

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

This dictionary has been compiled as part of the programme of developing the written language of the Lelna people of Zuru Emirate in Northern Nigeria. Young and old C'Lela speakers learning to write their language will benefit from a standardised spelling system as well as cross-references between the various dialects. Hausa and English speakers will find it particularly useful for learning the meanings and functions of many C'Lela words, and thus increasing their knowledge and understanding of C'Lela.

While care has been taken to follow internationally-recognised guidelines, C'Lela has several features which are either unique, or not common to Hausa and English. For example, C'Lela uses class-markers – a feature not found in either English or Hausa. In these instances we have aimed for simplicity in preference to technical precision and, where possible, example sentences have been provided to show how the word can change depending on its position in the sentence. English speakers in particular should beware of being too influenced by English rules of grammar when reading this dictionary; parts of speech are intended as a guide rather than a direct correlation to English parts of speech.

In addition to the main dictionary, there are finder lists which help an English or Hausa speaker find an appropriate C'Lela word quickly and easily. Appendices include important reference information such as C'Lela pronouns, names, numbers and the calendar. This book combining three languages in one is more than an ordinary dictionary; it is called “*K'Batksq*” which means “an opening up and spreading out”, which is what it does for the C'Lela language and the rich culture of the Lelna people. It is valuable for the teaching of C'Lela and literacy in primary and secondary schools and for reference use by adults.

Many people have helped bring this work to completion. I would like to acknowledge the help and support of Mr Stephen and Sonia Dettweiler in particular. Without them this dream could not have become a reality. I also want to thank my Principal A. Mikailu Mohammed and my school for allowing me to take time off to meet with officials in search of information. Mr Matthew Dasa and Alhaji Mohammed Danbare, the Z.I.E. of Zuru also showed great interest in the project and helped with much encouragement and practical support to see it succeed. Likewise Mr Aaron Dazi (J.P.) has been very encouraging and has done much to publicise the C'Lela language development work even outside of Nigeria. The district heads of Dabai and Senci were very helpful in making available to us many traditional items to help with their description and illustration. The Emir of Zuru has been very encouraging and supportive regarding the development, funding and publicising of the dictionary. Renée Wenger drew many excellent illustrations and Matthew Earwicker and David Rowbory also helped with much of the data entry, organisation and printing of the dictionary.

As with all first editions, there will be errors, some of fact and some of type-setting. Corrections, improvements or additions for future editions are especially welcome at this stage. Correspondence can be passed through the Lelna Language Development Office on Ahmadu Bello Way in central Zuru.

B. D. R.

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