

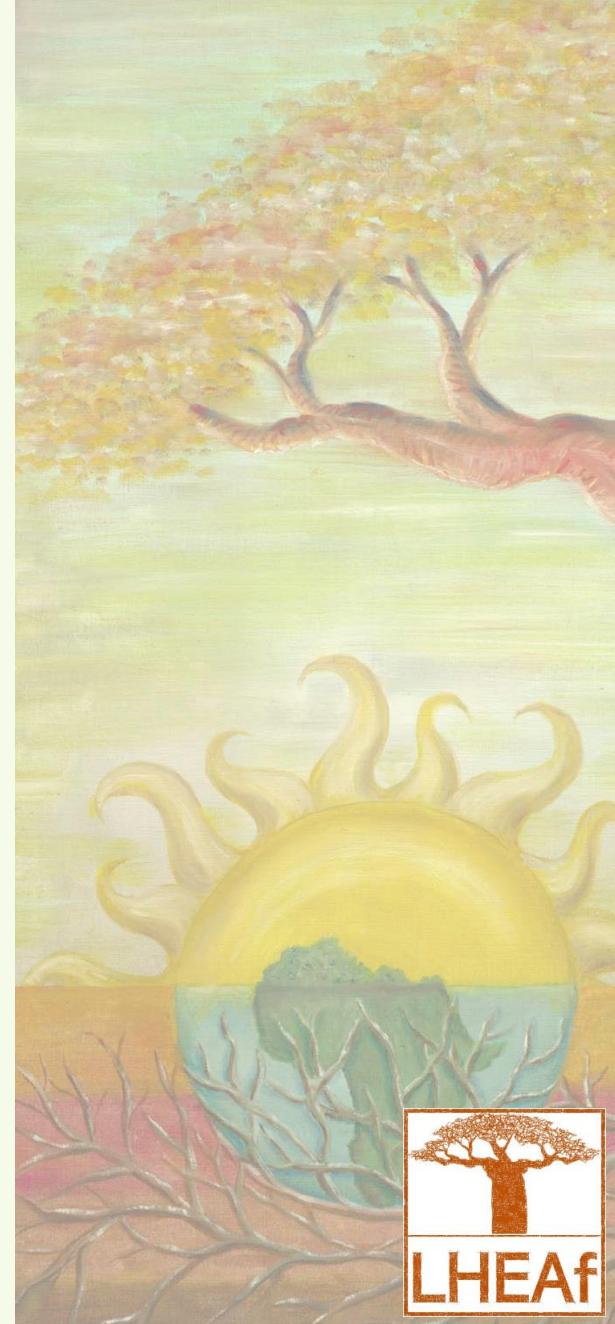
# Cushitic in the mountains of Taita, Pare, Kilimanjaro from loan word evidence

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# Content

- Introduction
- Non-Bantu in Taita-Bantu
- In Kilimanjaro Bantu
- In Pare
- Challenges and Prospects



# Introduction

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YAAKU  
Lake Natron

Lake Eyasi

IRAQW

Lake Manyara

MBUGWE

Mbulu

GORWAA

TANZANIA

Arusha

MAASAI

Kilimanjaro  
Lake Jipe  
N. Pare Mts  
Same  
Makanya  
Vudee  
Gonga  
Mt. Lasalas  
Usambaras  
Shume River Run  
Lushoto  
Korogwe  
Handeri  
Morogoro  
Nguu Hills  
Unguja (Zanzibar)

Taveta

Taita Hills  
DAVIDA  
SAGHALA  
Kasigau  
DAVIDA

KENYA

DAHALO

Mombasa

SEGEJU

Tanga

Pember I.

Pangani

MA'Á/MBUGU

Indian Ocean

● town

AASÁX languages

0 50 100 miles  
0 50 100 km

Lake Sulunga



LHEAf

# Earlier proposals

Taita hills: Ehret and Nurse (1981): Taita Cushitic A and B on basis of loans

Kilimanjaro: Nurse (1979) substantial borrowings from Cushitic and others

Pare: Ma'á as a result of shift from a Cushitic language to Pare

Re-assessment after new reconstruction of WR South Cushitic, reconstruction of Nilotic, new analysis of mixed Ma'á, a lot more lexical data, a fresh critical look



# LHEAf views on South Cushitic

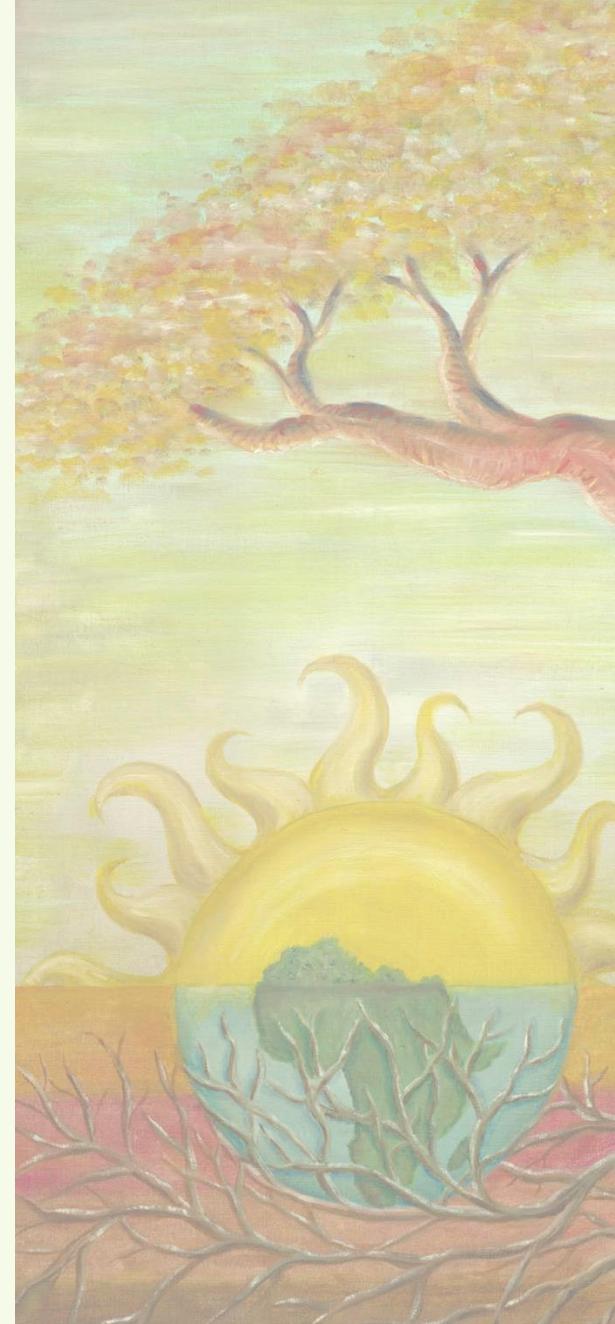
South Cushitic is a primary branch of Cushitic

Oromo influence on “proto-West-Rift”: SC in SW Ethiopia/NW Kenya

Extensive contact “proto-West-Rift”: SC in Cherang’any hills in Kenya

Taita-Cushitic + Kilimanjaro-Cushitic + Pare-Cushitic (=pre-Ma’á) sister of West-Rift

Qwadza and Aasa not closely related. Qwadza is West-Rift. Aasa?



# TAITA

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# Historical background

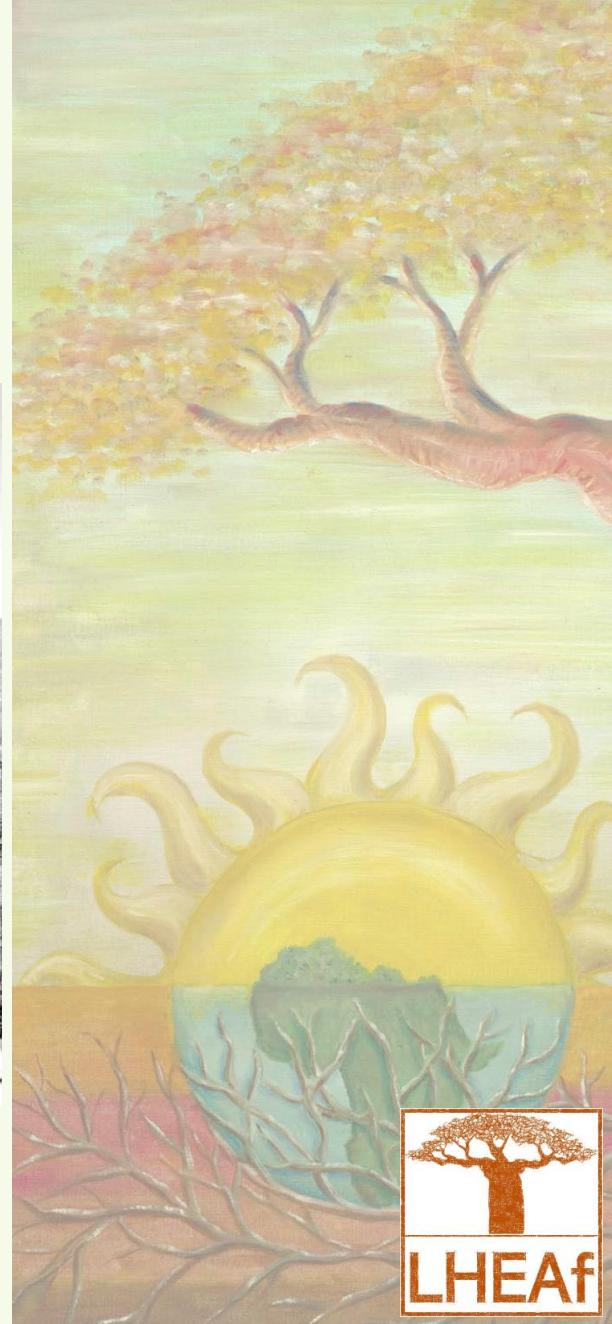
There is historical evidence for two groups of earlier occupants of Taita: The Wasi, hunters and gatherers, and the Bisha, agricultural-pastoralists, Merrit (1975) and Liszka (1974).

The large rock burial cairns are associated with the Bisha by the current inhabitants.

Kasigau hillslope contained a complex maze of terraced fields (Kusimba 2014)

Presumably a long period of contact involving bilingualism and language shift

substantial contact with the coast (Kusimba 2018)



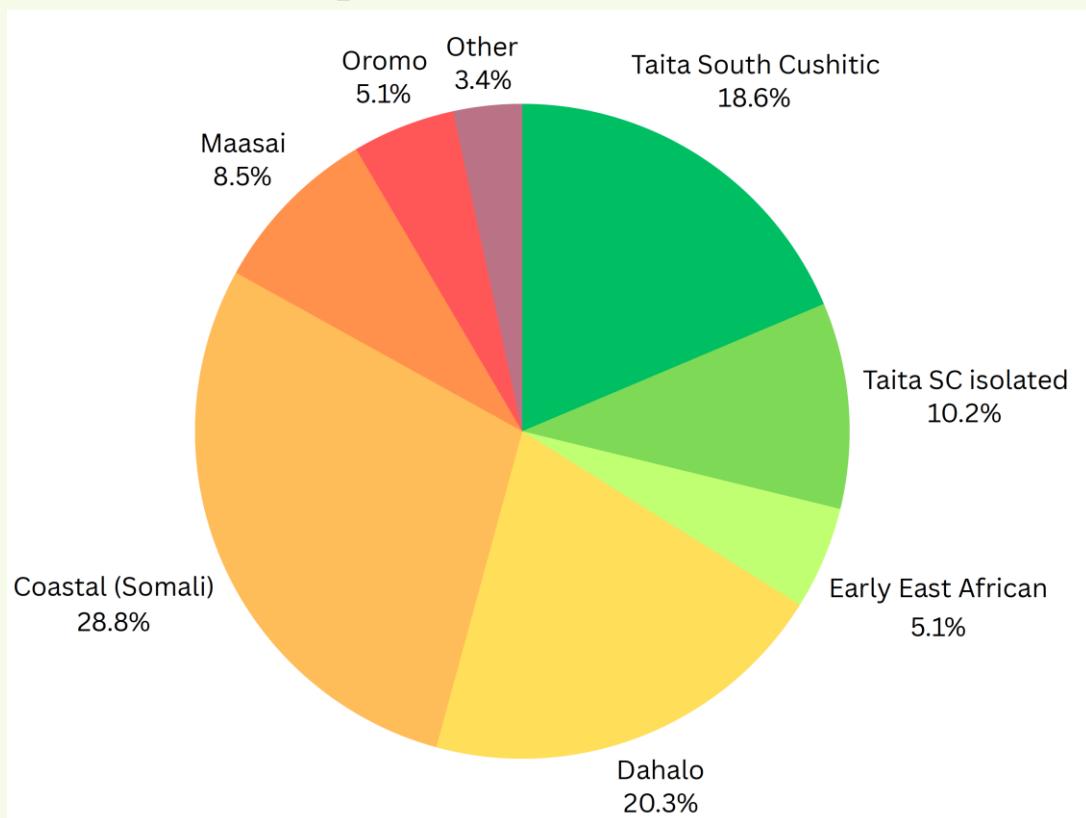
**LHEAf**

# Saghala loan adaptations

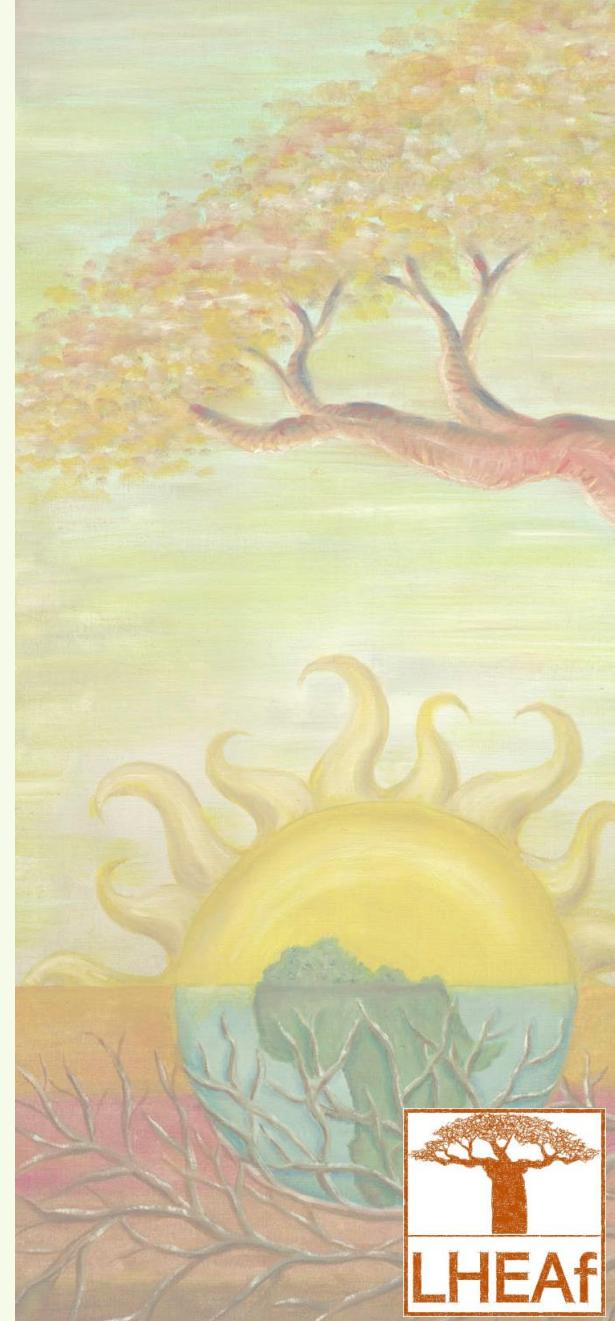
- change of ḥ and ɻ to h (or zero): ḥah-, baha, hotsa, gweha, dah
- Loss of r in C3 or intervocalic: gweḥera, tsifrangw, ? tlyeha But not in gwali, tsarua
- Loss of ? and ɻ in C3 (intervocalic?): doma, gwali
- Pre/postvocalic voicing of stops: tib, tsub, dah,
- S Cushitic t borrowed as t (ḥah) or as r (rufuk)
- S Cushitic ts' as ts: fitsa, tsub,
- S Cushitic tɻ' as “tly”: tlyeha,
- loss of nasal in nasal-fricative/affricate compound: gafa, (hotsa)
- Most proposals are for Saghala rather than Davida.



# Layers in Taita Bantu



source	#
Taita South Cushitic	11
T SC isolated	6
EEA	3
Dahalo	12
Coastal (Somali)	17
Oromo	3
Maasai	5
Other	2



## Example I (SC-10): Saghala and Davida *gafa* 'beard'

From <sup>ALBU\*</sup>*gaamfa* (f) 'beard, chin'.

Assuming the Taita Cushitic form was *\*gaamfa*,

Taita Bantu phonological restriction would have adapted it to *gafa*, not liking a nasal before a voiceless fricative.

Other Cushitic links are less close, if related at all:

LEC *\*gos-* 'chin, beard'

Gawwada: *kaws-o* 'chin'; *kawsa* (also 'beard')

Dahalo *gák'ane* 'chin' or Dahalo *gát'a* 'beard'

Possibly related to Beja *gunuf* 'nose' and Bilin *ganbär* 'forehead'



## Example 2 (SC/EEA-6): Saghala dah- 'to knock'

is related to PWR \*taħ 'to knock' (Kiessling & Mous)

which seems isolated within Cushitic



## Example 3 (EEA-3): BAHA 'big'

Saghala baa 'big'; Davida baha 'big'; Pare: bahá 'big'

The Taita root is related to pWR baʕ 'exceed'.

There are other Cushitic links such as Gawayada: bah 'to be grown up, become adult'; but Gawayada is quite far geographically.

Other similar roots that are more deviant in meaning or form are Dahalo *paħ* 'to beat'; Proto East Omo Tana *bat-an* 'many' (Heine 1978) which could have come from *baʔt* (Ahmed Sosal pc).

The click languages of the Tanzanian Rift valley have cognate roots: Hadza *paʔanaʔa* 'a lot', *pakapaʔa* 'big' (the *ka* is possibly the -kv- pluractional infix) (*paʔa* is a root); Sandawe: *bàʔé* 'big' (Elderkin 1983) also in *baʔa-wase* 'adult person' (Kagaya 1993).

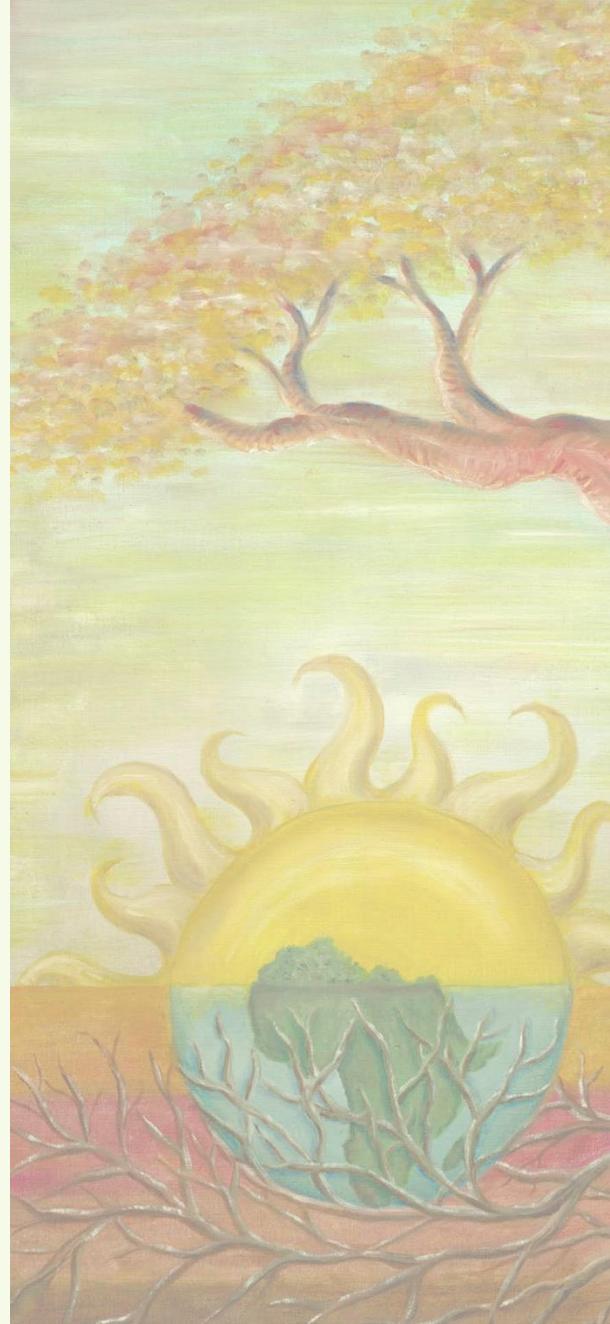
This opens the possibility that the roots are ultimately Early East African.



## Example 4a (DHL-12): Sagħala sare 'fame, name'

Related to Dahalo *sááre* 'name'

Other links in Cushitic further afield, Gawwada *saal-uy* 'to bring news', *saal-eet-e* (f) 'news, announcement'



## Example 4b (DHL): Saghala rugudi- 'to sweat' + i-rugudia 'sweat'

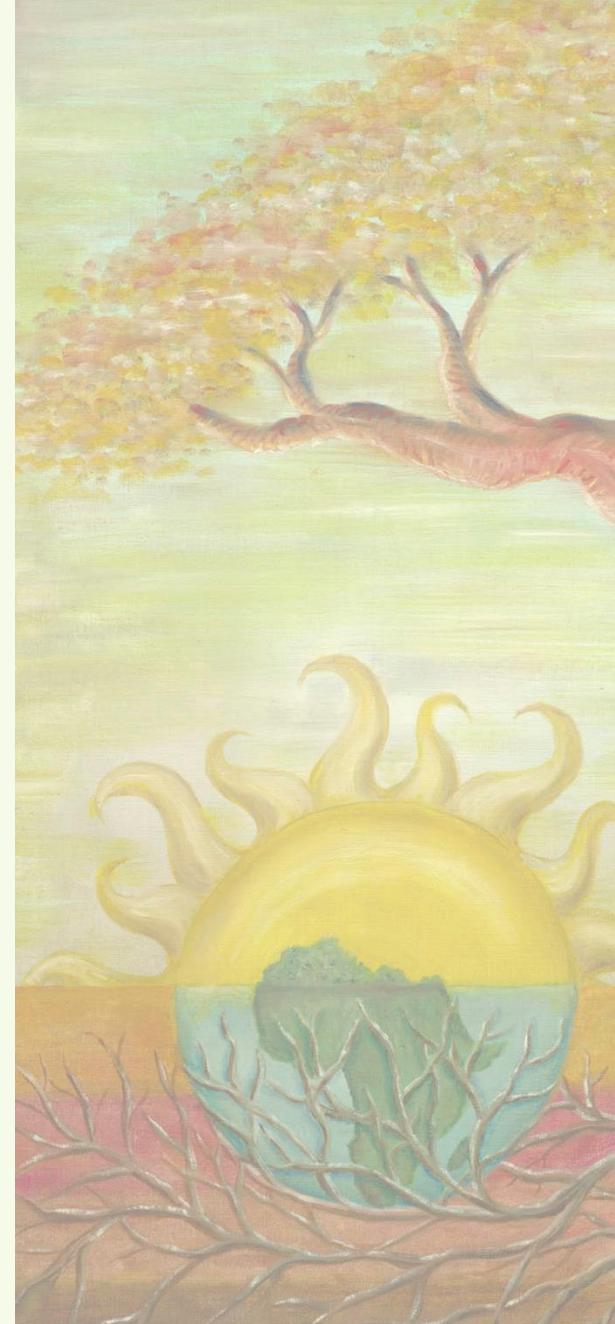
Also in Ma'á = Inner Mbugu *m-rukáo* (1/2) 'ill person' also *m-ruko* and *u-rukao* 'disease'. The IMb verb is *rú* (v) 'get sick'.

The word *m(u)ruke* 'sweat' is present in Normal Mbugu which is always identical to Pare, but it is not present in Mreta's Chasu dictionary.

Dahalo *ruk'o* 'sickness' (sweat – fever – malaria – sickness) works well as source for Inner Mbugu. However, as source for Saghala it requires explanation of the final syllable *di* in Saghala.

No other convincing Cushitic links found,

Most loans from Dahalo have issues like these.



## Example 5 (Coastal): Davida and Saghala foro 'zebra'

Source is Coastal Bantu:

Mijikenda *foro* 'zebra'

which has it from Somali *farow* (Said)

Also Ki. Boni *fárow* 'zebra'.



## Example 6 (Oromo): Saghala *lagelage* 'bad'

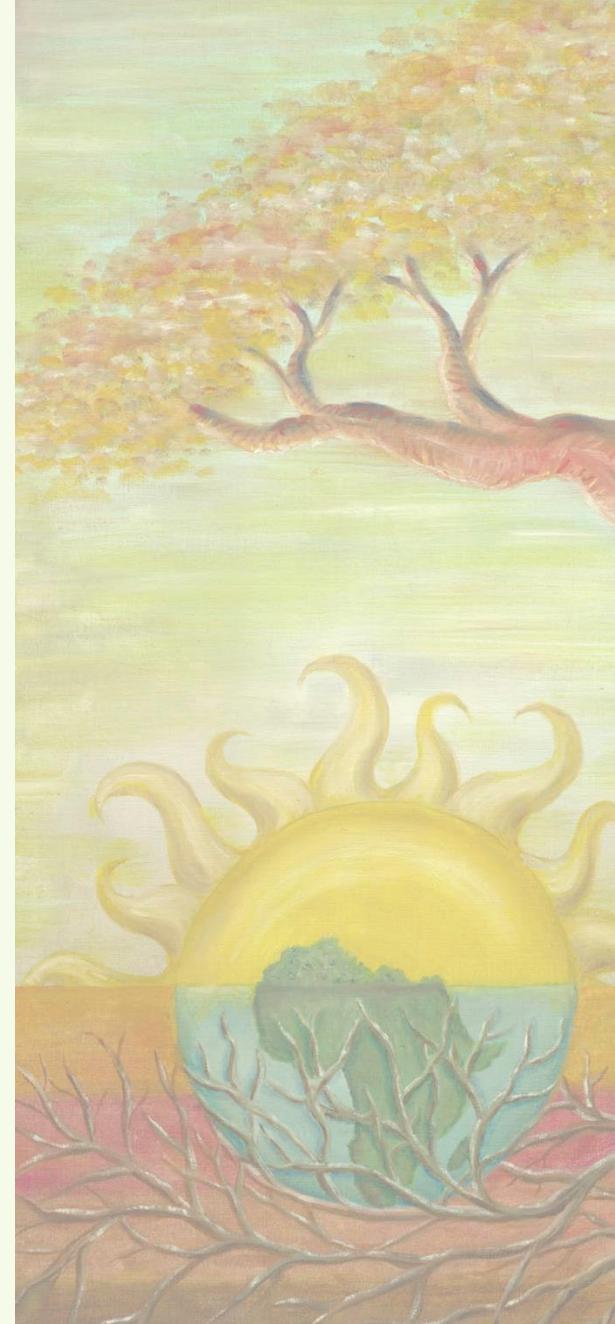
is from Oromo *-lagalaga* 'use bad language' derived from *laga* 'be forbidden'.



## Example 7 (Maasai): Davida sìlè ‘dette’

Also Tuveta *sile* ‘debt’; and all Kilimanjaro Bantu.

From Maasai: è-sílè ‘debt’ (Payne & Ole-Kotikash)



# Earlier Cushitic transfer into Bantu

For example: Saghala and Davida m-tawana 'young man'

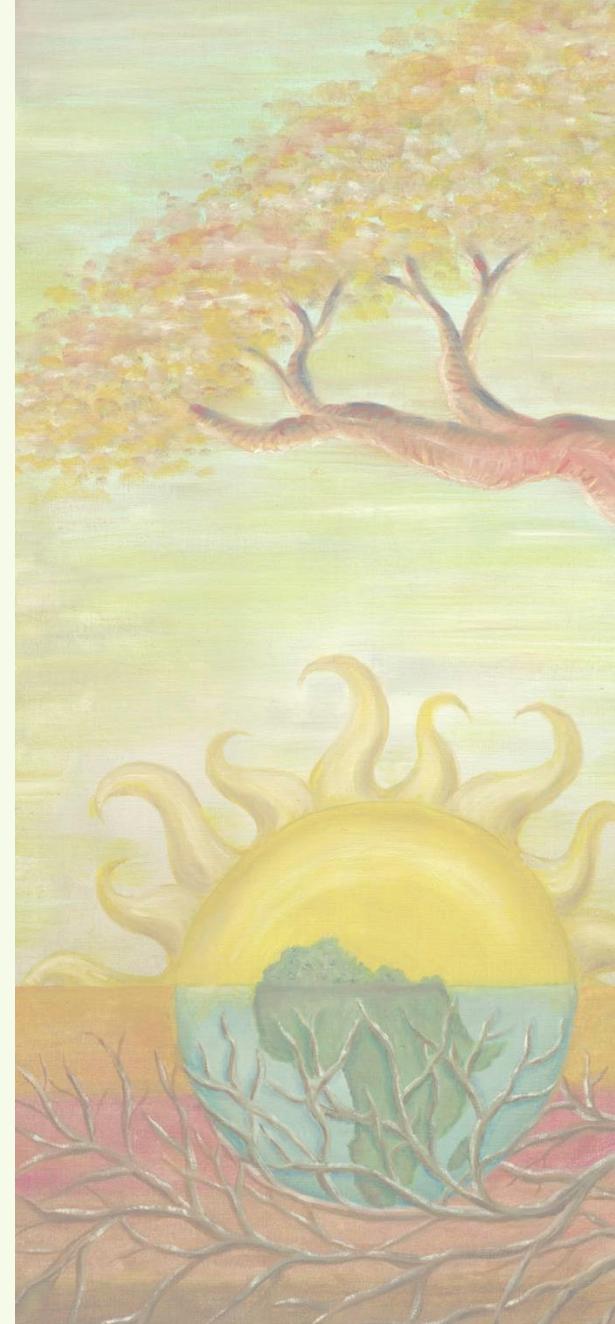
From pWR \*dabaʕ 'to circumcise' with cognates elsewhere in Cushitic, e.g. Somali *doob* 'bachelor' pl: *doobab*.

Circumcision is claimed to be a cultural influence from Cushitic. The South Cushitic/pWR form is close and requires lenition of *b* and initial consonant becoming voiceless.

But wide-spread in Bantu (Nurse 1979: 517, 544). S. Mijikenda, Davida, Saghala, Langi, E50 Thagicu 'brother'; East-Nyanza (E40) 'son' (and cognate in all these languages and hence an early loan). Pare *tavana* 'to circumcise'

Hence not part of contact in Taita Hills

Complication: possibly more of those cases mistaken as Taita contact.



# Kilimanjaro

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# History

early human occupation in early iron age (Chami & Silayo 2023)

extensive irrigation

traditions of earlier peoples but mythical (Shinagawa 2019)



# Layers in CHAGA (in progress)

## CHAGA SOUTH CUSHITIC

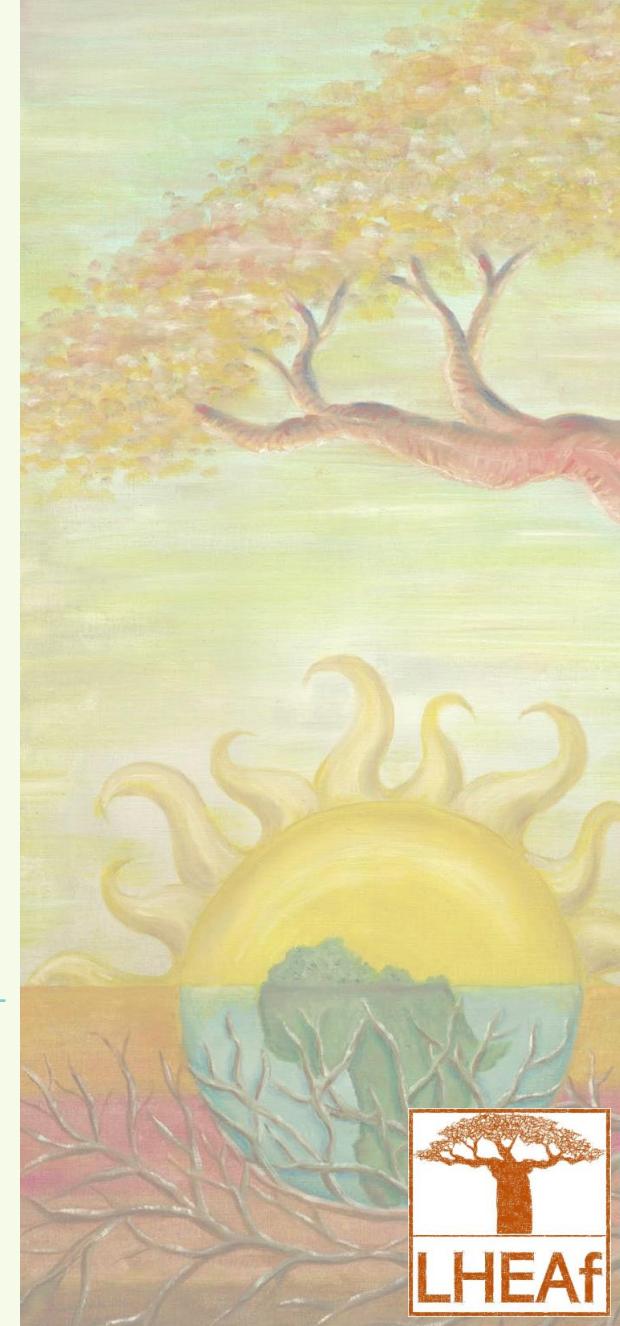
LALAMO 'mongoose'  
SAM 'climb'  
SIRA 'buttocks'  
GARA 'forest'  
SAA 'sun'  
? AMA 'morning'  
SAKAT 'hunt'  
SARIGA 'gazelle sp.'  
SAGA 'taste'

## DATOOGA

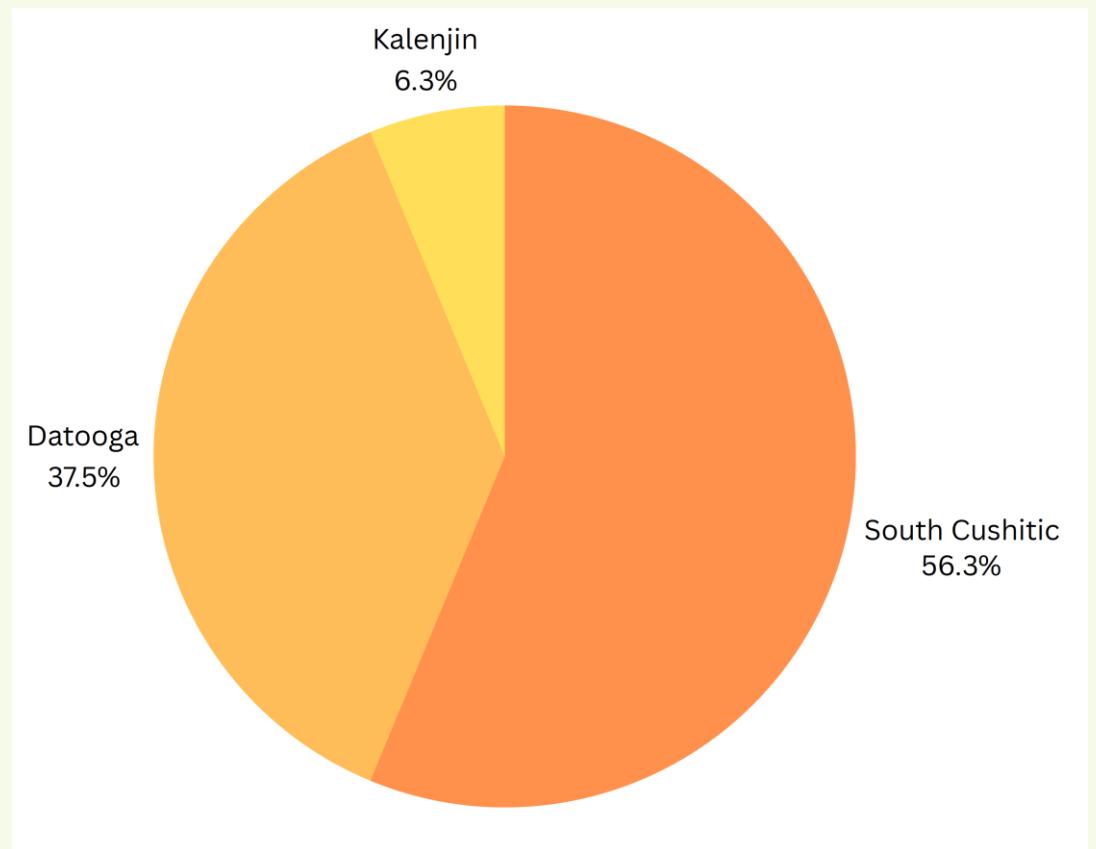
BALANG 'salt'  
SHANG 'fly'  
SUUN 'fat'  
SUUMA 'piece of hide'  
PORA 'boy, girl, chick'  
OBURI 'rhino'

## KALENJIN

GWARI 'bow' (Gweno, Lusoga, Seuta)



# to be added: pie diagram



# Shared with Langi

only SAKAT 'hunt', SAGA 'taste'

relevant because of Taita-Chaga-Langi clade



# Pare: pre-Ma'á

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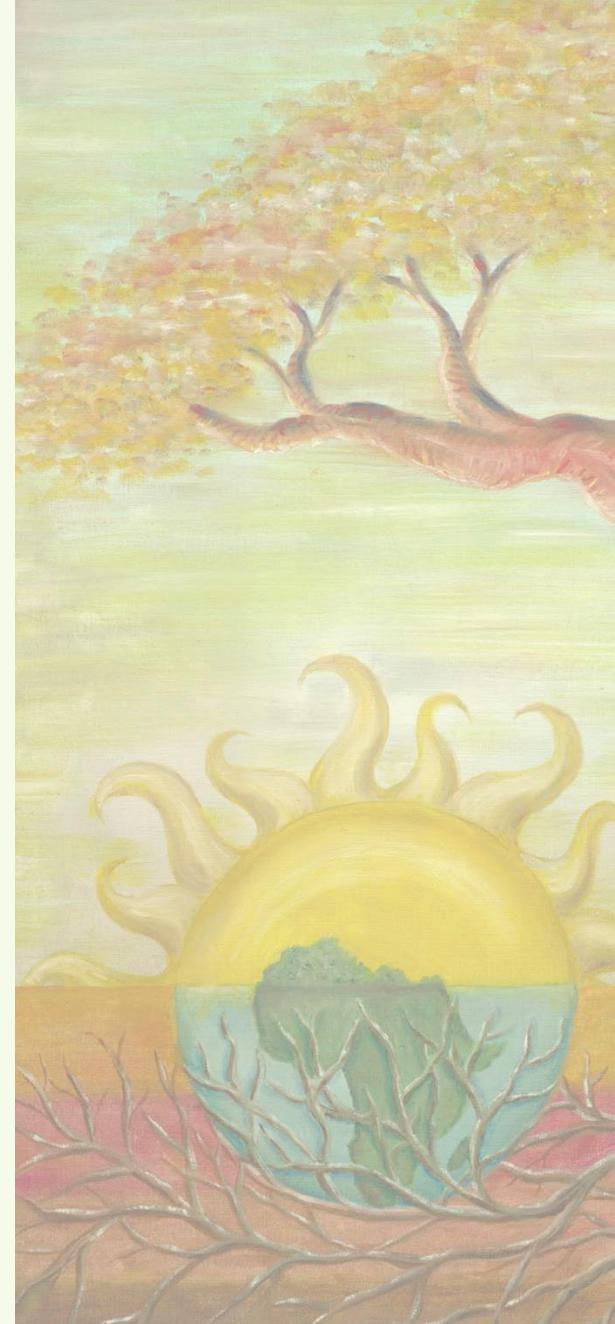
# History

Mbugu or Ma'á in Usambara speak a double language: Pare (Normal Mbugu) and their identity parallel lexicon (Inner Mbugu) = mixed Ig

The beginning for their full parallel lexicon was the shift to Pare

Oral traditions mention Lukipia (where Yaaku is spoken), Taita, (South) Pare, time as dorobo among Maasai, Mbugwe/Gorwaa and double entry into Usambara. All but the first corroborated in lexical evidence

contact with Taita: Davida spoken in East-Usambara



# The oldest layer, original Cushitic language?

bódi (v) sleep. ≈DAH: **b'om-** sleep + **di** down

lu-'iréno (11/6-11) sleep ≈OR (Waata) **irriwa** + **-eno**  
sfx

makahlú (9) dream ≈DAH: **mílaak'-ani** with  
metathesis

áho (v) see, get, procreate ≈OR: **arga**

béni (v) fail, miss ≈OR: **beeni** go!, **bada** miss, fail,

dáha (v) walk ≈OR: **d'ak'a** go to, DAH: **d'aa'** go out in  
a hurry, Ir/WR: **dah** 'enter', **dah** come from

fwáru (v) sing ≈OR: **faaruu** song, poem

ká (v) get up, stand, shine ≈OR: **kaa**, **kaata** stand up,  
rise.

ké (v) put ≈OR: **kaa**, **keeta** put sth swh, DAH: **kaaj-**

kú (v) be satisfied, draw water  
≈OR: **k'uufa** satisfied,  
and ≈MA: **a-oku** draw water

táho (v) pass ≈OR: **taakkuu** a step

'óro (v) wear, close ≈DAH: **'ur** sew

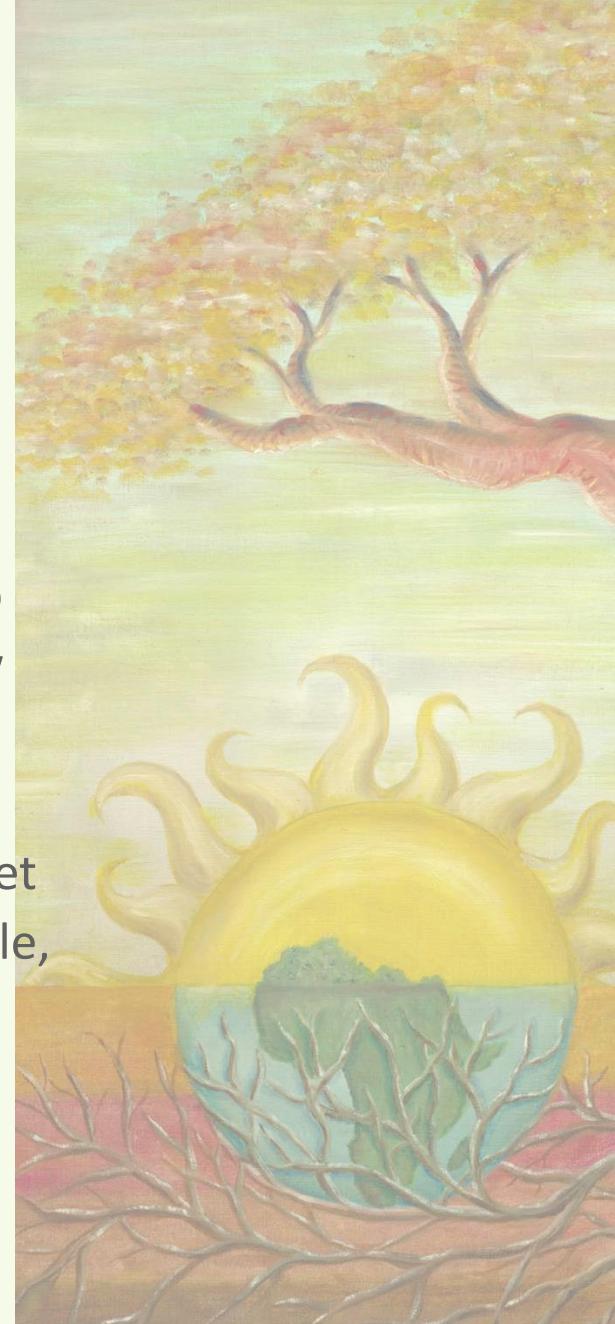
bó (v) rot ≈ DAH: **p'ó'ate**

ró (v) leave behind ≈DAH: **ro'**- go

sáhe (v) meet ≈DAH: **sahhan-** greet

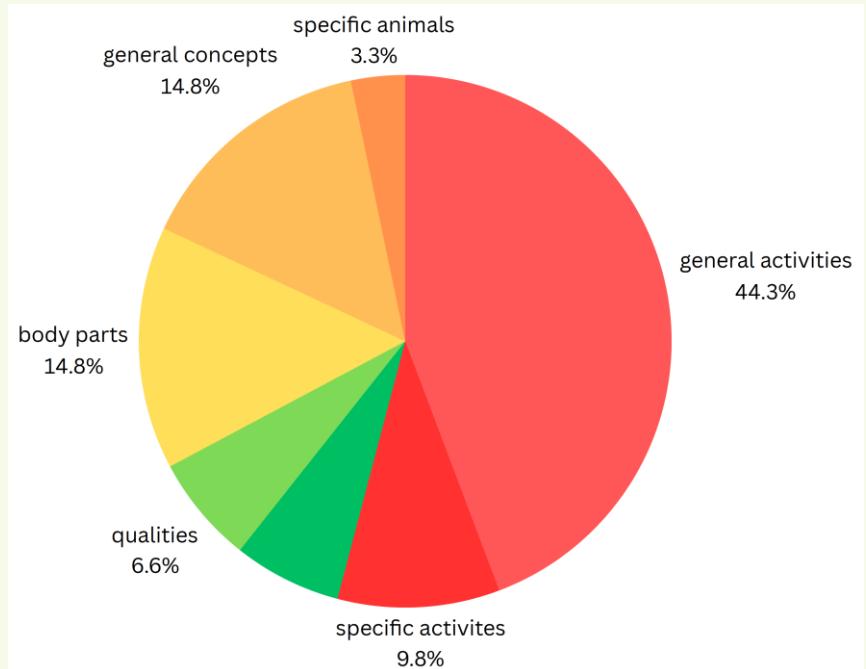
tará (v) shake ≈DAH: **tarar-** tremble,  
tar- mix

etc.: 87 words similar to Dahalo  
or Oromo  
!Only checked for those!

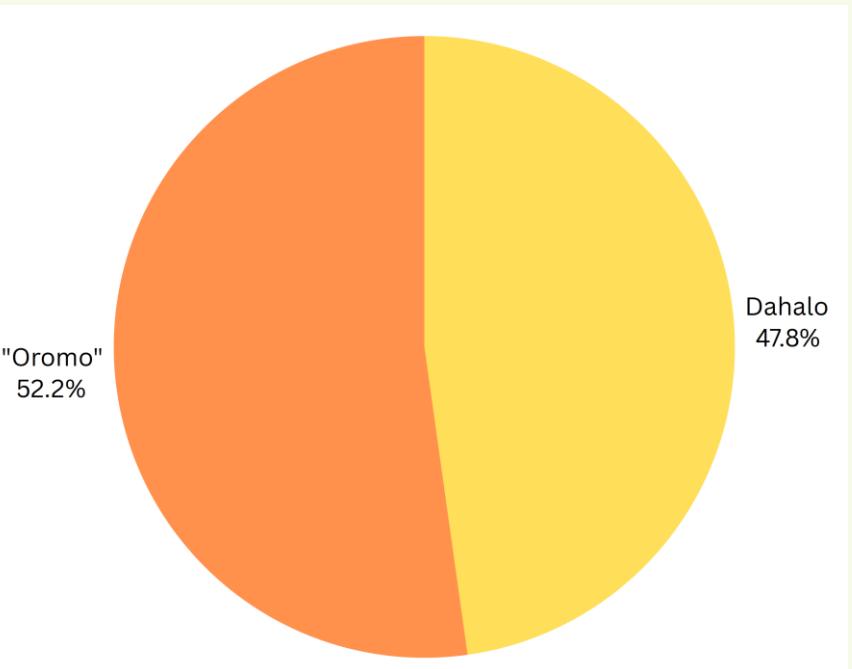


# Distribution oldest Ma'á layer

SEMANTIC



LINK



# But also Inner Mbugu words with Taita link (15)

**bó'i** (v) do, make

**sáru** (v) cool down, recover

**silú** (v) borrow

**‡á** (v) stab, pierce

**‡o‡oshi** (v) start

**i‡arí** (5/6) cloud

**kalá** (v) bitter, sour

**-‡éa** (9/10) ant (biting)

**lu-hási, hási** (11/10) tendon, vein.

**raó** (9/10) arrow for bleeding cattle

**sara'é** (adv) thanks

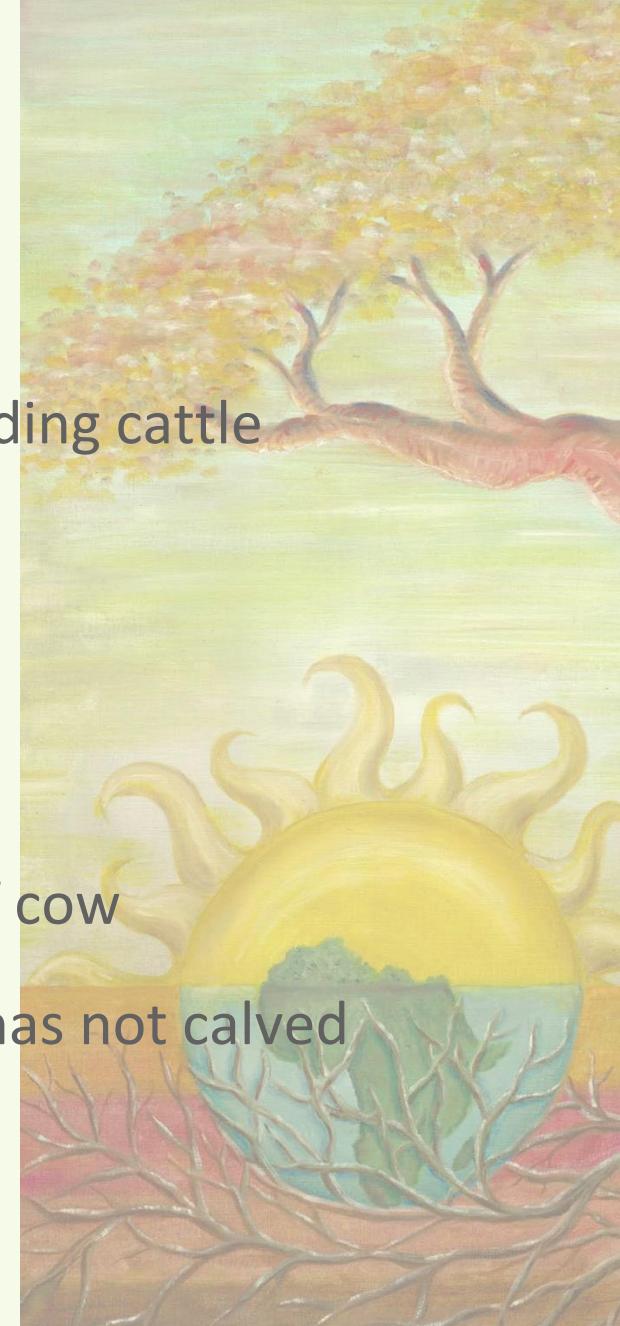
**tará'i** (v) shake, curdle

**xwa'ú** (adv) yesterday

**fóré** (9) mixed colours (of cow

**m? úse** (3/4) sheep that has not calved yet

**mirongo** (4) tens [IMb]



The “original” vocabulary in the mixed lexicon should be re-assessed.  
and there are two Cushitic sources, a recent one being Gorwaa.  
Mous (2003) assumed the original language to be “Old Kenyan Cushitic” and  
East rather than South  
Non-Bantu in Pare-proper is still to do



# Challenges and prospects

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# Challenges

Earlier and local Cushitic transfers difficult to tease apart

Later lexical transfer to Kamba and other Kenyan Cushitic  
we have etymologies for many words that cannot be shown to be Bantu

not enough known about lexicon of, e.g. Yaaku

evidence for a third factor, EEA, can only be indirect

Which scenario for Datooga influence on Chaga?

Why more non-Bantu in Saghala compared to Davida



# and prospects

establish relationships between Taita Cushitic, Kilimanjaro Cushitic and Pare Cushitic

and their relation to Tanzanian Cushitic

evaluate Dahalo as a source language for Taita and for Pare Cushitic

and Dahalo's position in Cushitic

and the fact that there is another language under Dahalo (EEA!)



# Thank you!



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