl-haƙƙî* 'seriously, in earnest').

On the plus side, too, it needs to be noted that the relatively recent (re)implementation of the *Shari'a* system in many parts of the core Hausa-speaking northern Nigeria is increasingly helping to popularize and reintroduce this classical Arabic-based terminology. This in turn has had a beneficial impact on the growth of mainly Hausa internet forums, such as *Finafinan Hausa* (Hausa Films Discussion Forum) and *Marubuta* (Hausa Writings Forum) where debates about the impact of *Shari'a* on Hausa popular culture continue to boost the range of classical vocabulary available to participants. Thus, Newman's *A Hausa–English Dictionary* may be anticipating a new era of significant expansion of the language, not so much from the usual (English) source, but from the dormant (*and* dominant) Islamic discourses of today's northern Nigeria.

The other source of this expansion must be the explosive growth in new Hausa writing, commonly termed *soyayya* (love) novels, which have engendered increasing literacy, especially among monolingual Hausa women, who constitute both the majority of the writers as well as the readers of this genre (see Furniss 1996, Furniss, Buba and Burgess 2004).

There then remain a small number of words whose figurative meanings have not been documented. The verb *caaɓaa* 'make slushy or splotchy', for example, is more commonly used for 'blunders' than the literal meaning given. (See also *hurùmii* 'land … with restricted use' (to the exclusion of its judicial usage of 'court jurisdiction').) Similarly, commonly used words such as reduplicated *gùrgùje* 'hurried', *daaƙîlee* 'dimmed', *maslahàa* 'truce', *gudàawaa* 'diarrhea' and *tàataccee* 'infamous, notorious' are rare omissions in this otherwise comprehensive work. In other cases, the meanings of tonally-distinguished minimal pairs are confused, as in *halii* 'character', *haalii* 'opportunity, chance', and *haalìi* 'means', although in almost all other respects *A Hausa–English Dictionary* is an excellent source of tone discrimination for Hausa students and teachers alike, using the large inventory of such minimal pairs (see *baba*, for example, with the following inventory: *bàaba* 'father', *baabà* 'mother', *baabàa* 'barber', *baabaa* 'indigo tree' and *bàabaa* 'eunuch'!).

In other words, nothing in this review should detract from the commendable presentation in *A Hausa–English Dictionary*. Its accurate tone and vowel-

length transcriptions, its large modern, colloquial and ideophonic inventory, coupled with an acute sensitivity to the appropriate meanings of words would surely make it an example of how dictionaries should be compiled. As the Hausa saying goes: *yàbon gwànii yaa zama doolè* 'praising the expert is a duty'. I have no hesitation in recommending *A Hausa–English Dictionary* by Paul Newman (Malam Sabo (lit. 'New Man'!) as he is popularly known in the Hausa world).

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