sciendo

Hunting and Hunting-related Practices among the Kushi (Northeastern Nigeria)

GIAN CLAUDIO BATIC

Department of Asian, African and Mediterranean Studies,
University of Naples "L'Orientale" in Napoli, Italy
gcbatic@unior.it

ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the practise of *shwɛɛ* 'hunting' among the Kushi, a Chadic speaking community of northeastern Nigeria. Subsistence hunting is still practised by Kushi, even if its importance and impact have been decreasing over the last few decades. A mental model of the past and present hunting practises are kept alive in the collective imagery by means of oral traditions, an instrument of knowledge transmission ubiquitous to many African societies. *Shwɛɛ* will be described through an oral text in which the narrator – a Kushi hunter – explains the nature and purposes of hunting along with the series of actions to be performed in order to carry it out properly, i.e. in a manner consistent with the values and social norms in force within the community. The procedural text describes some essential aspects of hunting: the way it is announced and who is allowed to lead it, the specificities of the kind of game that is hunted in terms of consumption and general use, and the traditional beliefs that need to be observed before and during hunting.

KEY WORDS: Kushi, hunting, oral traditions, meat consumption, Muri mountains

The Kushi live on the low plains at the foot of the northeastern fringes of the Muri mountains in northeast Nigeria (Gombe State, Chonge District, Shongom LGA, 9°35'33.9"N 11°11'16.9"E). The community is spread over the so-called Kushi 'village area', a series of wards and hamlets distributed longitudinally along the Muri fringes: (from west to east) Lapandintai, Kauri, Latogam, Kommo, Dirang, Gomle, Tabakro, Dankpanni, Tanzania, and Kugwayum (cf. ADELBERGER – BRUNK – KLEINEWILLINGHÖFER 1993:25-26). The

Ethnologue estimates the number of speakers at 12,000 (SIMONS – FENNIG 2018). The Kushi language (*ʄɔk Gòjì* 'mouth of Kushi', ISO code 639-3 <kuh>, Glottocode <kush1236>) is a West Chadic language classified in the Tangale proper of the Bole-Tangale group (NEWMAN 2013).

Kushi society is subdivided into 11 clans: Fojorak, Gupno, Fokori, Folokbe, Gbari, Dongo, Yange, Tagonro, Fojoklo, Fogolum, and Gok. Although in present-day, Kushi members of the eleven clans can be found in any of the hamlets forming the 'village area', the size of the clans as well as their distribution across the hamlets can vary significantly. Clans are exogamous, with some restrictions applying to inter-clanic marriages. In those cases where clans are seen as 'brothers' to each other, intermarriages are forbidden, like for example between the Dongo and the Fojoklo, or between the Gok and the Fokori. Kushi society is essentially horizontal. An official vertical authority – a chieftainship – surfaced as a by-product of the British administration. The *gùp* 'chief' of Kushi is chosen among the male members of the Gupno clan. Only the adult men of the group have active voting rights. The election of the *gùp* is carried out openly and may take place in any chosen venue within the village area.

Kushi are predominantly Muslim, with Christian adherents representing an important component of the community. Traditional beliefs are still practiced in a more or less open way (even if less frequently) by both Muslims and Christians.

In this article I will illustrate the practise of hunting among the Kushi through an oral text collected within the framework of a documentation and description project aiming at describing the language and the traditions of the Kushi people.

Eating habits among the Kushi

The Gongola river basin is home to a constellation of ethnic groups sharing an agriculturalist tradition dating back at least to the 1000 BCE (MANNING 2010:43). Kushi rely on a subsistence economy based essentially on farming; their eating habits are shaped by the food production system and do not differ significantly from those of the other groups inhabiting the region. Groups living in rural areas display 'traditional' (ROTHMALER 2012:154) eating habits based on the consumption of food rich in carbohydrates and fibres and poor in proteins. Kushi, who are no exception, present a consumption pattern structured in three meals: one minor meal consumed in the morning and two principal meals, one consumed at noon and one in the evening. The principal meal consists of a staple food (maize, Guinea

corn, millet, etc.) accompanied by a sauce. A small quantity of meat (chicken, 'bushmeat', and beef) may be consumed either as part of the principal meal or in form of traditional snack (e.g. skewers or *suya*-like meat).

Game is a feasible option when other sources of proteins are inaccessible. The importance of hunting as a means to find partial sustenance shows a certain stability. Extensive game hunting has caused an irremediable decline in the population of big animals whose presence is now limited within the fragile borders of the poaching-threatened Yankari National Park, about 50 km west of Kushi. Bushmeat (small mammals and reptiles), on the other hand, is still available: it is generally preferred to the meat of domesticated animals (cf. WILLIAMSON – LONNEKE 2016:5) and constitutes a significant part of the protein intake of the communities settled on the plains at the foot of the Muri mountains.

Oral texts

Oral texts are quintessential in documenting languages spoken by communities without a written tradition. Fieldwork linguists rely on oral texts to build a naturalistic corpus of data to be used to describe the lexicon and the grammar of the language they study, while researchers dealing with language documentation see oral texts as highly valued samples to collect, transcribe, translate, and archive in digital repositories. While oral texts, as language samples, are all equally important, not all oral texts fulfil the same function in terms of culture and knowledge transmission. Chelliah and de Reuse propose a working categorisation of orality into traditional and non-traditional texts (CHELLIAH – DE REUSE, 2011:425, but see also FINNEGAN 1992:135-157) illustrated in the table below.

Traditional texts	Non-traditional texts
Creation stories or myths	Anecdotes
Folk stories or fairy tales	Life experiences
Genealogies	Biographies or autobiographies
Legends	Stories about professional activities
Parables, sayings, proverbs, riddles, and jokes	Descriptions of pictures or video-clips
	News broadcasts from radio or TV
Ritual ceremonial texts or prayers	Tapes with messages
Procedural texts	Letters, good wishes
Songs	Re-tellings of stories
Poems	Religious or moralizing sermons
Plays	Conversations
	Any kind of non-traditional literature, songs, poems, plays, sayings, proverbs, riddles, or jokes

Figure 1: *Types of oral texts (based on CHELLIAH – DE REUSE 2011:425)*

Oral traditions are instrumental in the intergenerational transmission of norms, beliefs, values, and general knowledge. They adhere to a shared model shaped upon criteria of acceptability and consistency. Oral traditions are the tool available to community members to learn how to behave in specific occasions, perform certain tasks, and operate in the physical world. Therefore, they are collective and anonymous: rather than having authors, oral traditions have interpreters and performers.

From a textual point of view, oral traditions cover a wide spectrum of sub-genres. Some of them are quite rigid in their morphology and require a word-by-word transmission (e.g. formulaic language, proverbs, genealogies), others are more flexible and allow their interpreters to 'play' with the language by implementing variations and resorting to paralinguistic features (that is the case, for examples, of folktales and legends). Hence, traditional texts are a form of verbal art (i.e. related to the actual narration or performance and defined by means of aesthetic criteria) as well as 'packets of information' independent of the actual narrator or performer. In this paper I will deal with this second aspect, focusing on the contents of an oral text related to the hunting practise among the Kushi.

Hunting as a procedural text

The most daunting challenge in collecting oral traditions is the unpredictability of the immediate output, i.e. the inability of the researcher to control the situation and to collect a specific type of oral text at a specific time. This restriction is due to the fact that oral traditions, if collected under the framework of a language documentation project, are texts recorded in a naturalistic setting over a certain period of time through the mutual interaction of researcher and community. Oral traditions, in other words, are collected where the language is spoken by implementing documentation techniques that 'listen' to the community rather than merely 'extracting' something from it.

Procedural texts provide members of a given society with the set of norms and instructions to follow in order to carry out a certain activity. To collect significant procedural texts the researcher has to rely on the expertise of society's members. Sometimes this expertise is collective, i.e. shared by a vast majority of the group, sometimes it is restricted to specific figures, like for example traditional priests, herbalists, or craftsmen. In this sense, the knowledge Kushi have about hunting is collective: hunting affects the hunters who experience it, the women who roast the meat, the children who stay at home waiting for their fathers, and generally all the people who interact directly or indirectly with the activity as

well as with all the stories that it generates. Hunters, of course, are the preferred interpreters of the knowledge about hunting. Even if hunting surfaces in oral traditions in several sub-genres (folk-tales, songs, proverbs), procedural texts are by far the most extensive and valuable descriptions of the practice.

Hunting as an abstraction

The main characteristic of a traditional oral text is that it exists beyond the specific narrations provided by community members. No single story *is* the oral tradition, and no individual is the ultimate repository of its contents and morphology. Traditions are shared abstractions that can be regarded as 'idealised cognitive models'. An idealised cognitive model, in Lakoff's terms, is a structure we use to organise our knowledge and that can fit the world with different degrees of precision (LAKOFF 1987:68 ff.). Oral traditions tell us what hunting is and what is not, the series of actions a man should perform before leaving for the bush, what kind of game a hunting party is allowed to kill, the way the meat is distributed once the hunting is over, and also the way different kinds of meat are considered in terms of good and bad taste. All this knowledge about the hunting practise does not describe an objective reality, i.e. the world as it is, but rather an idealised conception moulded over time by several factors of geographical, social, political, historical, and cultural nature. When the reality in the world (e.g. a group of Kushi men hunting in the Muri mountains) and the idealised cognitive model (e.g. what Kushi people think is the correct way of hunting) are consistent, then the result is a prototype: hunting according to the set of norms transmitted in oral traditions – which are regarded here as 'recordable' idealised cognitive models – will be prototypical because they align with a shared model. As a consequence, deviating a little from the accepted and widespread definition of proper hunting will be less prototypical, while infringing or ignoring all the norms will definitely void the prototypical charge.

The abstract nature of oral traditions lies also in the fact that they function in a system of beliefs and transmission of knowledge where their physical realisations – the single oral texts – are just approximations of a mental narration whose utterance is partial, flexible, and subject to change.

Hunting in Kushi oral traditions

In this section I will present some extracts of an oral text describing the practise of *shwɛɛ* 'hunting' among the Kushi. The narrator is Malam Tengkje Chiroma, 62 years old, a farmer and former hunter. The translation has been kept close to the original to preserve the style typical of procedural texts and, more generally, of oral texts. Contrarily to oral texts such as songs, poems, and proverbs, procedural texts are essentially self-explanatory and linear.

The text describes the following aspects of hunting among the Kushi: announcement of the hunting; preparation and definition of the hunting party; norms about the distribution, skinning, and consumption/use of the hunted game; hunting with dogs; and disputes over the game.

Announcement

1. There are two types of hunting in Kushi[1]. One is called 'war' and the other is called 'begging'. In the hunting known as 'war', the man will pass through the town in the morning and again in the evening. In [the type of hunting called] 'begging', the man will go through the town only in the evening. He will walk through the village of Kushi, and then head back home. This is the difference between 'war' and 'begging'. When the decision that there will be a hunt is made, the man will walk through the entire town and announce it to all the people. You will tell them that you have come to look for water to drink. Then, after all these things, you will go back home. In the evening, you will go through the town again to know whether the people are well and to tell them where they will meet you in the morning. When you have finished to walk through the village, you will go back home. Then you will rise early in the morning, you will light a fire and go to the place where you are

---

[1] The narrator defines two ways of getting food: hunting and begging. *Shwɛɛ* 'hunting' is associated with *gei* 'war' and opposed to *kɛɣa* 'begging'. Hunting and war share some nuclear features: (a) they are both life-risking activities that involves pursuit and killing, (b) they require a specific outfit and gear, (c) they are performed by men, and (d) they are organised activities that imply the presence of a leader, a call for manpower, and the respect of a set of norms. When a man decides to hunt alone, i.e. without being part of a hunting party, then the Kushi use the term *pára* 'hunting alone'.

going to lay. Once you have reached the place, you will put your armour over the tree under which you will sleep and light a fire.

2. Before Kushi people start, a member of the Gupno[2] clan will announce the hunting. No other clan is allowed to announce the hunting. There are men of the Gupno clan in Kommo, Dirang, Gomle, and Kauri. A man of the Gupno clan will wake up before his brothers and will make the announcement. There is no way to start a hunt unless God has told you in a dream. The worship place is in Damade[3]. You are going in line: the people in Kauri will rise first and then meet the people in Kommo, and then they will meet the people of Dirang and Gomle. You will climb the mountain, go down to the river and enter Nagom[4]. When the worship is over, you will burn some cornstalk. A member of the Fojoklo clan is in charge of burning cornstalk. After all these things are done you are allowed to go hunting.

Preparation and definition of the hunting party

3. In the morning, the men will come to meet you where you have told them. When all the people are gathered beside you, you will tell them to wear their shoes. When all the people have worn their shoes, you will pack your armour and wake up and when the people wake also, you will hike a little and then stop, and the people will stand behind you. Once the people stand behind you, you – the leader of the hunting – will move forward a little and stand and that is all. Then you will put your hand inside the skin bag that is hanging on your back and take some of the grinded corn flour that you have prepared before. You will pinch some flour and scatter it on the ground in front of you for two or three times. When you have finished doing this thing, then you will carry your armour and greet the people [standing] by your left and by your right and finally those in the middle. After you finish greeting them, you will tell them the place that you have chosen for hunting. Once you finish telling them the

---

[2]   *Gùpnò* 'my king'.

[3]   Name of the place where some worship practices are carried out.

[4]   Area south of Kushi.

place that you have chosen for hunting, then the people will start running and looking for game. They will go through the bush and look everywhere.

Norms about the distribution, skinning, and consumption of the hunted game

4. When you finish hunting, you will go back home. Whoever kills game such as Guinea fowl, duiker, gazelle or other types of animals is not allowed to eat the meat anyhow. The meat will be eaten by the members of the family the hunter belongs to. Every clan has its own place[5]. If one kills a Guinea fowl, then he will cook it in his house, and in the morning he will bring it to the house of his elders[6]: it is then, when all the people are gathered, that the meat is divided between them. But you – you who killed the Guinea fowl – you will be given the breast of the Guinea fowl, and then you will go to meet your father and share the meat with him. As for the meat of duikers and gazelles, you will only cook the intestines; you put the remaining parts on the top of a fence so that, if there is a marriage in your clan, this meat will be taken and prepared by the cooks of the bride. The types of meat that women eat are duiker, Guinea fowl, and gazelle. Apart from these, women do not eat any other animal.

On leopards

5. If you are lucky to hunt [bushmeat like] a leopard, whether you are in Filiya, Burak, or Loo[7], then you will cut the leopard into pieces and put the meat over grass sticks. Then you will send the meat to your relatives who dwell in Kushi. You should not give the meat to people who are not related to you. [Let's consider] the case of those who don't eat leopard meat[8]. In the case of a person who doesn't eat leopard meat,

---

[5]   Different clans live in different parts of Kushi 'village area'.

[6]   The elders of the extended family or clan.

[7]   Filiya is a town about 10 km west of Kushi and home to a Chadic language-speaking community. The village of Burak is about 8 km east of Kushi on the road connecting Filiya to Bangwinji. The 'village area' of Loo lies south of Kushi beyond the northern range of the Muri mountains. Kushi people have strong relations with these settlements.

[8]   The narrator does not elaborate, but the reason for not eating leopard meat would be probably due to some restrictions related to the belonging of the hunter to a specific clan, secret society or cult, and not to a mere taste preference.

when he goes hunting and encounters a leopard, then he will spear it, remove the weapon, and exchange it with the spear of the fellow hunter beside him. He will not keep his spear, because the point is covered with the blood of the animal and it's his brother who will carry the dead leopard to the village[9]. The skin of a leopard is usually worn by those who carry the body of a dead person. If a rainfall causes the stones of the mountain to loosen so that the corpse remains exposed[10], then these stones will be put back in place and [it's is in that occasion that] the people will dance wearing the skin of a leopard. Not everybody is allowed to put the stones back.

On buffalos and elephants

6. A buffalo killed during a hunt has its uses too. Once the people have finished eating its meat, they will use the skin of the animal to make traditional shoes and repair their shields. The shoelaces are made with the skin of the elephant. This skin is too thick to be used for shields and people eat it. To make shields they will use instead the skin of the elephant's stomach, because it is not too heavy and hard. During the hunt, if an elephant appears, all the people will start running. They will climb into trees and wait for the elephant. When the elephant comes close to you, you should kill it with a poisoned spear. Then you will run and spear it [again], and when you have killed it, you will announce your hunt. No matter where you have hunted it, you are now the owner of the elephant.

On hyenas

7. As for the hyena, you will spear it as soon as it comes close to you. If your spear reaches its body[11], you will not shout anything because it is said that the hyena has a shadow[12]. But if you kill it, then you will carry the dead animal to your house and

---

[9] The hunter who brings home some game is supposed to prove his actions by showing the blood on his spear.

[10] The narrator refers to the traditional burial: dead bodies are disposed on the slopes of the mountain and covered with stones.

[11] That is, without killing it.

[12] A second life.

there will be people who will eat it and people who will not eat it, and this is because people are of different types.

On skinning

8. If God grants you access to the type of game that Kushi people call 'animals with black knees' – like leopards, chimpanzee, and bush dogs[13] –, then what will you do? Will you skin the animal there [in the bush] or will you carry it home? Well, if you have been lucky enough to catch 'black knees' game such as a leopard or a bush dog, then you will carry the animal to the skinning house. But if you have hunted a bush dog, you will skin the animal in the bush and then you will go home carrying the skin and what remains of the meat on the top of your head. In the case of a leopard or a chimpanzee, no matter how much meat there is, you must go to the skinning house. This is because the elders have chosen a place where leopards and chimpanzees need to be skinned, and they do like that due to a superstitious belief. Moreover, there is a way to carry leopards and chimpanzees: you will carry them on your back as if they were human bodies or babies. You will carry the game to the special place and skin it in Dirang.

Hunting with dogs

9. Concerning the use of dogs during hunting, some Kushi people use them and some others don't. When a dog catches an animal, you will remove it from its mouth, and then you will become the owner of the game. But there has been some talking about the fact that not anybody should be allowed to remove a hunted animal from a dog's mouth. Since some Kushi people own one or more dogs, keeping them in their compounds or in their farms, only the rightful owner of the dog that has caught the animal can claim the game as his own. There are people who don't own a dog but who nonetheless get hold of the animals hunted by other people's dogs. There are also hunters who, not owning a dog, tie a rope on their wrist in order to make other people think that they are hunting with dogs: it is their way of being cunning. This

---

13   The Kushi naming bush dog applies to fennec fox.

is not how the Kushi people used to behave [in the past], but now we are doing as strangers have taught us, appropriating the game caught by other people's dogs.

Disputes over the game

10. When you hunt an animal, if the hunter next to you is a person you hate, then you will not give him any meat. Who is a hated person? A hated person is somebody who takes your wife away from you and then marries her, or somebody who previously has refused to share any of his meat with you – and this is why you shouldn't give him any part of your hunted game. If such a person who has done bad things to you gets hold of your game, you will raise your elbow and he will raise his and you will fight with your knives. You will both hold the game in your hands and fight over it. The men who are nearby will ask: how have they started fighting? Somebody will say: is there no way to reconcile one hunter with the other? Somebody will say that you have arrived first. Somebody will tell the other hunter to remove his hand from the meat. If he is a good person, then he will remove his hands from the game and you will go to [the field to talk with] the judge to be reconciled. But if he is not a good person, he will not drop the meat. In that case, the person who has witnessed the scene trying to divide them will say that the other hunter has refused to agree and that he will tell what has happened[14].

Conclusions

Any practice can be analysed on two different levels: a) as a series of actions, and b) as a mental picture describing a series of actions. Oral traditions transmit knowledge by providing a community with certain models whose contents include both objective realities and projections over these realities. The text presented in this article is just one of the many texts that might be (and have been) collected among the Kushi on the subject of hunting. As procedural texts belonging to the oral traditions, they all show a certain consistency. Within certain limits given by reasonability and social acceptability, they are all deemed to be 'right', valuable, and equally plausible. However, the degree of detail can vary, and not all the

---

[14]   As a witness before the chief or the judge.

narrators elaborate or linger on the same topics (Malam Chiroma, for example, does not describe the several techniques used by the Kushi to trap animals, nor the different weapons that are part of their hunting outfit).

Another aspect that should not be neglected is the neutralisation of past and present operated by the mechanisms of orality. Leopards, chimpanzees, and elephants have disappeared from the factual universe of the Kushi, but they are all still present in their cultural horizon. In other words, oral traditions actualise the past by creating a temporal continuum narrative where hunters leave for the bush to face animals that have long ceased to populate the area.

Oral traditions are subject to physiological change, but also to bleaching and ultimate disappearance. In the long run, the decreasing importance of hunting will affect the form and the contents of the intergenerational transmission of this specific knowledge. There will be a point where the fracture between the physical world and the mental models rooted in the collective imagery will be too deep: then, talking of leopards and elephants will not make any sense and entire packets of lexical and cultural information will be dropped altogether. Language documentation provides both researchers and communities with the theoretical and methodological tools to collect oral traditions before the natural process of cultural erosion takes place.

Bibliography

ADELBERGER, Jörg – BRUNK, Karsten – KLEINEWILLINGHÖFER, Ulrich (1993): Natural Environment and Settlement in Chonge Distict, Eastern Muri Mountains, Northeastern Nigeria. An Interdisciplinary Case Study. In Günter Nagel (ed.): *Berichte des Sonderforschungsbereichs 268*, Vol. 2. Frankfurt/Main: Goethe University, pp. 13-42.

CHELLIAH, Shobhana L. – DE REUSE, Willem J. (2011): *Handbook of Descriptive Linguistic Fieldwork*. Dordrecht Heidelberg London New York: Springer.

FINNEGAN, Ruth (1992): *Oral Traditions and the Verbal Arts. A Guide to Research Practices*. London and New York: Routledge.

LAKOFF, George (1987): *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things. What Categories Reveal about the Mind*. Chiago: Chicago University Press.

MANNING, Katie (2010): A Developmental history of West African Agriculture. In Philip Allsworth-Jones (ed.): *West African Archaeology New Developments, New Perspectives*. Oxford: Archoepress, pp. 43-52.

NEWMAN, PAUL (2013): *The Chadic Language Family: Classification and Name Index*. Mega-Chad Research Network / Réseau Méga-Tchad. Retrieve from: http://www.megatchad.net/publications/Newman-2013-Chadic-Classification-and-Index.pdf.

ROTHMALER, Eva (2012): Cuisine as Health Factor. Some aspects of Nutrition in Western Africa. In Eva Rothmaler, Rémi Tchokothe, and Henry Toruneux (eds.): *Man and Health in the Lake Chad Basin / L'homme et la santé dans le bassin du lac Tchad*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe, pp. 151-168.

SIMONS, Gary F. – FENNIG, Charles D. (eds.) (2018): *Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Twenty-first edition.* Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Online version: http://www.ethnologue.com.

WILLIAMSON, Douglas – BAKKER, Lonneke (2016): The Bushmeat Crisis in West-Africa An indicative overview of the situation and perception. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Retrieved from: http://www.fao.org/forestry/13227-0dc169eeedbbab4a04cae75af869fdccf.pdf.

Gian Claudio Batic is an Africanist linguist working as researcher at the Department of Asian, African and Mediterranean Studies at the University of Naples "L'Orientale" where he teaches Hausa language and literature. His research focuses on the description and documentation of West Chadic languages of the Bole-Tangale sub-group (north-eastern Nigeria). He carried out extensive fieldwork in West Africa and between 2017 and 2019 has been visiting scholar at Bayero University Kano (Nigeria), Goethe University Frankfurt (Germany), Université Général Lansana Conté (Guinea), and LLACAN-CNRS (France). Among his publications, *A Grammatical Sketch of Bure* (Köln: Köppe, 2014) and the edited volumes *Selected Proceedings of the 1st Symposium on West African Languages* (co-edited with Sergio Baldi, Naples: UNIOR Press, 2015), and *Studia Africana* (co-edited with Rudolf Leger, Köln: Köppe, 2017). He is Editor-in-Chief of *JALaLit – Journal of African Languages and Literatures* (UNIOR).

Is Leather Skirt Designed by Urameselgwa a Symbol of Datooga's Identity?

EMÍLIA BIHARIOVÁ

Department of Ethnology and World Studies,
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovak Republic
emilia.bihariova@ucm.sk

ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on the context of a traditional women's wearing component – a leather skirt – on the example of the contemporary semi-nomadic Datooga[1] and ideas, imaginations, and myths which this product of material culture represents. Analysis of the researched material composed from the statements of the daily users (married women) as well as the members of the society on example of the Datooga people (Buradiga subgroup) in a particular locality of Igunga district in Tanzania will demonstrate why the leather skirt, linked and designed by women's deity Urameselgwa, is considered not only as a sign of marriage from the external perspective through outsider's eyes, but mostly as an identification factor and strong cultural symbol through the Buradiga's perception. The author explains how Urameselgwa is presented in the daily routine of the Buradiga' women and which kind of privilege, so unique among East African pastoralists, is given to them by the wearing of the leather skirt transmitted from one generation to the other.

KEY WORDS: Buradiga, Datooga, identity, leather skirt, Urameselgwa

---

[1] I use both names Datooga (a name for the whole ethnic group) and Buradiga (a name for one of the subgroups of Datooga people) when referring to the researched semi-nomads.

EMÍLIA BIHARIOVÁ

Is Leather Skirt Designed by Urameselgwa a Symbol of Datooga's Identiy?

Introduction

While I was focusing on ethnographic data collection on educational efforts in the context of vanishing semi-nomadic way of the Datooga's life in the Tabora region in Tanzania and consequently analysing the researched material, I formulated as one of the numerous reasons for avoiding schooling among these East African pastoralists, particularly girl's schooling,[2] an obvious fact – getting married in earlier age. Among the Datooga, a convenient age to get married for a girl is between 14 and 16 years, which is still equal to the schooling age.

The situation around the attitude towards formal education could be expressed by a statement of one of my collaborators, a medicine man, who belongs to the first attendees of the local primary school (established in 1989) in the researched area: *"Formal schooling itself is not bad, it is simply not in accordance with the Datooga's mind. We are afraid that the young generation will leave the customs, the place of living and also the clan. They are already losing respect for the elders and there is a chance to abandon the religion for Christianity or Islam."* As declared one of the Buradiga men, the main protector of the customs and tradition in daily routine which form the social life among Datooga are women: *"Mothers are looking to preserve tradition in the family, men are always in movement, going to the center, meetings, markets, sometimes absent all day, but women sustain the culture and highly influence children as well."*

If we focus on women, one of the visual and typical signs of the Datooga's customs and alive tradition is embodied by wearing a material component – a leather skirt, which symbolizes the status of a married woman. Such a 'prehistoric', 'outdated' and 'smelly' element of clothing by which are women widely recognized in the region, still current in various parts of Tanzania, where these semi-nomads are scattered, is from the outside perspective of neighbouring ethnic groups, travellers and even representatives of the state considered as a 'leftover' or better a surviving component of the pastoralists' culture, a visual image. A question arises here: In the Datooga perspective, how much does the skirt influence the whole

---

[2] More about girls' schooling among the Datooga and schooling in general see: BIHARIOVÁ, Emília (2015): 'We Don't Need No Education'. A Case Study About Pastoral Datooga Girls in Tanzania. In *Ethnologia Actualis* 15 (2), pp. 30-45 and BIHARIOVÁ, Emília (2017): *Education in a Context of Traditional Herding Life of Semi-nomads Datoga in Central Tanzania.* PhD. Thesis. Trnava: University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius.

women's world and consequently the Datooga culture? What does the skirt signify and mean in the real life of a pastoralist's woman?

An ethnographic approach could help us to reveal miscellaneous layers of the skirt's representation and help us to understand better the hidden context of skirt's wearing, not yet fully explained by anthropologists, and detect various realities connected with this manifestation of Datooga's material culture. If we consider Datooga culture as a system of symbols and meanings through which these semi-nomads live their culture, interpret their behaviour, even reality which surrounds them (SOUKUP 1994:147), the skirt is a key with its own sense, signification to the social reality not automatically known to the 'outsiders'. Its meaning is lived in people's mind, recognized and passed inside of the culture as a part of their human nature (GEERTZ 1973:45-46). outwardly expressed in a form of a material element. Though Goodenough does not consider material phenomenon as an expression of culture, but he made a clear point when postulating that culture is rather a complex recognition, set of knowledge, *"it is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them"* (GOODENOUGH 1957:167). Through this perception, I consider women's leather skirt not only as a sign of a marriage or a reason for schooling avoidance, but there is an inner deeper meaning which the skirt symbolizes. I argue that the skirt related to the women deity Urameselgwa[3] is still a strong ethnic-identification factor of present-day Datooga culture, a core of their identity, valued among the society, though the cultural pattern is decaying in decades as a consequence of conversion, globalization as well as progressive assimilation of different Datooga groups[4] (e.g. currently subgroup Bianjida near Itigi in central Tanzania) scattered in numerous Tanzanian districts what is substantiated by various anthropologists who studied the

---

[3]   Among the biggest group of Datooga, the Barabaig, *r* is pronounced as *d*, deity is known as Udamaselgwa. I prefer to use the spelling with *r*, typical for the Buradiga. There are several names of the Datooga used in the academic sphere, the variation *Datooga* is utilized mostly by anthropologists.

[4]   In the1990s, Ndagala (1991) recognized seven subgroups (Bajuta, Barabaig, Rotigenga, Ishimijenga, Buradiga, Gisamijanga, Bianjida), the decade before, Tomikawa (1979) mentioned thirteen, Kjearby (1976) noted less than eight groups and one of the first anthropologists who focused on the Datooga, Wilson (1952), is counting fifteen *emojiga*.

EMÍLIA BIHARIOVÁ

Is Leather Skirt Designed by Urameselgwa a Symbol of Datooga's Identiy?

Datooga[5] people (WILSON 1952; KJEARBY 1976; TOMIKAWA 1979; NDAGALA 1991; YOUNG [online][6]).

Methodology

The results are based on the analysis of the researched material which I collected among the Datooga people – Buradiga in a particular locality of Igunga district, in a village Chagana, which consists of the statements of the daily users, married women, as well as the members of the society such as unmarried girls, converts, elders, medicine men and men in general. The ethnographic research in Chagana among Buratiga subgroup has been ongoing since 2015, with short-term repeat stays (2-3 months per year) and continuing up to the present time. The choice of Buradiga and locality was preceded by a pre-research (2013) among the semi-nomads, by a long-term relationship and interest (since 2011)[7]. The data consist of participant observation in the field, the core foundation of ethnology, in-depth interviewing with a semi-structured questionnaire (repeated) and group discussions, mostly among women. Through the ongoing time, I did background literature research focused on relevant and crucial information regarding the skirt and the Datooga deity Urameselgwa, which were published mostly by KLIMA 1970; BLYSTAD – REKDAL 2004; BLYSTAD 2004 and YOUNG 2008.

I would like to mention some remarks on how I obtained the required data and which kind of obstacles aroused mostly regarding the Datooga women's deity since it highly influences my research in the field. Though I have conducter the research in the Chagana locality since 2015, I have been in touch with Chagana's Buradiga since 2011 and I could characterize my links with locals as respectable, correct, friendly and even familiar, I did not expect such a vacuum, silence when it came to a question from women's side: *"Can you tell me more about Urameselgwa?" "Who she was?"* In the middle of a conversation, suddenly the women said: *"I know nothing."* The question was accompanied among other women by a smile, or with

---

[5] There are several names of the Datooga used in the academic sphere, the variation *Datooga* is utilized mostly by anthropologists, *Datooga* mostly by linguists.

[6] Since it is not a published essay but a separate text on website dedicated to the Datooga, year of publication is missing.

[7] In years 2011 till 2014 I was a volunteer and a teacher in Central Tanzania, this time was fruitful for understanding the educational system in Tanzania as well as observing and getting in touch with the Datooga people.

no words, I experienced even a departure from the household of my host family of passing women when the question was asked.

I realized the following problems when communicating with women: language, where my main collaborator, a man, could not be helpful as a translator from the Datooga language to Swahili; they did not want to talk in front of a man; a 'sacred' topic was discussed or/and they did not have enough knowledge of the topic. It required time in the field to find women who were able to speak in Swahili or translate the language if needed and elucidate the topic. I could rely mostly on the women with whom a close relationship was already built.

While in contact with men, oral narrative linked with Masuja Gidawish, the cultural hero, was used as a way how to break or establish desirable atmosphere when investigating my researched topic regarding the skirt or the story of Urameselgwa. Pastoralists always used to repeat a quotation on different occasions: *"We and wazungu[8] are of the same origin."* or *"I and you are the same."* In the beginning, I did not pay attention to deal with this quotation. Uncovering the meaning of this sentence, which is in accordance with a Datooga myth about Masuja,* served as infiltration to the society. According to the oral narration, Masuja was created by God, but lately giving him so much trouble so God created other people to challenge Masuja (MHAJIDA 2019:44). He was fighting/arguing with the first Datooga people, the Bajuta[9], who are stronger and cleverer. At the end of the story, Masuja left the earth and entered the water with words: *"My offspring will come, with even more power and they will be white."* My awareness of the story with the declaration: *"I'm the child of Masuja,"* because of my colour and abilities (a high formal education, a mix of different experiences, etc.), was very much appreciated, in many cases with a laugh, as a sign of my respect, knowledge and interest in the Datooga and their stories and served as a way how to infiltrate the community.

The main source of information regarding Urameselgwa were not surprisingly women but men – the elders and medicine men and close neighbours over 40 years, especially, the father of my host family, an excellent narrator, who grew up on oral Datooga stories from his Bajuta's[10] grandmother. Then, women aged over 40 who knew me personally from their

---

[8]   Expression for 'white' people.

[9]   The Datooga king is selected always from this subgroup.

[10]   The first of the subgroups which according to the myth rose from the earth.

family celebrations were the crucial source regarding daily practices, rituals, and worshiping connected with Urameselgwa.

The paper could be called a mosaic of partial information connected with Urameselgwa, focused on the sum of information about her and her meaning expressed through the skirt in the social life of the Datooga through my informants and studies of the relevant bibliography.
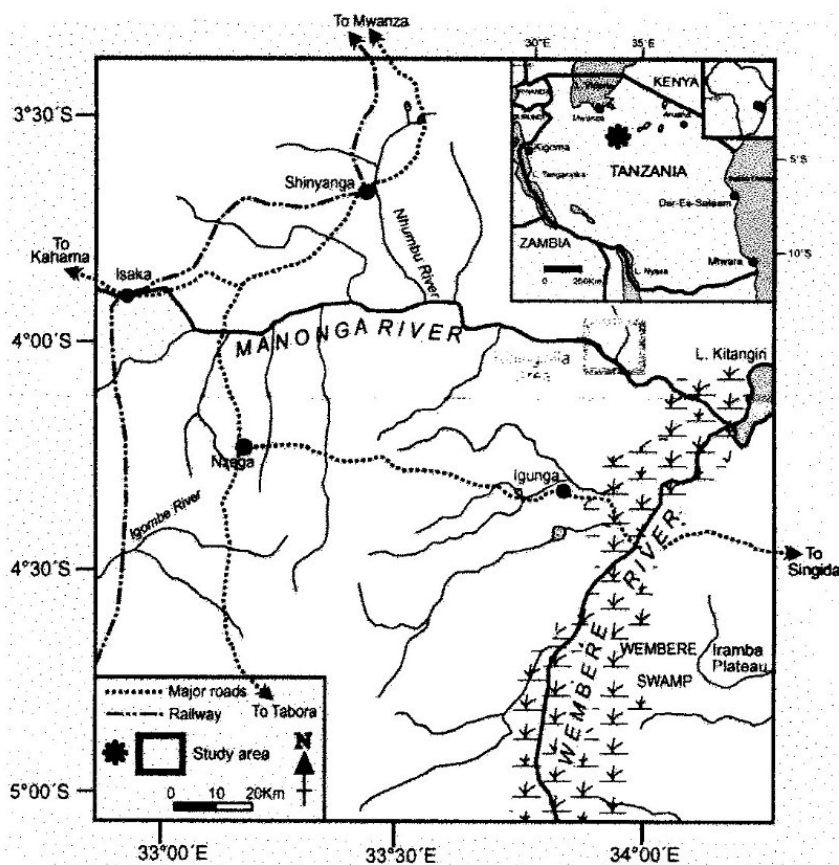
Figure 1: *Location of Chagana, the map is available at http://52.172.159.94/index.php/epi/article/download/62365/48637*

The study population and research site

Buradiga are a group of Datooga people, who live dispersed in different Tanzanian regions, mostly in the Singida and Tabora region. In the academic sphere and also in daily life, the use of diverse names are frequent (Datoga, Tatoga, Barabaig Wataturu, Manga'ti). The population of Buradiga is hard to estimate, the whole Datooga ethnic group is around 90 000 people (ELIFURAHA 2011:423) and at least two-thirds are formed by the Barabaig, concentrated mostly in Arusha region, the core Datooga area for centuries (BLYSTAD 2004:52). Another source, probably more relevant due to six years long research focused on production of a language atlas for Tanzania, mentions 138 777 Datooga people (MUZALE – RUGEMALIRA 2008:80). The Datooga language is linked to the Kalenjin cluster of the Southern Nilotic languages. The Buradiga are polygynous and patrilineal.

The Buradiga are Nilotic pastoralists, still engaged in a semi-nomadic way of life. They herd cattle, sheep, goats, and donkeys and their livelihood is supplemented by farming and fishing. The household is an independent social and economic unit consisting of the head of the household, his wife or wives, children, and possibly with other related family members. Their life is still related to persistence on livestock, with retention of specific cultural traits and also with a long history of resistance against schooling. These pastoralists are perceived by neighbouring ethnic groups as 'backward' due to the keeping of cultural habits such as stealing cows, wearing a leather skirt, long abidance of indigenous religion or by low knowledge of Swahili, the main communicative language in Tanzania. However, Datooga culture is not stiff, but it is a subject of modernization manifested by sending pupils to the private boarding schools, buying motorcycles, solar panels or the use of smartphones with access to the social network such as Facebook or WhatsApp.

The research was conducted among the Buradiga of Chagana (they represent 90% of the village population), administratively located in Itumba ward, Igunga District, Tabora region, 42 km to the south from the District town Igunga (Figure 1.). The village was settled in the 1960s when the first Buradiga families moved from the north-east and pushed Sukuma people more to the west. The area is bounded by Wembere swamp in the east – a source of water and a cause of recent, latently still present, Sukuma-Buradiga conflicts. The Buradiga represent a cultural wedge between the two Bantu ethnic groups (Iramba, Sukuma) with whom they live in relative symbiosis. Chagana is still a 'remote' area. The isolation is demonstrated by the absence of local transportation or roads, electricity supply, mobile signal coverage, source of drinking water and a lack of healthcare.

Rice cultivation is an increasing predominant subsistence system in Chagana. It is a consequence of droughts in the 1980, cattle fines for different kind of offences or rinderpest

but mostly as a result of the overpopulated area, currently with no pastures in municipal possession for communal ranging. All Buradiga, even the rich livestock owners, practice agriculture. The land is suitable for rice cultivation and more than a half of home consume bags is changed for maize, the cardinal component of the nourishment. The productivity of the land differs every year and is totally depended on the rain.

The Buradiga still practice the seminomadic way of life. Migration of animals depends on the forage conditions and water availability, but mostly in the period of July – August, herds with shepherds move to the neighbouring regions (Shinyanga, Singida) or they prefer a closer area near Loya and Mwanzugi, both localities within two days of walking distance with the livestock (BIHARIOVÁ 2017:42). Usually, they return back in November during the beginning of the rainfall. The distribution of livestock (on the example of the research site) is unequal across the population, it varies from zero to 300 cows.

The Buradiga still sustain their indigenous beliefs, although, since the 1990, two Christian missions (Pentecost, Catholic) have operated in the area but with a limited success (not more than 30 converts). Besides their evangelization activities, the missionaries promote schooling. Since my presence in the locality, educational efforts have risen (currently 16 children in private boarding schools) and the first student completed a full secondary level in 2017. Besides the mentioned 'progress' the educational process in the local primary school could be characterized by irregular attendance, high fallout of pupils, negative statistic regarding final examination, a bribe from parents' side and low awareness of the benefit of schooling (BIHARIOVÁ 2017:73). I consider the continuity of indigenous belief and the resistance against schooling as two strong and important conserving factors regarding maintenance of cultural pattern, particularly, the custom of wearing the leather skirt.

Urameselgwa as a women's deity

Womens' deity Urameselgwa is mentioned in previous works of different anthropologists. The most detail sources connected with this magician are provided by Klima, who mentions the myth of establishing marriage in details as well as the magico-religious significance of the skirt (Klima, 1970:88). His monograph based on fieldwork and focused on the Barabaig, the largest Datooga group, does not provide more information about who she really is, her story or her relevance to women's daily life. The detailed information is also not fully incorporated in the other academics' relevant papers connected with the Datooga's deity (BLYSTAD 1996, BLYSTAD – REKDAL 2004 or YOUNG [online]). Through oral history

and the elders' sum of information from the field as well as available data from anthropological literature regarding Urameselgwa, we can characterize her as follows:

– a female deity

– the meaning of her name means 'famous women'

– a real person, who lived in the 'old times' before the Datooga split into subgroups

– she never married and never had children

– a part of *ghaoga* (a ritual clan)

– she is connected with the myth of establishment of marriage

– she taught women how to sew the leather skirt

– women turn to her for help/blessing

– she is worshiped during the important moments of life e.g. during the childbirth, she is praised for easy delivery; during the seventh month of pregnancy, the woman consumes a special Urameselgwa medicine, this ritual ensures an easy delivery, since then women can have sexual intercourse only with their husbands,[11] the medicine is only known and prepared by an old Datooga woman; after the delivery, a sheep is slaughtered and called Urameselgwa sheep, the predominant purpose of this ritual meal is the recovery of the woman after childbirth, the meat is eaten by all present women, it is strictly prohibited to be eaten by men – this signifies the necessary balance between men's and women's world.

– the procreative powers depend on the blessings of the God – the creator, Aseeta, as well as on Urameselgwa, what is expressed by a ritual song sung by women invoking fertility and captured by Blystad in the field among the Barabaig:

"Do give us babies…

Udameeselgwa[12], hayayahee, Udameeselgwa, hayoyahee.

The one who does not marry.

---

[11]   Datooga practice marriage with several sexual partners classified as brothers or clan members of the husband to ensure wife's pregnancy.

[12]   As already mentioned above, among Barabaig *r* is spelled as *d.*

EMÍLIA BIHARIOVÁ

Is Leather Skirt Designed by Urameselgwa a Symbol of Datooga's Identiy?

Why does she not marry?

Her powers of blessing do not allow it.

The great blessing.

The mother who keeps watching.

At the precarious time of labour.

The one who supports without resting.

The one who never betrays us.

At the precarious time.

You, the one who knows no resentment.

Do give us children.

And the leather slings in which to carry them" (BLYSTAD 1996:296).

Figure 2: *The woman is sewing the stripes on the whole piece. Photo: author.*

Urameselgwa and her connection with the leather skirt

As mentioned above, Urameselgwa is connected with the skirt through the tangibility of giving women the skill of how to sew it. Nevertheless, wearing a leather skirt among Datooga women conceals several layers with their own meaning, all of them in coherence with the women's deity in its own manifestation. The visual cultural component symbolizes:

1. **A status of a married women**

In Datooga society, every woman marries, whatever or not she is physically desirable to be eligible to wear the leather skirt. It is a legal process arranged by the parents, where the transaction of livestock forms the legal basis of the marriage system. According to the myth, the institution of marriage was created by the deity Urameselgwa. In Datooga oral narration women were moving from one homestead to another and stayed shortly with a man. If a child was born, a boy stayed with the father and a girl moved with her mother and follow women's basic 'semi-nomadic' standard pattern. Men took care of everything in this pre-marriage period (KLIMA 1970:88), they were responsible for milking, cooking as well as herding. One day, women got tired of this situation and asked Urameselgwa. a powerful magician for help. She gave them magical medicine which the men drank together with milk without any knowledge and that night, each woman stayed with her man. According to the mythical story, slowly, the mind of the men has changed to respond to the women's wishes.

2. **A bond with a particular man**

Exact norms and customs come with the skirt e.g. a ritual of starting wearing the skirt through the wedding ceremony or a strict prohibition to remove it through the legs during the whole length of the particular marriage. The only possible way is through the head. The removal of the skirt via legs signifies a woman's wish for her husband's death. Undressing of the skirt through the legs is expected after the husband's death. As a manifestation of mourning, the Buradiga women first tear the skirt in the front and as a part of closing funeral rituals, the skirt will be placed on the top of the tomb of the deceased man in the kraal[13] and simultaneously replaced by a new one not related with the man. In the daily routine, the skirt is removed every evening before sleeping and hanged or used as a pillow. This undressing

[13]   An enclosure for cattle or sheep.

could occur only in the house, in the woman's bedroom, never outside, just as a procreation of the future offspring – inside of the house and in the marriage.

Figure 3: *Capturing two women from the back side where the stripes from goat hide are situated. Photo: author.*

EMÍLIA BIHARIOVÁ

Is Leather Skirt Designed by Urameselgwa a Symbol of Datooga's Identiy?

3. A magico-religious significance

According to oral history, Urameselgwa taught women how to sew the skirt. A special sheepskin panel (from a sheep sacrificed at a ritual) is sewn in front of the skirt and it is believed to promote fertility (KLIMA 1970:9). Prohibitions of removing the skirt are related to potent fertility connotation, *"the whole scope of the perpetuation of life"* (JACOBSON – WIDDING – VAN BEEK 1990:15). A women's role is closely linked with her ability to conceive and give birth to a child. Fertility plays an important role in the Datooga social life and takes place within a group of potential procreative partners of the husband's clan brothers. *"The celebration of fertility extends far beyond human physical procreation and penetrates and imparts meaning and knowledge to nearly every corner of Datooga life. Besides the obvious areas of concern – human and animal pregnancy and birth – metaphors for fertility are widespread, adding an association with procreation to practices, to rites de passage, and to mythical language"* (BLYSTAD 2004:55). Fecundity in the African symbolic system as well as in social ensures continuity and maintenance of the social life (MOORE 1999:6) and this 'procreative paradigm' (HERBERT 1993) is giving meaning to the Datooga ritual's world, especially among Nilotic female's cosmology, which is brimming with female symbols (BURTON 1991:81). Equally, the potent coitus might lead to the notion of a new life, potent fertility as well as to infertility, to death, so feared among the Datooga.

Looking closely at the production of the skirt, it consists of sheep, goat and cow hides, which are leached in human or cow urine mixed with water in a pot and left on the roof of the house in an effort to remove the fur and smoother them. Then the hides are cut and sewed (Figure 2.). The sheep panel, which is smoother, is in front, goat skins are from the back side, these goats skins are cut into strips (Figure 3.) and by walking they swirl around the hips. The hardest part of the skirt is formed by the cow hide panel, functioning as a band (Figure 4.) which assures the stability and adherence of the skirt to the body. A period of at least a month is needed to sew the skirt. Among the Buradiga, the skirt is not visible, *a kanga*[14] is worn over it (Figure 5.). It is occasionally beaded (Figure 6., 7.), only rarely impregnated by ochre colour (Figure 8.).

The skirt is prepared by the husband's family. Nowadays, it represents quite an expensive component. In the Tanzanian currency, the skirt could reach 150 000 shillings (it is equal to

---

[14] A piece of colourful light fabric, a type of Eastern Africa print clothing, functioning as an apron.

EMÍLIA BIHARIOVÁ

Is Leather Skirt Designed by Urameselgwa a Symbol of Datooga's Identiy?

a prize of a bicycle, to one calf and one well-nourished goat or almost 60 euro[15]). It is definitely more expensive than general clothes on the markets or in the shops, but with no ritual meaning and utterly out of 'Uramaselgwa's sphere'.

Figure 4: *An old woman is repairing her leather skirt, on the left side in the upper part of the photo, a cow's panel in a form of a belt is visible. Photo: author.*

There have been some changes occurring within one generation as was found out in the field and confirmed by the daily users. Instead of smoothing the skirt by cow fat, perfumed jellies are used. The typical well-recognized smell of women is decreased (due to this factor women were driven out of e.g. waiting rooms in dispensaries). In the night, the skirt is not used as a pillow under the head as the older generation still performs but only hanged on a rope. Less awareness of sewing the skirt was notified among young girls and even married women. Not every married woman knows how to sew it and also not every woman is interested in being taught the skill (the youngest generation). There is even a trend to use a hired tailor. A new

---

[15]   1 EUR = 2,567, the rate could be found on
         https://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/convert/?Amount=150%2C000&From=TZS&To=EUR.

rare habit of wearing such a component only for a wedding or a big celebration entered the Datooga space by educated girls who had the possibility to study. They do not follow the meaning and related to habits connected with this symbol, this behaviour is influenced also by conversion to Christianity.

Figure 5: *Flowing wind is uncovering leather skirt of two women on the left side, kanga is worn on the top. . Photo: author.*

During the data collection, the importance of wearing the skirt could be felt in the question of a large number of my men-collaborators: *"If you marry a Buradiga, will you be able to wear a leather skirt?"* The urgency of its meaning for pastoralists marks the uniqueness, importance and meaning of this component of material culture.

Pentecostal missionaries who came to the researched locality in the 1990s conditioned joining the church by stopping wearing the skirt which indicated also an awareness of the preachers to the skirt's ritual meaning. The Pentecostal community counts around 20-30 people and has not 'prospered' among the Buradiga, therefore, within the past decade, some changes in their

attitude occurred. One of them relates to the prohibition of wearing the skirt, nowadays, they do not necessitate entering the church with its removal anymore.

Figure 6: *A beaded front part of the skirt. Photo: author.*

4. The highest ritual status (*gijojenda*)

Married and consequently widowed Datooga women who wear the leather skirt can communicate with spirits and ancestors as mediators during a special sacred ritual. These women are only from the Bajuta group and they are known and respected among the whole Datooga society. To become such a mediator, the woman must be already widowed, with children, and must have gone through a period of aberrancy, losing her mind, to live as a 'freak' and later to come to her senses and be a part of the society again. This highest ritual status is reserved only for women and should be explained by the objective reality of the high social status of women, albeit the Datooga society is patriarchal and the real power is in the hands of men. Women, just as men can equally inherit cattle in a form of dowry, although inheritance is patrilineally determined. In reality, the inherited cattle from the father will be redistributed to the sons of his daughter. The existence of dowry gives a woman a certain economic influence in the relationship with her husband and could inflict tension between

the husband and the wife, tension between the female and male space, a rigidity between sexes (KLIMA 1964:13). The importance of the dowry and its impact in daily routine is reflected in the common Datooga saying: *"a high dowry use to close the husband's mouth."*

Such mediator helps with serious issues or problems thanks to her link to Urameselgwa. She could deal with the problem personally by giving an advice or as a mediator. She is mostly valued by her skills – to be a mediator through a sacred ritual located at the heart of Datooga tradition (BLYSTAD – REKDAL 2006:630), when different people are seeking for advice, a blessing from their own ancestors. The ritual takes place in her own house, where the woman is sitting in one room, while in the other one a crowd of people wait and consequently she can loudly, in darkness, communicate and solve problems with their own ancestors. Some of my Chagana informants attended such a ritual to deal with various problems e.g. an enormous loss of the livestock in the household; a problem to concieve a child; a reason of repeated divorces and a lack of ability to find a suitable husband; the reason of non-realization of promised prediction by the ancestors.

Figure 7: *Another possibility of beaded decoration.Photo: author.*

5. A right to be a part and to attend women married meetings (*girgweageeda gamemga*)

A group of married women holds certain rights, their legal status is reflected in the 'council of women', an important element in the jural institution of the Datooga (KLIMA 1964:12). The council is composed of the neighbourhood women (who wear the skirt, not converts, who are excluded), who collectively act as a judicial body against men who violated their rights. An offense against one woman in the neighbourhood is perceived as an offense against the whole group of women. Such a meeting can last several days. Women can also impose a sanction against the man who offended the rights of one of them. The council deprives the man of cattle which is the most valued property in the society and this system is validated by the myth linked with Urameselgwa. 'Fine of the women' relates to the promiscuous state before the establishment of marriage created by Urameselgwa. A bullock selected as a cattle fine is beaten with a stick by the women but not to the death after suffocated by men as at any ritual killing, no bones are broken or blood drawn, and consequently eaten by the group.

Such a meeting when a man is judged by the council could be called when a man rapes a girl; or a man beats his wife over the head with a stick; for kicking the cooking stones, what means he is wishing she would die; if a man witnesses a childbirth; when a husband beats the wife in her convalescence period after childbirth; when he will send the wife naked home or when he refuses to provide an animal for a mother after childbirth in the neighbourhood. All mentioned reasons are still in accordance with Klima's findings in the fifties among the biggest Datooga subgroup, Barabaig (KLIMA 1964:15). The group of women appears as a preservation of the social and legal status of women, a quite unique phenomenon among the pastoralists in Eastern Africa.

Discussion

The results from the field indicate several outcomes: a little knowledge among young girls or married young women regarding Urameselgwa, about who she is, 'her story' and her connection with the skirt. This reaction was confirmed especially by a few young girls in the boarding schools who never heard about Urameselgwa (or have not heard yet), nor wish to wear one day a leather skirt, precisely an outcome, which the elders are afraid of. They are worried of the future changes and they connect them also with schooling or conversion to Christianity.

Young married women pointed up that the skirt is a symbol of marriage. Not all women know how to sew it yet, but it does mean that older women have the ability of this skill. One of the

informants, a woman in her proximate thirties mentioned her knowledge of sewing, but her old mother is/was never practicing it. Her peers were mentioning Urameselgwa as a synonym to the skirt.

Figure 8: *An example of rare ochre leather skirt among Buradiga.. Photo: author.*

I wrongly assumed little awareness among young women to be a sign of disinterest or losing of follow/up with the 'cultural pattern'. In the Datooga society, everything has its right time to learn, to transfer to the next generation e.g. the medicine for pregnant women is prepared by old women, they can transfer the knowledge only to the widowed women, without

procreative days, the consumers of the medicine are aware of only their obligation to swallow it.

An intriguing finding is required to bring up. Older women were the proper source when it came to rituals linked with worshiping of Urameselgwa in their daily life, or how to make a skirt and describe the whole process. They transfer the practical skills about the deity, not the theoretical sum about the awareness of her detailed story. Elders and most of the medicine men, contrary, were the cardinal source about the story of Urameslegwa and several of men' collaborators actively participated in the ritual *gijojenda* performed by a special old widowed woman.

Conclusion

All mentioned discussed aspects – marriage, fertility, possibility to inherit cows in a form of dowry, to be part of the women council, be the carrier of the highest ritual position – are bonded with Urameselgwa and are expressed by wearing the leather skirt, which is still worn in the researched area inhabited by Buradiga women in Igunga district. Though the skirt is from the outside perspective perceived as a leftover or a reminder of the 'old times', contrary, from the Datooga's perspective, it gives women certain rights, a high social and ritual status in the pastoralists' society, unique in the wider view when considering East African pastoralists. The system of Datooga's ideas, thoughts, norms, and rituals gives a sense to the wearing of the skirts, through which the group of women represents themselves. The skirt is a manifestation of the Buradiga's identity, which is embedded in the remembered past transferred from one generation to the other in the 'right' time. Women transfer the knowledge to the daughters and daughters-in-law by teaching them how to sew it, how to worship or pray to Urameselgwa, so they transfer the practical skills. Men, on the contrary, treasure the theoretical sum of myths, ideas, and their meaning.

Coming back to the presumption mentioned at the beginning regarding schooling, it is not simply a right to wear the skirt, through which the society urges girls to marry, but also it is a 'ticket' to the Datooga women's world, a guarantee to sustain the identity of the ethnic group.

Bibliography

BIHARIOVÁ, Emília (2017): *Education in a Context of Traditional Herding Life of Semi-nomads Datooga in Central Tanzania.* Dissertation, Trnava: University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava.

BIHARIOVÁ, Emília (2015): We Don't Need No Education'. A Case Study About Pastoral Datooga Girls in Tanzania. In *Ethnologia Actualis* 15 (2), pp. 30-45.

BLYSTAD, Astrid (2004): On HIV, Sex and Respect: Local-Global Discourse Encounters among the Datooga of Tanzania. In *African Sociological Review* 8 (1), pp. 47-66.

BLYSTAD, Astrid (1996): Do give us children: The problem of fertility among the pastoral Barbayiiga of Tanzania. In Abdel Ahmed, Hassan Abel (eds.): *Managing Scarcity: Human Adaptation in East African Drylands*. Addis Abeba: Commercial Printing Enterprise, pp. 295-317.

BLYSTAD, ASTRID – REKDAL, Ole Bjørn (2004): Datooga. In Carol. R. Ember, Melvin Ember (eds): *Encyclopedia of Medical Anthropology*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, pp. 629-638.

BURTON, John W. (1991): Representation of the Feminine in Nilotic Cosmologies. In Anita Jacobson-Widding (ed): *Body and Space: Symbolic Models of Unity and Division in African Cosmology and Experience*. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International, pp. 81-98.

ELIFURAHA, Isaya Laltaika (2011): Tanzania. In Kathrin Wessendorf (ed): *Indigenous world 2011.* Copenhagen: Eks-Skolens Trykker, pp. 423-430.

GEERTZ, Clifford (1973): The Impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man. In *Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 45-46.

GOODENOUGH, Ward (1957): Cultural Anthropology and Linguistics. In Paul L. Garvin (ed): *Report on the 7th Annual Round Table Meeting in Linguistics and Language Study.* Washington/DC: Georgetown University, pp. 109-173.

HERBERT, Eugenia W. (1993): *Iron, Gender and Power: Rituals of Transformation in African Societies, African System of Thought.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

JACOBSON-WIDDING, Anita – VAN BEEK, Walter (1990): Introduction: Chaos, Order and Communion in the Creation and Sustenance of Life. In Anita Jacobson-Widding,

Walter van Beek (eds): *The creative Communion: African Folk Models of Fertility and Regeneration of Life.* Uppsala, Almqvist and Wiksell International, pp. 14-43.

KLIMA, George (1964): Jural Relations between the Sexes among the Barabaig. In *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 34 (1), pp. 9-20.

KLIMA, George (1970): *The Barabaig. East African cattle-herders*. Illinois: Waveland Press.

MHAJIDA, Samwel S. (2019): *The Collapse of a Pastoral Economy. The Datooga of Central and Northern Tanzania from the 1830s to the 2000s.* Dissertation, Göttingen: Georg-August-Universität Göttingen.

MOORE, Henrietta L. (1999): Introduction: Gender, Symbolism and Praxis: Theoretical Approaches. In Henrietta L. Moore, Todd Sanders, Bwire Kaare (eds): *Those Who Play with Fire: Gender, Fertility and Transformation in East and Southern Africa*. London: Athlone Press, pp. 3-37.

MUZALE, Henry R. T. – RUGEMALIRA, Josephat M. (2008): Researching and Documenting the Languages of Tanzania. In *Language Documentation and Conservation*, 2 (1), pp. 68-108.

SOUKUP, Václav (1994): *Sociální a kultúrní antropologie*. Praha: Slon.

YOUNG, Alyson (2008): *Young Child Health among Eyasi Datooga: Socioeconomic Marginalization, Local Biology, and Infant Resilience within the Mother-Infant Dyad*. Dissertation, Tucson: University of Arizona.

YOUNG, Alyson (2018). *Datooga.* Accessed April 30 2018.
https://alysongyoung.org/Datooga/.

Emília Bihariová († 2019) was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Ethnology and World Studies at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. Her research focused on changes in the pastoralists' life of semi-nomadic Datooga in Eastern Africa, writing on subjects of educational issues, girls' schooling, identity, ritual and impact of Christianity. She conducted research on ethnic conflict among Datooga and their Bantu neighbors in central Tanzania as well as on pastoral Maasai and their ability to adapt in the urban area on the example of Stone Town, Zanzibar.

36

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Fracas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

SAMWEL MHAJIDA

College of Eduaction, Dar es Salaam University, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
mhajida@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the Datooga resistance to the British land law as announced by the Land Ordinance in 1923. The discussion centres itself in the provocation that the law implied and commanded on the local Datooga's ownership and control of the natural resources within the jurisdiction of the chief. The Datooga as shown in the paper were probably the first to openly resist the public ownership of resources as announced by the Ordinance, because for the Datooga the land resources, particularly the salt deposits from Balangida Lalu or any other that fell within the reach and borders of their chief's power were completely Datooga. The pinnacle of this contradiction is whether local chiefs in colonial Tanganyika understood the limits of what the British had claimed to offer to the local chiefs or they sometimes needed to resist what they considered undesirable situation. The salt fracas in Mbulu district that the paper discusses is an indicator of the irony of colonialism that offered local chiefs political power which the recipients could not use beyond the colonial framework.

KEY WORDS: colonial order, Datooga chiefs, ethnic identity, salt fracas

Introduction

The histories of public and private properties are still drawing many interests from across academic disciplines. Discussions on these two aspects range from rights of individuals to property, the evolution of property relations and its execution within the national parameters.

37

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

While on the other end, public property is often presented by economists as inefficient due to rent dissipation, lack of direct ownership until they are captured and unproductive struggle to tame them (ÖSTROM 1999:334-335). In some instances, the common property is presented as a pre-capitalist dispensation and allocation of property which means that the more societies become complex and capitalistic the more they throw away the common practice.

In the context of Tanzania, the debate about the two aspects has more historical conglomerations. This is because of the historical circumstances regarding socialism and the fundamentals of *ujamaa* (Swahili word that means shared together) which cherished the traditional family through shared public property in what Nyerere called it basic goods of life (NYERERE 1968:106) was not completely unproductive. In the Tanzanian case, the difference between the two especially in the postcolonial era is possibly slim and controversial.

But taking this subject in the spectrum of colonial era, the conception put forward by Östrom possibly fits the British colonial context. The public and private properties are not without conflictual meanings. In the context of the British or any colonial order, tribalism as a vocabulary was introduced into the mind of the Africans and most importantly with communal identity (PARSONS 2012:496). In that regard, public property meant not individual but state owned. So while private property was somehow clearly delineated, the public nature of it was not. This paper tries to disentangle how such conflicting phenomena did also ingrain the social and political life of the Datooga in what was called by the British the salt fracas. I address this problem from a wider British establishment in Tanganyika in the early 1920s and the local/indigenous response to it. Lastly, I address also the subject of colonial resistance that picks it away from the always common understanding of African colonial resistance that sees the African chiefs/sultan as safeguarding their political interests in terms of rights to remain leaders of a local community, while economically, such interests would range from trading monopoly and worries against new competitors.

The Datooga and their neighbours: the creation of tribal Territories in Central Tanzania and its limits in the colonial contexts

The Datooga (Tatog, Taturu, Datoga) are communities which comprise more than 12 subgroups of the Datooga (*emoojiga* Datooga meaning the community of Datooga) who settle in northern, north western and central parts of Tanzania. They are specifically settled in

38

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

modern days Manyara, Singida, Tabora and Mara regions (MHAJIDA 2019:48; BLYSTAD 2000:48; BIHARIOVÁ 2016:46). The community has such diverse sub groups which made some colonial sociologists to mistakenly list them as independent tribes (GULIVER 1959:74). The biggest subgroups of the Datooga are the Barbaig (Mang'ati) who are estimated to be 100,000 (BLYSTAD 2000:48). Others are the Brediga who settle along the Wembere River in western Tanzania (MHAJIDA 2019:42; BIHARIOVÁ 2016:48), the Rotigeng who are considered remnants of the Maasai raids of the 1830s and 1860s and live south Serengeti in Mara region. Many of the Rotigeng communities were uprooted in the Serengeti by Operation *Vijiji* (Swahili word for hamlets) in 1974 (MHAJIDA 2019:181). The Taturu are mostly in Singida, Tabora and Shinyanga. In Manyara there are still scattered Datooga groups who identify themselves as Gisamjeng, Dororajeg, Isemjang, Nyanyewda, Bisiyeda, Daragwajega and Gidang'odiga (BLYSTAD 2000:47; INFORMANT 2:07.01.15). Some other Datooga subgroups like the Barakushega and Sisiga in Dodoma, have completely vanished while only a few Gogo people in the villages around Kintinku and villages around in the north of Dodoma still trace their origin to the Datooga migrants of the 19th century; though most of them have not retained traces of Datooga culture (INFORMANT 2:07.01.15).

The Datooga mentioned above have had a long and tumultuous history. Their social and political landscapes in the last two centuries have been volatile and affected by the ruptures of the 19th century (SHETLER 2006). Part of the ruptures was the Datooga violent encounters with Arab and Swahili slave traders and later colonial activities (BURTON 1860; SHETTLER 2006; INFORMANT 1 2015). There is one specific reason why central Tanzania was also one of the affected regions. The effects are a mixture of constructive tendencies of the ruptures on one hand, and destruction on the other. As Mathias Mnyampala correctly says, by the late 19th century, the region was sparsely populated, so it was considered by many communities as a place of refuge from violence or any other displacement factors (MNYAMPALA – MADDOX 1995:43-44). So the savannas of central Tanzania ultimately became sanctuaries for communities especially those running from the Arab slave raiders in western Tanzania and Maasai raids. This is the reason why ultimately the region became a mosaic of diverse communities of the Bantu, the Cushitic, Nilotes and Bushnoids (LUSEKELO 2016:5; MHAJIDA 2019:59; MNYAMPALA – MADOX 1995:44). According to Mnyampala, Ugogo and the entire central Tanzania region, communities like Wagogo, Nyaturu and Nyiramba who occupy the region today are recent social and cultural units who resulted from the 19th century blending of cultures of the Wanyamwezi, Kimbu and Hehe (MNYAMPALA – MADOX 1995: 44; SHORTER 1968:240).

In addition to the Arab, Swahili and the general Trans Indian traders, the role of what Becker has called the politics of big men of the 19th century is also decisive in the making up of

39

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

ethnic regions and territories in the region (BECKER 2004:6). Picking up from these drivers of change in the region, we should acknowledge the roles of Chief Mirambo and the resulting succession conflicts after the death of Mkasiwa in 1972 which resulted into the expulsion of Nyungu ya Mawe (the name means a pot of stone) to Ukimbu. This disrupted the Wakimbu and further pulled the war beyond the Unyamwezi to Singida and Ugogo (KIMAMBO 1969:72; SHORTER 1968: 239). In addition to the Nyamwezi factor, the Arab wars had similar consequences. One exemplary case was captured by Richard Burton while crossing the region in 1860, where he tells of the enterprising Wataturu around Tura, whom he saw with asses with "neat saddle-bags of zebra skin." Burton adds that this party "brought calabash or monkey-bread flour in this country, as in Ugogo, a favourite article of consumption and a little coarse salt" (BURTON 1860:220). For the Datooga, the trade in salt (processed either by drying mud from a *mbuga* (a blackish soil which is very common in the savanna plains in Tanzania) or by extracting it from Lake Balangida Lalu (Eyasi) in exchange for *holcus* grass and beads was not new (BURTON 1860:221). It is important to note that the participation of the Datooga in the trade, whether local or within the Trans-Indian Ocean trade, was primarily scant. Datooga groups remained on the periphery of trade, where the center was controlled by the Nyamwezi and their Arab allies, whose control of trade in Tabora had made the town a metropole of west and central Tanzania. Regarding the negative side of the trade, the trade brought break downs all weaved within the politics of big me. Burton further observed that:

"This wild pastoral people were formerly rich in flocks and herds… about five years ago, however, they were persuaded by Msimbira, a chief of Usukuma to aid him against his rival Mpagamo, who had called in the Arabs, as has been related, were worsened in the field, and the Wataturu suffered severe losses in cattle" (BURTON 1860:220).

The Datooga and Iraqw elders retold the same story differently, referring to those recruits of Msimbira as people who were involved in "the Datooga Rascal Domain" (MBULU DISTRICT BOOK 1930). According to the narrative, by 1852, the Arab traders had established formidable trading and political power in the region, particularly in Tabora. Nervous about Mirambo's growing power and the threat to Arab trading interests, the Arabs entered a coalition with a local Sukuma leader Mpagamo. Subsequently, Mirambo formed similar alliances with other ethnic groups in an attempt to bolster his competitive advantage against the Arabs. This alliance seeking behavior among leading enterprising communities forced immediate communities and those that were at the periphery like the Gisamjeng – Datooga to be drawn into the politics of self–made traders or power brokers (BECKER 2004:4-6). The recruitment of the Gisamjeng by Msimbira in the war against Mirambo led to a loss of cattle by the Gisamjeng. This event is also presented by the Gisamjeng as a lie that

40

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

lured them into a complex war that impacted their population. According to the Gisamjeng, the "rascal domain that misled the tribe and lured them with lies to trek to Tabora, there most of them died" can be historically verified (MBULU DISTRICT BOOK VOL. 3 1930). While the "rascal domains" motivations and the trick remains unexplored in its details, what can be said is that the conflict was disastrous for the Datooga groups involved. Not only were they decimated, but "the remnants of this unhappy race drifted once more to Mbulu, hungry and poor" (MBULU DISTRICT BOOK VOL. 3 1930), they also became an increasingly marginalised group fighting to cement their own identity against other larger and more powerful ethnic establishments.

Identity, territory and colonial encounter

Three things were very important as a result of the 19th century circumstances. One was the fact that the century brought the formation of ethnic and language groups in central Tanzania. The Datooga as migrants from Serengeti transported their identities and group consciousness into Singida as complete and mature (KIDAMALA – DANIELSON 1961:67-68; LINDOSTROEM n.d. 21-22). Secondly, the Datooga and the Maasai apart from the above forces seemed to have produced a remarkable contribution in the formation of territorial consciousness among the people in central and northern Tanzania. The Maasai wars in the 19th century assisted in the formation of ethnicity, for instance among the Wagogo by the late 19th century "all young people in Ugogo spoke Maasai language and those who could not were laughed at" (MNYAMPALA – MADOX 1995:44). Similarly, Kidamala observed the same trends on the influence of the Datooga to the Nyiramba who taught them the art of war and the value of land and leadership (KIDAMALA 1961:68). Thirdly, by 1900, each society in central Tanzania was at least geographically settled (MNYAMPALA – MADDOX 1995:43). In this regard, the German colonial establishment recognized this ethnic alignment and produced boundaries between regions, districts and villages according to ethnic settlements. But these boundaries were defined by geographical features like rocks, mountains/hills, trees, rivers and any promontory features of any significance. Many German colonial arrangements had such reports on ethnic boundaries from 1911 (TNA: G36/4), most of them constructed arbitrarily, one of the German reports states the following:

Now the whole district is divided into jumbes, which are grouped according to the individual branches. In many cases, the individual tribes are divided into several jumbe companies.

41

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial
Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

Among the jumbe are the Wanyampara, which include a small number of huts (TNA: G31/163).

The British conquered Mbulu from the retreating German soldiers in 1916 (MHAJIDA 2019:79). The British occupied Mbulu largely already organized within the Germany colonial administrative framework. So the first Datooga chief was Malomba. He accidentally acquired the position, when the rest of other Datooga were far from the reach of the colonizers. There was another important thing that gave Malomba advantage over the rest, he stayed close to the northern trade route to the Great Lakes, so had contacts with Swahili traders and so spoke some Swahili. So when the Germans came to the area, Malomba was quickly spotted and was given a status of a chief. Though Malomba was publicly denounced by the mainstream Datooga as illegitimate instead they considered his rival Gazeri the father of Gishingaded as lawfully jumbe. So throughout German colonial times, the Datooga had two chiefs, a pro – government chief (*chief ya serkali*) and the pro-Datooga, (*chief ya Datooga*) (TNA: Accession 69, file P.51). The two opposed each other on many issues especially pertaining to German colonial interests and those of the Datooga. Against all odds, Malomba persevered until he passed the banner of chiefship to his son Gidahoda.

Basically, there was a significant difference between the ethnic geographical consciousness that was acquired by the Datooga and other communities in the 19th century and the one that the colonial establishment brought in. Colonialism meant a total colonization of land and people and their political jurisdictions. The first tension that the British colonial system extensively wrestled with in the Datooga country was an attempt to resist the colonial exclusive rights on land matters. The early protest against the colonial definition of the public property was led by Chief Gidahoda Malomba of the Datooga – Barabaig in 1923. His protest started as irritations that came from the Rangi people from the neighbouring District of Kondoa. Chief Gidahoda claimed that the Rangi people, when entering his country for honey expeditions, also brought tsetse fly. The chief also accused the Rangi of burning grass, which was precious for the survival of their cattle. The following letter from Chief Gidahoda summarizes the alleged sources of conflict:

"I am informing you through this letter or letting you know. Now, I tell you this, the day 19.9.23, I have seen something bad in my country which was brought from the direction of your country. This thing is fire. Your people have burnt down grass in the direction of Akida Binde Changaha, and the fire went uncontrollably to Balagda Dalala (Sic.), and many

42

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial
Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

bomas[1] have been burnt out. So our cattle do not have anything to eat, all the grass is gone. You know our power we Mangati dwells in cattle, our food come from them, and our water is cattle. My people are in trouble; their bomas have been burnt down. Our cattle are also in trouble. I am in the process of migrating from here, but I know if I dare move to your country you will arrest me and all of my property will be confiscated. And if I migrate to Singida, they will imprison me as well and my property will be taken. Now, tell me if I must come to you or what? Because in my country there is no more fodder left for my cattle. Now look for the man who set these fires, because he has brought war of fire and is expelling me from my own country. Now my decision is this, tell your people that they are not allowed to come for salt nor come for honey expeditions in my forest. If I see your people in my country, I will arrest them and please don't be annoyed[2]" (Emphasis is added by the author) (TNA, accession 69, file P.51: Jumbe Gidahoda's letter to Jumbe Salimu Kimolo of Sikole (Kondoa).

This letter contains serious warnings and definitely more lingering aspects which need to be discussed in detail. Firstly, the chief Gidahoda wrote through a secretary and unconventionally sent the letter directly to the "aggressor" community. In doing this, the chief Gidahoda affirmed the seriousness of the matter. And this had another implication on the Datooga, Gidahoda exerted his power as both *chifu ya* Datooga and chief *ya serkali,* but he did so without realising his had created bigger implications especially as far as the British colonial order was concerned. Secondly, the letter was the first indicator of the growing disturbance and anxiety of the Datooga concerning the infiltration of other communities into their country. The consistent usage of the word *nchi yangu* (my country*)* from the local chiefs' point of view completely opposed the order of the colonial authorities regarding common property. Therefore, Gidahoda's letter showed the predicament of the Datooga as a result of the colonial "tribal" border regulations. The border regulations created uneasy relations with neighbouring communities in the three Districts of Mbulu, Singida and Kondoa. As both the chief and spokesperson of his people, Gidahoda defined the economy of his people (their power) as basically pastoralist. Therefore, whoever attacked the survival of the cattle also attacked the entire Datooga community. The last observation from the letter

---

[1]   This is normally a household of a Datooga or any other pastoralist which has a collection of houses or just a single house where such house(s) are attached to a cattle kraal made of thorns or poles of different trees. In colonial Tanganyika, a boma was also a popular name for the district or government offices.

[2]   TNA, accession 69, file P.51: Jumbe Gidahoda's letter to Jumbe Salimu Kimolo of Sikole (Kondoa). (Translated from its original Swahili version).

43

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

concerned the tribal space and limitations that each "tribal" chief was bound to protect or expand.

After the letter had been sent to Sultan Salimu Kimolo of Sikole in Kondoa without going through the District Administrative Officers of the two Districts, the immediate effect was evident. The first reaction of the Acting Chief Secretary of the colony recommended to the Provincial Commissioner that the Warangi should be ordered not to go into the Datooga country for honey (TNA 69, FILE P.51). The Warangi were therefore prohibited from honey expeditions in the Datooga country. Although the direct letter among local African chiefs such as the one by Gidahoda was rebuked and later was punished by the District Officer in Mbulu, this opened for more complex agitations from the Datooga community as they unfolded their resistance against the common property.

The salt dispute expanded the magnitude of the conflict between the Datooga and the neighbouring communities and at the same time increased tensions with the British colonial government.[3] While the honey expedition issue was quickly resolved, the salt lingered on. The difficulties that surfaced concerned how ethnic territories were superficially defined in British colonial eyes, which created tensions between the ethnic collective/common property as opposed to the public (government) sphere.

The problem was mainly on the lake Balangda Lalu (Lake Eyasi). The salt from Lake Balangda Lalu located in the Datooga country was a source of trade to Nyiramba, Nyaturu and other neighbouring communities. Juhani Koponen suggests that the salt in the Eyasi Lake was a huge source of a pre-colonial trade network that attracted not only the surrounding communities but also people from as far as eastern Nyanza. The argument that these communities paid a certain fee to the Datooga to access the salt and then used it as a trading commodity is not farfetched[4] (KOPONEN 1988:234). Apart from indicating the true scale of the demand for salt, a revealing article by H.S. Senior on the salt issue in Lake Balangda Lalu written in 1938 does not mention the involvement of the Datooga. Senior shows that the salt acquired from Eyasi was a huge asset to the communities involved:

"To give some idea of the numbers who make the journey: fourteen hundred people were seen, some going to, and some coming from the lake, in two days. It is estimated that at least

---

[3]   TNA, accession 69, file P.51: Tatog Affray.

[4]   The Nyaturu were apparently mentioned as key salt traders in pre-colonial central Tanzania, taking possibly their sources of salt from the Datooga country. See for instance KOPONEN 1988a:234.

44

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

thirty thousand people make the journey to Nyaranja (Eyasi) annually from the various areas of the [sic.] Shinyanga, Kwimba, Mwanza and Maswa Districts" (SENIOR 1938:87).

Senior's observation summarises the Chief Gidahoda's argument of the true influence of salt in the economy of the Datooga and the rest of the communities. As the Sukuma popular adage says "he who has salt never starves" (SENIOR 1938:90). Since this resource was within Datooga country, the Datooga believed it to be their own gifts from God to enable them buy *matama* (cereals), axes, cooking pots and other needs. The number of people who converged around tha Balangda Lalu lake had established very elaborate exchange relations powered by the salt from Datooga land. This fact shows that since the pre-colonial period, salt was a key resource. The Datooga maintained "that no one ever obtained salt free until the establishment of European administration" (TNA 69, FILE P.51). It appears that the salt problem was also a contentious issue in the German colonial period, although the tensions are not brought to attention in many of the sources that I encountered.

Examining the protests expressed in a letter by Sultan Gidahoda, we can see that the underlying problem for the Datooga-Rangi conflict was not about who owned the salt deposits. Rather, why should one harvest the salt without payment and acknowledgement of the authority behind? The Datooga refused to agree that the salt from the lake that had been within their surroundings for centuries was now public property- as defined by the Datooga, "free for everybody" (TNA 69, FILE P.51) and that they had no control over this resource. But the public property domain was not a British invention in Tanganyika. The German colonial government established the Crown land-Ordinance in November 26th 1895.[5] On the British side, the Land Ordinance (Cap. 68 of the Laws) copied the above-mentioned German law in its form and contents. Its definition of the land tenure insisted that:

"under this ordinance the whole of the lands in the Territory are declared to be public lands under the control and subject to the disposition of the Governor to be held and administered for the use of the common benefit, direct or indirect, of the natives of the Territory, but the validity of any title to land or interest therein lawfully acquired before the date of the Ordinance is not affected thereby. On the enactment of this Ordinance the German law and

---

[5] *Schriftverkehr in Landangelegenheiten, provisorischer Militärbezirk* Kilimatinde. Part of the Ordinance reads: "In respect to property claims or otherwise material claims are private or juristically persons, chiefs or other native communities could legally claim…all land within German East Africa is to be ownerless Crown land." TNA, G 55/ 64

45

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

practice as to the granting of public land cease to be in force in the Territory" (TNA 1934:26).

It is not a coincidence that the Ordinance appeared in 1923 and the Datooga were among the first to resist its definition of public sphere. This refusal was witnessed two months after Chief Gidahoda's angry letter: that the Datooga began to arrest several Rangi and Nyiramba going for salt as they had warned in the letter. Some of these salt harvesters were allegedly molested while others became victims of a Datooga culture of *kufaa Umardadi* (TNA 69, FILE P.51).[6] Nine days after the letter was issued, the Datooga found the Wanyiramba at the salt site and restrained them from taking the salt. In addition to this, they reportedly "t[ook] from one to three men or women where they were well fed and kept the night" (TNA 69, FILE P.51). This was the beginning of accomplishing the *kufaa Umardadi*. The kidnapped Wanyiramba were told to pass over a beam placed across the doorway of their host homes, and then water was sprinkled over their chests. The crossing of the beam symbolised that they were going backwards from adulthood into a childhood state (TNA 69, FILE P.51). The British administrators added that after this symbolic act, these motivated Datooga youths took about 23 Wanyiramba to their Chief, possibly thinking they would be cheered for what they had done. Instead, the Chief gave them lashes. It seems that chief Gidahoda was not impressed by the public spectacle that the Datooga youths were making of the whole issue. A few days later on November 6th 1923, a group of more than 100 Wanyiramba men and women going for salt in the Datooga country were caught by surprise by a similar number of Datooga men who inquired why were they there. Part of this story was told by the administrative officer for Mkalama, Kondoa-Irangi Perham, as follows:

"[They] approached them and asked them by whose order they were coming to dig salt. They replied that they were come (Sic.) at their own bidding and asked "have we not permission to dig salt?" The Tatoga replied 'it is our order that you may not dig salt'. The Tatoga were armed with spears and sticks and were seem (Sic.) to strike several women with the latter.

---

[6] *Kufaa umardadi* in the today standard Swahili is *kuvaa umaridadi*, and this means wearing smart. This culture was embedded in the capture of a supposedly enemy neighbour; its meaning in the context of 1923 is very obscure. According to the British officers, the tradition then was taking the latter to one's *boma*, and "on arrival to their houses they made the Wanyiramba pass over a beam placed across the door way and water was sprinkled over their chests, this I understand to be the old native custom when they kidnapped people." Then the captured were fed and after few days of traditional performances the victims were let free and accompanied back to their homes. The culture therefore gave those captors something to celebrate, wear ornaments such as bracelets, beads and others as a realization for having an adult 'child.'

No one was, apparently seriously hurt. The Tatoga also threw salt in the eyes of the Aniramba. The aniramba had not yet obtained their salt and were prevented from getting any. They were split into separate small groups and led away captive by the Tatoga" (TNA 69, FILE P.51).

The assault made some Nyiramba and Rangi avoid the salt expeditions in the Datooga *nchi*. When they went on salt expeditions, they had to be covered by a government escort. At this juncture, the Datooga relations with their neighbours slowly became difficult. Oral accounts collected around this time did not reveal an outright state of violence but rather showed the beginning of fearful co-existence among the ethnic groups. What changed the situation was the reaction by the District colonial administration. The British colonial officers, who represented the public space as enshrined in the 1923 Land Ordinance, clashed with the Datooga who were ingrained within "tribal" institutions and authority. From the Datooga point of view, colonial maps, which were handed down from the German period, represented real borders that delineated the public and their own spaces. The Datooga understood public to mean territories that were outside ethnic spheres. It was therefore inconceivable for the Datooga that such maps, which defined what was theirs, were openly defied by the same people who introduced them as guides to the boundaries of economic space. It was a fallacy to them that salt within their borders was public but the land was Datooga. The multiple meanings of *nchi*, its borders and power over its resources were at the heart of the controversies. As a way of enforcing the British understanding of public space, they made sure that the salt matter was dealt with severity. Following the Datooga actions, it was estimated that between 70 and 80 Datooga pastoralists were arrested and later fined 3 heifers each (a total of 210 or 240 collected cattle). Some were confined in garrisons in Mbulu and a threat of a more severe punishment if such "offences" "were repeated was communicated to the Datooga" (TNA 69, FILE P.51).

Apart from the punishments described above, the British colonial officers wanted to find a lasting solution to the salt matter. Colonial administrators argued that "large parties of natives from Kondoa-Irangi and Mkalama come yearly to the lake; recently the Stock Inspector in Mbulu reported that on 2 days while he was at the lake some 500 Wanyaramba per day were taking salt" (TNA 69, FILE P.51). After issuing a verdict that punished the Datooga – Barbaig in the salt 'fracas,' the District Administrative Officers for Mbulu and Mkalama visited the conflict area. The first person to do so was the District Administration Officer for Mbulu from November 21st to 29th 1923. Another officer from Mkalama visited Datooga country from the 24th to 26th of the same month. The Mkalama officer was accompanied by 29 Nyiramba people as victims and witnesses of the previous Datooga salt assaults. These two visits, which were supposed to be a part of a fact finding mission, were nothing but a strategy

47

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial
Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

of crushing the Datooga's confidence and particularly Chief Gidahoda's claims to salt. In addition, the two expeditions of British Administrative Officers which converged later at Ntimitiki, the eastern shore of the Lake Balangda Lalu used the occasion to reinforce the colonial government's position that the lake was part of the public sphere. Similar government impositions on the public property discourse appeared in other prior meetings between the 'native' *barazas* (meetings) and the British colonial administrators. As the following indicates:

"At the senior Commissioner's Baraza *[public meeting] at Dareda that day (12ᵗʰ October) all present were informed that the salt was public property and they were not to stop people taking it, also the quarantine regulations i.e crossing the Mkalama or Singida border without a veterinary pass were impressed on them, these regulations were also impressed on them at a Baraza at a Mumurang on 29ᵗʰ August"* (TNA 69, FILE P.51).

After the administrative Officers' visits and *barazas* there were several scattered episodes of resistance of the Datooga against the British public space discourse. After the Dareda *Baraza*, the Datooga youths' actions against the Nyiramba and Rangi salt diggers were secretive and spontaneous. The chief's letter that created the first spark of resistance was no longer important, though it was constantly referred to by the British administrators as the first symbol of defiance. The chief's fear of imprisonment made him resolve to adhere strictly the duties of *chifu ya serkal*. For instance, he started to collaborate to pass verdicts and punishments upon the Datooga youths who resisted. The sultan's aversion to government support would later haunt him in his position as a colonial chief. The Datooga interpreted the "conversion" of their chief to duties of *chifu ya Serkali* instead of those of *chifu ya Datooga* as an open betrayal. Therefore, Datooga youths were increasingly taking matters into their own hands and continued to arrest "alien" salt harvesters through the guise of *kufaa umardadi;* as the following extract attests:

"About 7ᵗʰ November a similar occurrence took place but the captors took their captives to their houses, and not to their sultan, making them go through the same ceremony as described above, feeding them well and in some cases giving them presents such as hides and beams, and food for the road and in nearly every case the captors claimed having accompanied their captives to the salt place the following morning and seeing that they get their salt and they were not arrested again. They were obviously not carrying out sultan Gidahoda's threat at stopping people getting salt" (TNA 69, FILE P.51).

The changing of the resistance from physical encounter to a cultural manifestation was a result of British arrests and punishment. To avoid confrontation with the British while also continuing the resistance, the Datooga initiated the *kufaa umaridadi,* so that people entering

48

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

Datooga land for salt expeditions underwent and experienced "mockery arrests" to hide the true intention, which was still a resistance to what was regarded as their tribal sphere (INFORMANT 1 2015). With these changing tactics, the British also tightened their grip in dealing with these forms of resistance. It is difficult to understand the roots of *kufaa umardadi* as an invented cultural tool, because as far as the Datooga were concerned, the cultural practice seemed to have acquired prominence in the salt conflict. Years later, this invention translated into other forms of resistance including violence in the Singida-Mbulu border, popularly known as the Datooga "murders", and mass migration of Datooga youth from Mbulu onto other districts (MHAJIDA 2019).

The consequences of the salt fracas

The salt issue was not a simple and definitely and ease one especially for the Datooga. It brought many direct as well as indirect social and political costs for both individual and an entire Datooga community as noted earlier. The most significant impact that came over the Datooga was that for the first time, the community came to the spotlight of the British administrators in Northern and Central Provinces. The first major impact that affected the Datooga as a community was that their chief Gidahoda Malomba was sacked in 1927 because of charges of tax extortion (TNA 54, FILE 2/A). Thereafter, Gishingaded was given the mantle and mandate of a chief of the Datooga. However, Gishingaded never stayed long, he was also removed in less than a year. So the Datooga were placed under an Mrangi Chief as overseer until a formidable Datooga chief was erected (TNA 69, FILE P.51). At the same time, the British were growing weary of the Datooga leadership. In this account, the British summoned in 1927 a big meeting (*baraza*) in Dongobeshi of more than 150 local leaders from both Iraqw and Datooga. The agenda under this *baraza* was to push the Datooga into amalgamation into what the British called progressive individuals (the Iraqw). Further on this the British argued:

The Barabaig are an anachronism and cannot with the present outlook last very longer. Amalgamation and absorption is I think their only hope, and slow extinction, with their children neglected and left behind as a curiosity for the progeny of the progressive tribes the only alternative. The tribal boundary is only a line on the map and ignored by both sides; I know and record; without fear of contradiction that a very large number wish to amalgamate; join with a powerful tribe, under a just and satisfactory administration and receive their

49

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

share of full prosperity and progress. If undue notice is taken of future the type of elder I have endeavored to portray this will be impossible" (TNA 69, FILE 8/5/A).

The Dongobesh Baraza took place on 2nd of August 1927. The District relied on two interpreters Kwaidamwish for the Datooga and Galkaeh for the Iraqw for him to transcribe the conversation. It is important to emphasize that the entire meeting was poised on destroying the Datooga concept of *nchi* as something contradictory. The Datooga's conception of land and its resources rested on the fact that such assets could be owned like cattle or farms. For the British, this was treasonous; the Datooga had to know clearly that local authority was there for the interests of the colonizers (PARSONS 2012: 497). This was the core of the whole matter. It is therefore an oversimplification of the whole matter if we suppose that the Datooga did not understand such a simple logic. What the Datooga were resisting was the allocation and definition of *nchi* and ethnic boundaries. So the Datooga understood also that the meeting called by the British officer sought to water down the conviction addressed by Gidahoda's letter. That is why all the Datooga whose opinions were jotted down by the British officer disagreed with the general opinion that an Iraqw chief should rule them. For instance, Gishema, after listening to the rest said "I am one of the Gismajeng wazee I only ask can a donkey mount an "*ngombe*" (cow) or vice-versa? Hence you cannot expect me to be placed under an alien chief" (TNA 69, FILE 54/MB/1). These same choruses were repeated by many Gisamjeng – Datooga. On the contrary, all the Iraqw present in the meeting agreed with the amalgamation policy.

Another vital consequence of the salt matter was more interference of the British on the Datooga livelihood. The most important is the beginning of the British policy of allowing more Iraqw people to come into the Datooga territories. The amalgamation policy was a delicate historical act which allowed more Iraqw agro-pastoralists into the Datooga land – what the Datooga continued to resist ever since. In his final letter to the British long time after he had been dismissed as a chief, Gidahoda believed he was at heart a chief of the Datooga even if the *serkali* power was over. In his self-made apostle of the Datooga land rights, Gidahoda wrote this final message:

"The serkali [Officer – Sic.] *has listened to the Wambulu.* Bwana *[master] we proved it was the Wambulu who did the murders in our country. They have got my country. Tell the Barotzl [British?] to give me back my country and I can and I shall rule my people. If there were no serkali there would not be an Mbulu in my country" (*TNA, Accession 69, FILE 51/1).

Gidahoda as a chief was very consistent on his usage of the word country. Since his first letter in 1923, his single message was 'leave alone the Datooga in their country." For Gidahoda, there was no contradiction at all in his message. In other words, though the

50

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

colonial boundaries in villages were physical, the Datooga, like many other communities, drew their maps in their hearts and passed the conviction to all the successive generation through oral messages. When it was possible to use the written word as a tool for their defense, they used it as well. After 1923, there was probably many letters written by the Datooga either through hiring or the use of their educated sons.

Conclusion

The paper has addressed several issues of importance. First is the question of identity formation as purely a product of the 19th century history in central and northern Tanzania. In the discussion, I have underscored the fact that there was no single major force that played more roles in the shaping of the ways communities came to be. The experience of communities differed in the way they exposed themselves to agents of change. Therefore, the communities copied a variety of cultures and experience of which some were lethal and changed such communities in a negative way. In this case, the Datooga were a victim as well as an aggressor, depending on the contexts. Secondly, the issue of *nchi* as both enshrined in the British colonial policy or any colonial documents but also deeply fused in the geography of identity of individuals. The mentality and psychology of the Datooga chiefs as far as *nchi* was concerned was shared and strongly consistent. The third issue is the message of Chief Gidahoda's letter. He wrote it in 1923, but such a letter sparked a general Datooga resistance on one hand and provoked the British authorities to harass the Datooga on the other. Each reaction was equally widely expressed, but it was the British who were more reactionary. Even though the Datooga chief promised his neighbours a punishment, their response was rather lenient and soft. Lastly, there was a repercussion of actions of the two sides. Both were engaged in a non-agreement discourse that kept the two in unfitting ends throughout colonialism.

Bibliography

BECKER, Felicitas. (2004), "Traders, 'Big Men' and Prophets: Political Continuity and Crisis in the Maji Maji Rebellion in Southeast Tanzania", *Journal of African History*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (2004), pp. 1-22.

BURTON, Richard F. (1860): *The Lake Regions of Central Africa: A Picture of Exploration.* New York: Harper.

BLYSTAD, Astrid (2000): Precarious Procreation: Datoga Pastoralists at the Late 20th Century. PhD. thesis, Bergen: University of Bergen.

BIHARIOVÁ, Emília. (2016): Avoiding Christianity – a Weapon in Educating 'savage' Pastoralists: a Case Study of Nilotic Buradiga in Tanzania. In *Asia and Africa Studies* 25 (1), pp. 85-105.

FOSBROOKE, Henry A. (1948): An Administrative Survey of the Masai Social System. In *Tanganyika Notes and Records* 26, pp. 1-50.

FOSBROOKE, Henry A. (1950b): Sociological Report on the Iraqw of Mbulu with Particular Reference to Destocking." accession 69, file 54/1. Tanzania National Archive, Part of the extensive report by Henry. A. Fosbrooke, submitted to the District Commissioner for Mbulu in 1950.

GULLIVER, Phil H. (1959): A Tribal Map of Tanganyika. In *Tanganyika Notes and Records* 52, pp. 61-74.

JACKSON, C. H. N. (1942): The Mangati. In *Tanganyika Notes and Records* 13, pp. 1-6.

KIDAMALA, Daudi – DANIELSON, E. R. (1961): A Brief History of the Waniramba People up to the Time of the German Occupation. In *Tanganyika Notes and Records* (56), pp. 67-78.

KIMAMBO, Isaria N. (1969): *A Political History of the Pare of Tanzania, c 1500-1900.* Nairobi: East African Publishing House.

LAL, Priya (2010): Militants, Mothers, and the National Family: *Ujamaa,* Gender, and Rural Development in Postcolonial Tanzania. In *Journal of African History* 51 (1), pp. 1-20.

LUSEKELO, (2015): Amani, *The Hadzabe Society of Tanzania: Contacts, Sociolinguistics and Onomastics*, Ibadan, John Archers

MAFEJE, Archie (1971): The Ideology of 'Tribalism'. In *Journal of Modern African Studies* 9 (2), pp. 253-61.

MNYAMPALA, Mathias 1995. *The Gogo: history, customs, and traditions*, translated, introduced and edited by Gregory H. Maddox. New York: Sharpe.

NYERERE, Julius K. (1969): *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism.* Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press.

ÖSTROM, E. (1990), *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for*

52

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

Collective Action, Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

PARSONS, Timothy (2012): Being Kikuyu in Meru: Challenging the Tribal Geography of Colonial Kenya",In *Journal of African History*, V. 53, 65-86.

Senior, H. S. 1938. "Sukuma Salt Caravans to Lake Eyasi." *Tanganyika Notes and Records* 6: 87-90.

SHETTLER, Bender (2007): *Imagining Serengeti: A History of Landscape Memory in Tanzania from Earliest Times to the Present.* Athens: Ohio University Press.

SHORTER, Aylward (1972): *Chiefship in Western Tanzania: A Political History of the Kimbu.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Interviews

INFORMANT 1, 18.09.14. Kizonzo, Iramba District.

INFORMANT 2, 08.01.15. Sanjaranda Village.

Archival materials

TNA, accession 69, file 54/MB/1: Chiefship & Land Rights in Dongobesh Mbulu (Gitagano

TNA, *Mbulu District Book*, vol.3 (1930).

TNA, accession 108, file 2/A: Gogo Customary Law and Customs

TNA, *Manyoni District Book*, vol. 1 (1930): Wataturu from Manyoni

TNA, accession 108, file 2/21, a 1952–1953: Gogo Development.

TNA, accesssion 69 file 8/5/A, sociological research on the Iraqw of Mbulu district, by H.A Fosbrooke, 1950.

53

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

SAMWEL MHAJIDA
The Contempt of Public Property: the Datooga Salt Francas and the Resistance against Colonial Definition of Property in Central Tanzania (1923-1927)

Samwel S. Mhajida is a lecturer in history at the Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE). He is the author of *The Collapse of a Pastoralist Economy: The Datoga of Central and Northern Tanzania, from the 1830s to 2000s* (2019), Goetingen University Press. He is now working on the youth and informal economy in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania). For two semesters in 2015/16 and 2016/17 he was a Swahili lecturer at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Goettingen (Germany) and in April 2019 he participated in an Erasmus Mobility programme as lecturer at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Trnava (Slovakia). In addition to all these, the author is also a reviewer of various local and international journals. For the local journal he is a manuscript reader for *Tanzania Zamani: a Journal of History of Tanzania* and for the international ones he participates in the reviews for the *Springer Open Journals: Pastoralism.*

54

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Adaptation of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

AMANI LUSEKELO

Dar es Salaam University College of Education,
University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
alusekelo@duce.ac.tz

ABSTRACT

The exchange of linguistic materials between languages which come into contact is indeed reciprocal. The previous accounts of the outcome of contact between Datooga and Sukuma was skewed towards impact of Datooga on Sukuma. Based on ethnolinguistic vitality approach, the Datooga tend to reveal solidarity-related social identity by acquiring their language as a mother tongue. They also reveal prestige-related social identity by acquiring Sukuma language which is the prestigious lingua franca of the Itumba area in Igunga District. Moreover, the Datooga envisaged mechanisms to either isolate out-group members using their ethnonyms. Based on a list of 250 loanwords, this paper highlights the substitutive borrowing of kinship terms and additive borrowing of agricultural terms. The Sukuma loanwords penetrate into the Datooga lexicon.

KEY WORDS: language contact, lexical borrowing, Nilotic Datooga, Sukuma Bantu, Tanzania

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Introduction[1]

The Datooga pastoral community of Tanzania occupy a large area of central and northern Tanzania. Rottland divided the Datooga into the western dialects (Bianjida, Buradiga and Rotigenga) and eastern dialects (Bajuta, Barbaiga, Gisamjanga and Isimijega) (ROTTLAND 1983:216). Each of the two groups comes into contact with different ethnic groups in Tanzania. The western dialects are collectively called Taturu by non-Datooga communities (MHAJIDA 2019:173) and the name Taturu appears in the *Atlas of the Languages of Tanzania* (LOT[2] 2009:2). The non-Datooga people refer to the eastern communities as Mang'ati, but particularly the speakers of the Barbaiga dialect (KILMA 1970; MHAJIDA 2019). Thus, the intent of this article is to look at the outcome of contact between Bantu speaking communities and Datooga dialects in Mara, Singida and Tabora regions of Tanzania.

The outcome of language contact is reciprocal in that speakers of both languages which come into contact tend to exchange linguistic materials, primarily loanwords and sound systems, in both directions, i.e. donor community to recipient society and the vice versa is also true. This is confirmed by research in which larger communities surround smaller ones, e.g. in north-eastern Tanzania (NURSE 2000). The reciprocal exchange of linguistic materials is also confirmed in other communities in various countries (cf. HASPELMATH – TADMOR 2009; MATRAS 2009; THOMASON – KAUFMAN 1988). However, studies reported by ITANDALA (1980) and BATIBO – ROTLAND (2001) are inadequate because they discuss the impact of the Nilotic Datooga to the Sukuma Bantu. This paper, therefore, addresses the reverse in that it accounts for the penetration of the Sukuma loanwords into Datooga lexicon.

The choice of the impact of Sukuma on Datooga is purposeful because the Datooga people have many neighbouring communities. As stated above, the speakers of the dialects of Datooga, who are scattered in central and northern Tanzania, come into contact with many other communities. Based on the map published by Kiessling, Mous and Nurse, eleven different communities live close to the Datooga in just the Tanzanian Rift Valley area:

56

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Alaagwa, Gorowaa, Hadza, Iraqw, Maasai, Nyamwezi, Nyiramba, Nyisanzu, Rangi, Sandawe, and Sukuma (KIESSLING – MOUS – NURSE 2008:187). Consequently, an exchange of linguistic materials between Datooga and Sukuma is given by BATIBO – ROTLAND (2001), Datooga and Iraqw is reported in MOUS–QORRO (2009), and influence of Datooga on Hadzabe by LUSEKELO (2013a, 2015). The reverse, i.e. impact of other languages into Datooga, is inadequately covered, as it appears in passing in MITCHELL (2015a) who highlighted the penetration of Kiswahili words into the lexicon of Datooga.

The contact between the speakers of Datooga and Sukuma in Tabora and Shinyanga areas of Tanzania probably began around the 1700s. Based on Itandal, they might had been in contact for about 300 year now because the Datooga "gradually moved southwards would appear that they were in the vicinity of the Ruvana by 1600, but they do not seem to have had any notable contact with the Babinza or the other Wasukuma until the 1700s" (ITANDALA 1980:2). Mhajida accepted the narration that "the first group of Datoga migrants headed west and settled around Nzega, southwest of the Serengeti" (MHAJIDA 2019:56). Therefore, the exchange of the lexical words discussed in this paper is assumed to have taken place for about 300 years now.

The impact of the Sukuma language on Datooga cannot be underestimated because of the differences in socio-cultural and economic activities. On the one hand, the Datooga had been full-time nomadic pastoralists (ITANDALA 1980). On the other hand, between the 1700s and 1800s, the Sukuma people practised solely agriculture (ITANDALA 1980). However, recently some Datooga people had taken up agriculture, though they still keep livestock (CEPPI – NIELSEN 2014; MHAJIDA 2019). Given this difference, exchange of linguistic materials between Datooga and Sukuma is necessary in order to fill a lexical gap in the target language. Contributors in the volume of lexical borrowing by HASPELMATH – TADMOR (2009) highlighted that most lexical gaps involve words or items alien or foreign to the target languages. In this regard, agricultural activities and words involving farming turn alien to Datooga hence could be borrowed.

The influence of Bantu on Datooga is not a new phenomenon. Ehret presented the linguistic evidence of the contact of the groups speaking Nilotic, Cushitic and Bantu languages in East Africa. For instance, *mageemoojig* 'iron hoe' [<*magembe* 'iron hoes'] and *maargweeg* 'millet beer' [<*maalua* 'local brew'] represent some Bantu loanwords which were incorporated in Datooga lexicon (EHRET 1971:162). Both words bear origin in the agricultural community.

57

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Thus, investigation of the loanwords of Sukuma origin in the lexicon of Datooga turns to be a welcome contribution to make in order to understand the grammar of Datooga.

The linguistic evidence given in EHRET (1971) and BATIBO – ROTTLAND (2001) seem to suggest least impact of Sukuma to Datooga. However, Nurse highlighted correctly that in any situation of language contact, the number of speakers counts a lot (NURSE 2000). In fact, the speakers of majority languages tend to influence greatly the speakers of minority languages. The speakers of Sukuma outnumber, by far, the speakers of Datooga. Muzale and Rugemalira provide these statistics: Sukuma speakers in Tanzania: 5194553 and speakers of Datooga and Taturu: 161,449 (MUZALE – RUGEMALIRA 2008:79-80). In this regards, the Sukuma people are likely to impact greatly the Datooga.

The habitations of the Datooga people

The Datooga speaking people inhabit almost six regions of central and northern Tanzania today, namely Arusha (Karatu District), Manyara (Babati, Hanang and Mbulu Districts), Mara (Bunda and Serengeti Districts), Simiyu (Itilima, Maswa and Meatu Districts), Singida (Itigi, Iramba, Manyoni, and Mkalama Districts), and Tabora (Igunga District). The majority of the speakers are found in Hanang (KILMA 1970; ROTTLAND 1983; BLYSTAD 2000, 2005; LOT 2009), which was a district established purposefully for the settlement of the Datooga in the late 1980s (MHAJIDA 2019:179). Of these six regions, Simiyu and Tabora are primarily the hinterlands of Sukuma people as well (ITANDALA 1980; BATIBO – ROTTLAND 2001; MHAJIDA 2019).

The Datooga speaking people are divided into at least seven (language) dialects. Based on Rottland, now we can project the habitations of the dialects as follows: Bajuta, Gisamjanga and Isimijega dialects (Karatu, Mbulu and Mkalama Districts), Barbaiga dialect (Hanang and Mbulu Districts), Buradiga dialect (Igunga, Iramba, Itilima, Meatu, and Maswa Districts), Rotigenga dialect (Bunda and Serengeti Districts), and Bianjida dialect (Itigi and Manyoni Districts) (ROTTLAND 1983:216). The *Atlas of the Languages of Tanzania* provides estimates of the speakers of Datooga into two groups, namely Datooga: 138,777 and Taturu: 22,672 (LOT 2009:2). Table 1 provides the distribution of these speakers. These communities

58

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

are located in almost in the Rift Valley area of Tanzania, as provided by KIESSLING – MOUS – NURSE (2008).

Regions	Districts	Number of Speakers	Additional Information
Arusha	Karatu	8,806 (Datooga)	---
Manyara	Babati	6,869 (Datooga)	---
	Mbulu	7,639 (Datooga)	---
	Hanang	88,982 (Datooga)	plus 3,946 (Taturu)
Mara	Bunda	2,397 (Taturu)	---
	Serengeti	1,261 (Taturu)	---
Shinyanga	Meatu	2,492 (Taturu)	---
Singida	Itigi	2,199 (Datooga)	plus 5,252 (Taturu)
Tabora	Igunga	1,745 (Taturu)	---

Figure 1: *The distribution of the speakers of Datooga (LOT 2009:2; 2002 census)*

The dispersal of the Datooga hinterlands invites contact with several speaker communities. Kiessling, Mous and Nurse present fourteen speaker communities in the Rift Valley area of Tanzania: Alaagwa, Burunge, Datooga, Gorowaa, Hadzabe, Iraqw, Maasai, Mbugwe, Nyamwezi, Nyaturu, Nyiramba, Nyisanzu, Rangi, and Sukuma (KIESSLING – MOUS – NURSE 2008:188). In the margins of the Rift Valley area, the Datooga (Taturu) people come into contact with the Nyamwezi and Sukuma, who are genetically affiliated communities (ITANDALA 1980; MASELE 2001). Therefore, the focus of this paper is on the outcome of the Datooga–Sukuma contact.

The outcome of the contact between these communities is reported, though in passing. Ehret presents the Datooga loanwords in Nyaturu Bantu (1) and Bantu loans in Datooga grammar in (2). The attestation of the Datooga loanwords in Nyaturu and Bantu loans in Datooga is an evidence which substantiates the contact of these communities.

(1)   NYATURU WORDS   DATOOGA STEMS

   digida 'donkey'   *digeed* 'donkey'

   lughumida 'hide finger ring'   *luugmeed* 'hide finger ring'

   muli 'dark red cow'   *mur* 'brown cow'

   senuku 'dark cow'   *saenaeku* 'dark'

   siuli 'white cow'   *siiwoold* 'eland'

(2)   DATOOGA WORDS   BANTU STEMS

   buulaaliid 'bed'   laala 'to sleep'

   maadiingood 'large wooden spoon'   matinko 'wooden spoon'

   maadaenjaend 'dried meat'   tanda 'to spread out'

   mageemoojig 'iron hoe'   magembe 'iron hoe'

   maargweeg 'millet beer'   maalua 'local brew'

                     (EHRET 1971:150, 162).

The outcome of the contact with other ethnic community languages (shorthand: ECLs) in the Datooga habitation is reported. For instance, in Hanang and Mbulu districts, the Datooga come into contact with the Iraqw and Hadzabe (KIESSLING – MOUS – NURSE 2008; LUSEKELO 2015). An exchange of linguistic materials between Iraqw and Datooga is reported by MOUS – QORRO (2009). The examples in (3) illustrate this point. Apart from Kiswahili, Mous and Qorro insisted, there are numerous Datooga borrowings in Iraqw in the area of cattle colours, cattle names, and cattle diseases (MOUS – QORRO 2009). This phenomenon was also reported by Batibo and Rottland for Datooga loans in Sukuma.

60 ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

(3) IRAQW WORDS   DATOOGA STEMS

   areer 'red (as cow colour)'   *areera* 'red'

   gídabá 'because'   *aba gidɛɛba* 'because'

   gwanda 'ram'   *lagweenda* 'ram'

   iidígw 'news'   *iidiga* 'news'

   muur 'brownish'   *muru* 'brown cow'

   nawéet 'name for cow born on the road'   *naweeda* 'road'

                                                    (MOUS – QORRO 2009:111-113).

The linguistic situation of Tanzania allows many languages to co-exist and the official languages to dominate ECLs. The impact of Kiswahili on Chingoni (MAPUNDA – ROSENDAL 2015), Iraqw (MOUS – QORRO 2009), and Kisafwa (MSANJILA 2004) provide enough evidence to highlight the power of Kiswahili over ECLs. Baldi gives evidence to substantiate the impact of Arabic loans in Kiswahili which penetrated into East African languages, including Nilo-Saharan ones such as Acooli (Uganda), Dholuo (Kenya and Tanzania), Ma'di (Uganda and Sudan), and Pokoot (Kenya and Uganda) (BALDI 2011, 2012). In fact, Datooga is not unique in this regard. In line with a specialised study of avoidance register amongst the Datooga women, Mitchel lists some Kiswahili loans in Datooga (4)

(4) DATOOGA WORDS   KISWAHILI STEMS

   bâanga 'machete'   *paanga* 'machete'

   bàl(à)bála 'road'   *barabara* 'road'

   bìkpík 'motorbike, scooter'   *pikipiki* 'motorbike, scooter'

   sàbúuni 'soap'   *sabuni* 'soap'

   sàmàháan 'sorry'   *samahan*i 'sorry'

                                     (MITCHEL (2015a:208).

Now we return back to the Datooga–Sukuma contact situation in Tanzania. Based on Table 1 above, the contact between Datooga and Sukuma occurred in Shinyanga (now Simiyu) and Tabora regions as from the 1850s. It involved the Taturu, as they are called by non-Datooga

61

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

speaking communities (KILMA 1970; MHAJIDA 2019:56-57). The primary data presented and discussed in subsequent sections come primarily from Igunga District, which is the home of the Buradiga dialect in Wembere plains (BIHARIOVÁ 2016; MHAJIDA 2019).

The Taturu people (Buradiga and Bianjida dialects) had been in contact with the Sukuma people in other regions of Tanzania as well. Mhajida reported the tension between the Sukuma and Datooga people in Shinyanga, Singida and Tabora regions in the 1980s (MHAJIDA 2019). Therefore, other linguistic materials reported herein were gathered from native speakers of Bianjida and Rotigenga dialects of Datooga.

The collection of the linguistic material

Three main strategies to obtain data were involved in this research. The first strategy involved a survey of the state of multilingualism as evidenced by the school children in Datooga villages. The target villages are situated in Singida and Tabora regions of Tanzania. The survey questionnaires were administered by teachers to 50 students of five secondary schools (Table 2).

Region	District	Name of School	Respondents		Total
			Male	**Female**	
Singida	Itigi	Ipande	4	7	**11**
		Doroto	6	6	**12**
		Sanjaranda	12	10	**22**
Tabora	Igunga	Itumba	5	0	**5**
Total			**27**	**23**	**50**

Figure 2: *Research sites: Secondary schools in Datooga villages (My Field Data, 2018)*

The questionnaire intended to gather information about the language of the school and home environment. Tanzania permits Kiswahili and English as the official languages of schools. However, in rural schools the use of mother tongue in the school environment is reported by MSANJILA (2003). Therefore, the questionnaire intended to gather some information of language use in schools.

The questionnaire also intended to gather information about the language use in the villages. Students were asked to mention the languages predominantly used at home by siblings and

62

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

parents/guardians. These items of the questionnaire aimed to gather information about the dominant languages in the villages. Msanjila reported that even in villages which are prescribed to maintain the indigenous culture, the influence of superior languages such as Kiswahili cannot be ignored (MSANJILA 2004:170). Given the superiority of Sukuma in terms of number of speakers, investigation of the language use in Datooga villages was executed in Singida and Tabora.

The survey method was supplemented by the observation of language use in Chagana village. During fieldwork, the engagement with the local community was made possible mainly during the village gatherings called gerigwegira in Datooga and involvement in the day-to-day village activities in Chagana. Based on Msanjila, this kind of observation in the home environment helps to obtain the clear picture of language use in villages (MSANJILA 2004).

The second strategy concerned a word list (of 250 entries) which was supplied to native speakers of the Datooga dialects (Table 3). In order to obtain a good list of loanwords, Haspelmath and Tadmor envisaged the best strategy of semantic fields (HASPELMATH–TADMOR 2009). Since the Sukuma were full-time agriculturalists and the Datooga are nomadic pastoralists, the lexical entries of the word list involved such semantic fields as agriculture (e.g. potatoes, maize, rice, farm, millet, etc.) and food and drinks and household utensils (beans, cooked rice, cup, chair, local brew, plate etc.). Since these are culture-oriented words (THOMASON – KAUFMAN 1988; MATRAS 2009), the assumption here is that additive borrowing from Sukuma to Datooga will manifest in these cultural lexical entries. The results are indeed revealing.

Dialect	Region	District	Ward	Village	Population	Informants
Rotigeenga	Mara	Bunda	Hunyari	Maliwanda	14,569	2
Bianjida	Singida	Itigi	Sanjaranda	Sanjaranda	8,828	2
Buradiga	Tabora	Igunga	Itumba	Chagana	20,464	4

Figure 3: *Research sites in the Datooga villages in Tanzania (My Field Data 2018).*

In the studies of lexical borrowing in Africa (e.g. MAPUNDA – ROSENDAL 2015; MATIKI 2016; LUSEKELO 2017a), these semantic fields have been found to contain most loans: the

63

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

modern world (motorcar, bicycle, school, nurse, train etc.), the house (door, roof, window, bed, chair etc.), the cognition (write, read, book, notebook, teacher, office etc.). These words were included in the list in order to figure out loans in Datooga. In fact, the Sukuma and Datooga had had different cultures, therefore, an exchange of cultural matters related to housing and households is expected (ITANDALA 1980).

Another target of loanwords involved the semantic fields of kinship terms (sibling, father, mother, wife, sister etc.) and the physical landforms (hills, mountains, rivers, ponds, valleys, lakes etc.). Thomason with Kaufman, and Matras highlighted correctly that kinship terms and lexical entries for the physical world are not borrowed easily because they are not cultural terms (THOMASON – KAUFMAN 1988; MATRAS 2009). When borrowing of these terms occurs, usually substitutive borrowing emerges, as had been the case of Chingoni (MAPUNDA–ROSENDAL 2015) and Hadzabe and Maasai (LUSEKELO 2017b). The results in Datooga do reveal.

The lexical entries presented in this paper were collected from three villages. At a single village and one time, at least two informants were engaged in the elicitation of the lexical entries (Table 3). In Sanjaranda Ward, many of the words come from one person because the other informant provided few entries. In Itumba area, almost four informants were engaged because much time was spent in the village.

The locations and demographics of the research sites are offered in Table 2 (URT[3] 2013). Two of these research sites are located in rural areas, while one is at least close to town centre. Sanjaranda Ward is located some 7 kilometres west of Itigi Small Township, which had been a hinterland of the Datooga (MHAJIDA 2019:106). Notice also that less Bianjida is spoken in this originally Datooga village because the Gogo, Nyaturu and Sukuma occupied the village (MHAJIDA 2019:106, 2015). During fieldwork, it was found that the village is predominated by Nyaturu speakers and people of Datooga descent are multilingual in Nyaturu, Kiswahili and less Bianjida dialect.

Another village is called Maliwanda and it is located in Hunyari Ward. The Datooga people in this village were expelled out of the Serengeti, either by the Maasai since the 1850s and/or by the colonial government project which established the Serengeti National Park in 1951 (MHAJIDA 2019:14-16). Consequently, they settled in the villages along the fringes of the Serengeti National Park. Maliwanda is a typical rural village located about 18 kilometres

---

[3] This is a shorthand for **U**nited **R**epublic of **T**anzania.

64

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

north of the capital of the Bunda District. The village is predominantly occupied by Sukuma and Ikizu speakers. Consequently, Rotigenga speakers are multilingual in Sukuma, Ikizu and Datooga.

The main research site is Chagana village which is situated some 37 kilometres south of the capital of Igunga District. Generally, the village is located in the Wembere Plains, which Mhajida suggested to be the main hinterland of the Datooga in Singida and Tabora regions (MHAJIDA 2019:38). Bihariová, as well as field encounters, revealed that Chagana is a typical Datooga village (BIHARIOVÁ 2016:95). Sukuma and Nyiramba are other important languages spoken in the village. The Buradiga speakers speak Sukuma as well.

The third strategy involved the collection of data from secondary sources. As far as Datooga is concerned, two important resources with linguistic materials were consulted as sources of secondary data. The kinship terms in Datooga, mainly the Gisamjanga and Barbaiga dialects were collected and presented by Mitchell based on data collected in Mbulu District (MITCHELL 2015b, 2017). Klima and Blastad highlighted that the Gisamjanga and Barbaiga communities inhabit primarily this area (KLIMA 1970; BLASTAD 2000, 2005). Since the data in her study would comprise kinship terms as attested amongst the Gisamjanga and Barbaiga in Yaeda valley and Haydom areas of Mbulu District, the comparison with the data collected from Buradiga, Bianjida and Rotigenga dialects was carried out.

The secondary data came also from narrative texts of the Gisamjanga variety of Datooga collected by Paul Berger in between 1935 and 1936, which have been converted into electronic format by Kiessling (cf. KIESSLING 2001). Moreover, Rottland collected the lexicon of Datooga and compiled a manuscript of the Datooga-English and English-Datooga dictionary (cf. BATIBO – ROTTLAND 2001). Both researchers provide very good sources of the data for the current paper.

The state of multilingualism in Datooga villages

Ethnolinguistic vitality theory as the base of the current analysis

The case of multilingualism in this paper is approached using the ethnolinguistic vitality theory, which is rooted within the social identity theory (LIUA – GIJSENA – TSAIB 2013:427). The main assumption is that in-group members will maintain some group traits which recognise them as in-groups. Thus, the Datooga children may maintain some traits, in

65

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

our case language-oriented features, which will eventually help to isolate the Sukuma. Likewise, the Sukuma will regard themselves as a group different from the Datooga.

The ethnolinguistic vitality theory assumes that there is an asymmetric linguistic relationship between the minority and majority speaker groups in a given area. Batibo offers a Tanzanian scenario in which Kiswahili is the group of the majority and a prestigious language while Sukuma is a minority group (BATIBO 2015:83). Msanjila and Ehala discussed the utilisation of the ethnolinguistic vitality theory to determine some intergroup relations (MSANJILA 2004; EHALA 2010). The theory assumes that the sustainability of a small language does not necessarily depend on the size of the community but also the sustainability depends on the temperament and attitudes of the speaker community.

Karan highlighted important points related to ethnolinguistic vitality theory. The social identity motivates people's desire to be identified with a group or individual in three strands: (i) prestige-related social identity motivations involve people who choose to use or acquire a language variety in order to associate themselves with a prestige group, which normally uses that language variety;

(ii) solidarity-related social identity motivations concern people who choose to use or acquire a language variety in order to create and/or maintain a solidarity bond with an individual, group, culture or subculture;

and (iii) distance-related social identity motivations happens when people choose to use or acquire a language variety in order to create or maintain a distance between themselves and an individual, group, culture or subculture (KARAN 2011:141).

Nonetheless, the use of the theory does not offer straightforward answers to sociolinguistic questions of language use. This happens because attitudes of people might differ due to the status they maintain at a given point in time. For instance, Ehala highlighted that there are cases in which "both the minority and majority agree that the majority vitality is higher, but the minority group perceives the vitality difference between groups to be less than the majority does." Therefore, the attitude differs from one group to the other. In addition, there are cases in which "the minority perceives the vitality difference between its own group and the dominant outgroup to be larger than perceived by the dominant majority" (EHALA (2010:205).

Given this backdrop, the ethnolinguistic vitality theory fits to examine language use in Tanzania because the situation of language use in rural areas of Tanzania reveals the presence of Kiswahili, the national language and ECLs such as Alaagwa, Datooga, Hadzabe, Iraqw, Kisafwa, Nyamwezi, Sukuma etc. We can situate the phenomenon using Msanjila and Ström

66

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

who reported on the language uses in various domains in rural areas of Ituha (Mbeya Region) and Rufiji District (Coast Region) in Tanzania, respectively (MSANJILA 2004; STRÖM 2009).

In Rufiji District bilingualism is commonplace because both Kiswahili and Ndengeleko co-exist, though with Kiswahili enjoying being a privileged official language. Ström concludes that Kiswahili impacted Ndengeleko, which had co-existed in this area for some 200 years. Today, "there is no reason to believe that they couldn't do so in the future. But the situation in favor of Kiswahili has changed dramatically since independence in the 1960s, leaving hardly any space for L1" (STRÖM 2009:241).

Msanjila reported that in the village of Ituha, language use reveals presence of Kisafwa and Kiswahili, hence inhabitants of Ituha village are bilingual. However, language use varies between people of different age. The grandparents and middle-aged parents use predominantly Kisafwa when they interact amongst themselves but they use both Kisafwa and Kiswahili when they interact with young people. The opposite is true because more young people dominantly use Kiswahili at home than middle-aged parents and grandparents (MSANJILA 2004:165).

The situation in Mbeya and Coast Regions exhibit the state of bilingualism due to language contact. It is known that the outcome of the contact between speakers of different languages is development of bilingual children (BAKER 1996; MATRAS 2009). The situation in Datooga villages, however, is different from that of Mbeya and Coast Regions. In the Rift Valley area of Tanzania, a convergence of many ECLs is apparently attested. Findings in next section will display that what happens to the Datooga children in rural areas of Tanzania is that they acquire two languages in the neighbourhood and later earn Kiswahili. At first, they become bilingual in either Datooga and Sukuma or Datooga and Iraqw or Datooga and Nyaturu, depending on their area of residence. Then they learn Kiswahili either in school or meeting centres.

It is obvious now that apart from the ECLs in the neighbourhood of the Datooga villages, Kiswahili comes to play as well. This phenomenon is reported in almost all studies of language contact and lexical borrowing in Tanzania (cf. LUSEKELO 2016; MAPUNDA – ROSENDAL 2015; MOUS – QORRO 2009, among others). Also, code-switching between ECLs and Kiswahili is reported in rural areas of Tanzania, e.g. Ngoni and Kiswahili in Ruvuma Region (ROSENDAL – MAPUNDA 2017) and Pare and Kiswahili in Kilimanjaro Region (SEBONDE 2012). In these studies, the domination of Kiswahili is observed in areas

67

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

of modern world, agriculture, housing, cognition etc. in fact, Datooga is not unique in this regard (cf. MITCHELL 2015a).

Multilingualism in Datooga villages in north-western Tanzania

Observations at Itumba ward found that the Datooga identify themselves as a unitary group with distinct socio-cultural settings with the Sukuma of Igunga. Within the ethnolinguistic vitality theory, the Datooga people insist to maintain their ethnic identity as a group. The historian Mhajida and anthropologist Bihariová confirm the sole identity of the Datooga (MHAJIDA 2019; BIHARIOVÁ 2016).

This identity happens amidst the presence of several ethnic groups in the area. As highlighted in the foregoing discussion, Kiessling, Mous and Nurse presented correctly that the Rift Valley area of Tanzania is a zone of convergence of all language families of Africa. Specifically, they exhibited the presence of Sukuma and Nyamwezi in the neighbourhood of the Datooga (KIESSLING – MOUS – NURSE 2008). Other researchers found that in Igunga District, the Datooga live adjacent to Sukuma and Nyiramba (BIHARIOVÁ 2015, 2016; MHAJIDA 2019).

The presence of many languages in a small area is further confirmed by estimates by Lot who shows that the Datooga communities live adjacent to Gogo and Nyaturu (Singida Region), Ikizu (Mara Region), and Nyamwezi and Sukuma (Tabora Region) (Table 4).

Region	District	Ward	L_1	L_2	L_3	L_4
Mara	Bunda	Hunyari	Ikizu	Sukuma	Rotigenga	Kiswahili
Singida	Itigi	Sanjaranda	Nyaturu	Gogo	Bianjida	Kiswahili
Tabora	Igunga	Itumba	Sukuma	Nyamwezi	Buradiga	Kiswahili

Figure 4: *Languages spoken in the selected research sites (LOT 2009).*

The state of multingualism in Datooga villages is evident in the areas mentioned within the *Atlas of the Languages of Tanzania* (LOT 2009). Almost a four-tier of languages is

68

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

apparently revealed in each administrative ward (Table 4). For instance, the atlas shows that Sukuma and Nyamwezi are dominantly first languages at Itumba ward. Then Kiswahili turns to be the fourth language in the area.

An important observation from the state of multilingualism above is that Datooga turns to be the first language at Itumba ward in almost all Datooga families. Both parents and children communicate in Datooga within Chagana village. The lingua franca of the area is typically Sukuma rather than Kiswahili. However, Kiswahili is also used in the communication with people who neither speak Sukuma nor Datooga. Irrespective of the presence of Kiswahili and Sukuma, Datooga people are very proud of the culture and their language and pass it very proudly to young generations. This tendency conforms the Karan's type of social identity called solidarity-related social identity motivations in which the Datooga people choose to acquire their language for identifications to the in-group members (KARAN 2011).

The mastery of Sukuma amongst both young, middle-aged and aged persons is a sign of the importance of the language which is used as a lingua franca in the area. This is in line with Karan's state of prestige-related social identity motivations in which the Datooga people choose to acquire Sukuma in order to associate themselves with a prestige group of the Wasukuma (KARAN 2011).

With regard to multilingualism of school children, the four-tier of language in the *Atlas of the Languages of Tanzania* was not fully confirmed by investigations in the field (LOT 2009). In fact, a three-tier phenomenon appeared to be commonplace (Table 5). This survey was conducted in secondary schools to reveal the pattern of language use by students. The obvious information is that most children are bilingual in Datooga dialect and Nyaturu, Sukuma, Gogo or Iraqw. Kiswahili is the third language commanded by secondary school pupils. Table 4 gives the summary.

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Region	District	Schools	L$_1$	L$_2$	L$_3$
Singida	Itigi	Doroto	Taturu	Gogo	Kiswahili
		Ipande	Taturu	Gogo	Kiswahili
		Sanjaranda	Taturu	Nyaturu	Kiswahili
Tabora	Igunga	Itumba	Taturu	Sukuma	Kiswahili

Figure 5: *Multilingualism of secondary school pupils in Datooga villages (My Field Data 2018).*

Within the realm of ethnolinguistic vitality theory, all the children identified Taturu (Datooga) as their mother tongue. This means that they assign solidarity to their ethnic identity. Nonetheless, most of the students acquired Sukuma, Gogo or Nyaturu as another language. Generally, this means that Gogo, Nyaturu and Sukuma remain important languages in the area and the Datooga wish to associate with this prestigious language.

Further evidence come from ethnographic encounters in Datooga villages. It is apparently true that Datooga speakers are multilingual, speaking their mother tongue and another language. In Itumba, for instance, most Datooga speakers command fully Sukuma, which is the main language of communication in the area. Nonetheless, they have linguistic mechanisms to identify out-groups. The ethnonyms are one of the mechanisms. Table 6 presents names of other ethnic groups as are referred to by the Datooga.

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological
Implications

Ethnic groups	Bianjira	Buradiga	Rotigenga
Hadzabe	matindiga	hagiriiga	hagiriiga
Maasai	rubageigi	rabegiiga	rabeeghiigha
Nyamwezi	mkonongojeega	matakamajiiga	matakama
Nyaturu	mainetika	maineta	maineeta
Sukuma	masukumaa	masukumajeega	galiiti
Iraqw	mamburu	qayiwuuriga	---
Nyiramba	raimbera	ireimbira	raembira
Ikizu	---	---	gijirigeu

Figure 6: *Names of neighbouring ethnic groups in the research sites (My Field Data 2018).*

Some observations could be made based on data in Table 6. The first observation is that the contact situation is apparently attested only for the Ikizu people who are identified by the Rotigenga speakers in Mara Region. Since this is several kilometres away, the Bianjida and Buradiga could not establish a name for the Ikizu.

The second observation concerns some of these ethnonyms which bear connotations. For instance, the name Rabeghiigha means enemy, fighter or warrior, which is similar to the Maasai label for the Datooga, i.e. Mang'ati 'enemy' (BLYSTAD 2005; BIHARIOVÁ 2016). Mhajida assigns the label Mangati/Mang'ati to being the real enemy of the Maasai. However, it became obvious that the Datooga appear to have coined a name with similar connotations for the Maasai (MHAJIDA 2019:63).

Similar connotative ethnonyms manifest for the Hadzabe. In the field, it was observed that the Datooga coined the name Hagiriiga which means a hunter or a person in the wilderness (< *tarebiita* = wilderness, forest). The Nilotic Maasai coined the name Tindiga for the Hadzabe whose connotation is poor person (people without cattle), who dwell in water sources.

The third observation concerns other names of the ethnic groups. Their names emanate from their area of residence, e.g. Matakama has reference to the southerners. Also, the names Raembira and Mainetika have reference to sections of the ethnic groups Nyiramba and

71

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Nyaturu respectively. These are the neighbours of the Datooga in Tanzania who are identified as out-group members to Datooga.

The presence of Kiswahili in the village centres cannot be ruled out. Our ethnographic observations at Sanjaranda in Itigi District and Itumba in Igunga District revealed that most inhabitants of these villages converse in Kiswahili apart from their mother tongues. This is apparently common because these villages are composed of people from different ethnic groups. However, the mastery of Kiswahili is limited. Bihariová found that only 5 % of the Buradiga Datooga speak Kiswahili (BIHARIOVÁ 2015:32).

Nonetheless, the participation of the Datooga of Singida and Tabora in school curriculum is still low. Bihariová found that "Datoga rarely sent children to schools and were sceptical of education from the beginning." The impact of education system in Tanzania, which supports the promotion of Kiswahili, has yet impacted the Datooga. Thus, Sukuma still remains the lingua franca in Wembere plains (BIHARIOVÁ 2015:32).

The penetration of the Sukuma loanwords into Datooga lexicon

Incorporation of kinship terms: A case of substitutive borrowing

Two issues are worth mentioning in this introductory note. The first issue is the fact that kinship terms are treated as being pervasive in each language and they formulate a relatively stable category of the lexicon (BORGES 2013). Kinship terms rank very low on the scale of borrowability according to semantic domain (HASPELMATH – TADMOR 2009). However, Borges found that Suriname had demonstrated "kinship terms have undergone, and continue to undergo, changes in both form and meaning." This is the outcome of the contact situation in which "Sranan and Dutch have both contributed material to the shared structure of kinship terms in the Surinamese linguistic area" (BORGES (2013:24).

Haspelmath argues correctly that borrowing of the kinship terms would require prolonged contact between languages to the extent that the native lexicon of the target languages get replaced by terms from the donor language hence substitutive borrowing (HASPELMATH 2009). This is the case of Suriname which had been in contact with Sranan and Dutch for more than two hundred years (BORGES 2013:5).

Itandala suggests that earlier contacts between the Datooga and Sukuma occurred some three hundred years ago (ITANDALA 1980). Also, the historical sources have shown that the intense contact of the Datooga and Sukuma occurred from the 1850s (MHAJIDA 2019:56-

72

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

58). Thus, these communities had been in profound contact for more than one hundred and fifty years now. Probably such a long period of time is necessary to influence exchange of kinship terms between these communities.

The second issue concerns language shift as related to kinship terms. Batibo highlighted the situation in which speakers of minority language tend to shift to the dominant language (BATIBO 2005). In the same vein, Batibo argues correctly that when words of important domains are being replaced by terms from areally dominant language that becomes a case of language shift (BATIBO 2005). Borges highlights that semantic shift of the kinship terms occurs sometimes, as had been the case of the Suriname language (BORGES 2013).

Now this scenario has implications to Datooga–Sukuma contact situation. Batibo provides that "the only major areally dominant language is Kisukuma, which is spoken in the northern part of the country by more than 12.5% of the population" (BATIBO 2005:83). This entails that Datooga becomes a minority language. However, we demonstrated in section 4 that the Datooga maintains their culture and language and they are proudly passing the language and culture to the new generation. Nonetheless, the penetration of Sukuma kinship terms into the lexicon of Datooga is an important subject matter of discussion.

The Taturu, the northern dialects of the Datooga, incorporated some kinship terms from Bantu languages, mainly Nyaturu, Sukuma and Nyamwezi. We offer data in Table 7 (for Buradiga and Rotigenga) and then discuss this as a case of substitutive borrowing leading to language shift. The benchmark kinship terms of Barbayiga dialect come from Mitchel (2015b).

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Kinship	Buradiga	Rotigenga	Barbayiga
father's father	ghembagweenda	ghuuku	qéambábàabà
father's mother	qambaabwa	ukuuku	qámbàaba
father's sister	seengi	qambwaabwa	qámbàabà
father's sister's son	jefta seengi	ribiga iija	òorjéedá bwàabà
mother's brother	mami	mwamwáy	máamày
mother's father	qemba qeamata	ghuuku	qéambîiyá
sister's child	mami	jefta ee balegii	jéeptá húda
husband's brother	maramunajeenda	mulamu	síiyéeda
wife's sister	ghényáwa	mulamu	qényáwa
son-in-law	mkwilima, gigwejucheenda	mkwelima jendeeyu, ngweenga	síiyéedá húda
daughter-in-law	ng'wiinga jendenyu	ngweenga jeendeyu	gátmóodá bálêanda
brother's wife	bwamuku	mulamwa jendeyu	gátmòoda
parent of son-in-law	qeera ghwejiu	mkwelima jendeyu	bàadìi

Figure 7: *Loanwords for kinship terms of Datooga (My Field Data 2018).*

Two general observations are worth mentioning here. The first general observation to make out of the data in Table 7 concerns the sources of the kinship terms. Since the Barbayiga remains the most dominant and more conservative dialect (ROTTLAND 1983), we provide kinship terms from Mitchell, who collected data amongst the Barbaiga and Gisamjanga communities in Mbulu District of Tanzania (MITCHELL 2015b, 2017). This is the benchmark for the northern dialects of Datooga.

Another general observation concerns similarities between Nyamwezi, Nyaturu, Nyiramba and Sukuma kinship terms. As shown in Table 8, similar kinship terms are pervasive across Bantu speaking communities in Africa (cf. KUPER 1979; PRINSLOO 2014). Thus, on convenient grounds, we use the Sukuma kinship terms. These loanwords are in a series of four kin terms as discussed below.

First, the term *ghuuku* 'father's father' and *ukuuku* 'father's mother' in Rotigenga differ significantly from the Buradiga and Barbaiga kin term. These are loanwords from Sukuma because the Bantu languages Sepedi, Setswana and Isizulu, which are inhabit areas located

74

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

thousands of kilometres from Sukumaland, make use of the kinship terms *gogo* 'grandmother' and *koko* 'grandfather' (KUPER 1979:375).

Second, another common Sukuma term is *seengi* 'father's sister, aunt' which is attested in Buradiga and Rotigenga. The Barbaiga uses the term qámbàabà 'father's sister'. Similarly, the term mami 'uncle, mother's brother' is robust in Buradiga. The benchmark dialect has the kin term *máamày* 'uncle'. In southern Bantu languages, the term *malume* or *umaluma* 'mother's brother' is common (KUPER 1979:374; PRINSLOO 2014:275-279). Moreover, the expression *jefta seengi* 'aunt's children' is commonplace in Igunga District of Tanzania.

Third, it was observed that the Bantu terms m*alamujeenda* and *mulamu* 'wife's /husband's brother' penetrated into the lexicon of the Buradiga and Rotigenga. The benchmark dialect (Barbaiga) adopted the terms *síiyéeda* 'husband's brother' and *qényáwa* 'wife's sister'. The term *malamu* 'wife's /husband's brother' is used in many Bantu languages.

Last, the kin term for son-in-law or daughter-in-law is borrowed as *mkwelima* in Taturu dialect. In Kiswahili, the term mkwe 'son-in-law' is used. In Shona, the kinship terms *mukuwasha* or *mukwambo* 'son-in-law' and *murora* 'daughter-in-law' are commonplace (MASHIRI 2004). The kinship term *síiyéedá húda* 'son-in-law' is attested in Barbaiga. Similarly, the Bantu loan *ngweenga* 'daughter-in-law' replaces *gátmóodá bálêanda* 'daughter-in-law' which is attested in Barbaiga.

Now we return to issues related to language shift based on the cases of substitutive borrowing discussed above. These series of four loans cannot support language shift rather semantic shift as discussed by BORGES (2013). Batibo states that "the nationally dominant and the major areally dominant languages are the most devastating in causing language shift and death because of their power, charm and extent. They can easily penetrate into the primary domains" (BATIBO 2005:23). This phenomenon is not realised in Igunga District because the Datooga still maintain their language and culture in Wembere plains. The penetration of foreign words is not detrimental to the language. However, Nyaturu had already engulfed Bianjida because language use in Sanjaranda village is purely dominated by Nyaturu rather than Datooga.

The culture of the Bianjida speakers changed. For instance, based on data collected from Sanjaranda village, Ceppi and Nielsen reported that "the Wataturu have taken up agriculture the past 25 years, and cultivate intercropped maize, beans and pumpkin (90% of the respondents), with sunflower (50% of the respondents) and sorghum (33% of the respondents) as monoculture" (CEPPI – NIELSEN 2014:279). This means that the penetration of agriculture and new culture engulfed the community. The language shift is

75

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

apparently observed in the area, as discussed in previous section. Specifically, the school children speak Nyaturu or Gogo in Itigi area (cf. MHAJIDA 2019).

The case in Wembere plain is different. The Buradiga maintain their culture and full-time pastoralism. Thus, in the case of the Datooga dialect spoken in Igunga District of Tanzania, language shift has not occurred. Some of the kinship terms were borrowed from Sukuma/Nyamwezi which is the areally dominant language in Tabora. However, the children acquire Sukuma/Nyamwezi for communication purposes but they still maintain their culture and language (BIHARIOVÁ 2015:33).

As far as kinship terms are concerned, further analysis of the state of multilingualism can be provided based on marked bilingualism model. In this model, we can view substitutive borrowing within the process-based perspective (BATIBO 2005:89). Language shift can only take place when there is a state of bilingualism. In fact, all around Chagana and Sanjaranda villages, speakers of Datooga are bilingual as they speak Sukuma and/or Nyaturu. In fact, Sukuma and Nyaturu are predominant languages. However, the shift occurred in Sanjaranda but not in Chagana.

Batibo highlighted that in order for the speakers of one language to be attracted to another, there must be significant differences of prestige and status between the two languages (BATIBO 2005:89). As stated above both Sukuma in Igunga and Nyaturu in Itigi are prestigious and dominant languages. However, the shift is felt in Itigi were the Datooga have taken up farming and lost most of their cattle (MHAJIDA 2019). In Chagana, farming is practised by a few Datooga people but pastoralism is maintained fully (BIHARIOVÁ 2015:34). As a result, language shift has not occurred.

Furthermore, Batibo highlights that the rate of language shift depends to a large degree on the amount of pressure from the dominant language on the one hand, and the degree of resistance from the minority language on the other (BATIBO 2005:89). With regard to the Datooga community at large, this is not fully achieved because the Datooga people clinch to their culture. Datooga is still maintained in their homesteads in Tabora.

Adaptation of crops and farming practices: The case of additive borrowing

The Datooga of Mara, Singida and Tabora have taken up agriculture, though with variations. In both Maliwanda and Sanjaranda villages, the Datooga have become sedentary agro-pastoralists (CEPPI – NIELSEN 2014; MHAJIDA 2019). In Wembere plains, farming is

76

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

limited while pastoralism is robust (BIHARIOVÁ 2015:34). This has implications to the foreign terms which fill a gap because traditionally the Datooga were full-time pastoralists.

Now the discussion hereunder is guided by additive borrowing. This is examined using a single semantic field of agriculture and vegetation suggested in contemporary studies (cf. HASPELMATH 2009; MAPUNDA – ROSENDAL 2015; MATIKI 2016). However, the main attention is paid to the agriculture because farming is a new activity amongst the Datooga speakers.

Most of the New World crops came from Americas (BLENCH 2006) and India (Asia) (BOSTOEN 2007). The names of these crops spread through Tanzanian languages through Kiswahili (LUSEKELO 2016). Baldi discusses penetration of other Arabic words into East African languages, including the Nilo-Saharan language of Dholuo (spoken in Tanzania and Kenya) (BALDI 2011, 2012).

From the field, we gathered data related to crops. Findings in the Datooga dialects revealed the penetration of Sukuma/Nyaturu names into Datooga. This is a very important observation because the Sukuma and Nyaturu people are agro-pastoralists. Kiswahili terms are also attested in the data. Table 8 gives an inventory of the names of crops amongst the Wataturu (the northern Datooga).

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Word	Bianjira	Buradiga	Rotigeenga
Sukuma/Nyaturu loans			
maize	mambukira	mambugiira	membugiira
millet	bwoga	bwoga	bwoga mwanang'
red millet	bwogariri	bwogariri	bwogariri
finger millet	bwoga	bwoga	mahimbiga
bulrush millet	mbiriigi	gibiriiga	mahimbiiga
potatoes	kandoljeega	gasisa	gasiisa
sugarcane	mshariijanda	maguba	maguuwa
peanut	karangaa	gisigisika	gàranga
beans	maharaje	murumburi	maháragi
rice	bwoginyega	mchele, ghughudiga	mcheli
rice farm	minyandi booginyegi	rabasijeenda, rabasuuka	mariminyenda mchele
Swahili loans			
cassava	mihog	mihog	mwaliwa
pepper	pirpíl	geetangw'ani	gabwalara
pawpaw	papai	paipai	mapápàyí
pineapple	mananaas	nanasi	nanasi
mangoes	nyeembe	munyembe	minyembi
tomatoes	manyanya	shebudiga	uchanyanya

Figure 8: *Names of crops in Datooga dialects[4] (My Field Data 2018).*

---

[4]   Based on Table 8 above, loans related to the names of crops in Datooga penetrated through Kiswahili, as it is the case in other languages in East Africa (BALDI 2011, 2012; LUSEKELO 2016). Two loans bear scientific names: *mananasi* [<Greek: *ananas*] 'pineapple' and *mapápàyí* [<Spanish: *papaya*] 'pawpaw'.

78

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

The additive loanwords in Table 8 split twice: some come from Sukuma/Nyaturu, while others come from Kiswahili. The first set involves most crops grown in Singida and Tabora. For example, the Wembere plains are well-known for rice and maize cultivation (MHAJIDA 2019:169). Four observations can be made from the first dataset.

First and foremost, the word bwoga has reference to all cereal crops of millet and rice across Datooga dialects. The Datooga people labelled all cereals as *bwoga*, which is one of the testimonies that they have taken up farming recently. A special case is for the cereal maize which is labelled *mambugiira* across dialects.

Secondly, the Rotigenga speakers have borrowed the word *mahimbiga* for finger and bulrush millet. The word appears to have come from mahemba, an Ikizu (Bantu) word for maize. Lusekelo found that *-hemba/-pemba* 'maize' is common for Bantu languages around Lake Victoria and Mount Kilimanjaro areas, while the rest of the dialects adopted *bwogariri* for finger millet (LUSEKELO 2016).

Thirdly, exchange of crop-related materials is attested for the word -ndolo (*kandoljeega*) 'potatoes'. With regard to foreign tubers, this name is attested across Bantu languages (BOSTOEN 2007; LUSEKELO 2016:54). It is spread across African languages south of the Sahara desert (BLENCH 2006). For example, in central Tanzania, -ndolo 'potatoes' is used by the Gogo speakers.

Furthermore, Sukuma and Nyaturu names manifest in Rotigenga and Bianjida. For instance, the word *maguuwa* 'sugarcane' comes from Bantu. Likewise, the word *mwaliwa* 'cassava' is used by the Rotigenga speakers. Lusekelo found the word *malibu* 'cassava' across Lake Victoria Bantu. Therefore, the speakers of northern Datooga dialects borrowed the word from Bantu speakers (LUSEKELO 2016).

Looking at the morphology of these loans, we would conclude that these ones had undergone nativisation: *mahimbiga* 'finger/bulrush millet' and *kandoljeega* 'potatoes'. These words bear the Datooga element -ga, which was assumed to be marking number (plural) (CREIDER – ROTTLAND 1997:78) or some specificity within the noun (KIESSLING 2001:351). Thus, since the element -ga manifested in the loanwords, then this substantiates that the words have become Datooga now.

Kiswahili words appear to be penetrating into Datooga recently. Technically, their incorporation does not show full-picture. The words *mihog* 'cassava' [from Kiswahili: *mihogo*] and pirpíl 'pepper' [from Kiswahili: *pilipili*] had been nativised by the deletion of

79

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

the final vowel. Creider with Rottland, and Kiessling reported the presence of the short final vowel in Datooga. Therefore, the Kiswahili loanwords obtain this sound as well (CREIDER – ROTTLAND 1997:74; KIESSLING 2001:350).

The other names also had been nativised partially. This is confirmed, for instance, by *nanasi* 'pineapple' [from Kiswahili: *nanasi*] and *uchanyanya* 'tomatoes' [from Kiswahili: *nyanya*]. The latter example, however, appear to have adopted the name from the Ikizu people who calls *uchanyany*a 'tomatoes'. The Kiswahili words, therefore, penetrated through Ikizu into Datooga dialect.

Now that we know most loans in the western Datooga dialects come from Sukuma, we would like to examine the borrowed elements in the semantic field of the modern world, as suggested by HASPELMATH – TADMOR (2009). Studies in Tanzania revealed that the languages borrow mainly from Kiswahili (cf. LUSEKELO 2017b; MAPUNDA – ROSENDAL 2015; MOUS – QORRO 2009).

Integration of terms for modern world: Another case of additive borrowing

With regard to the semantic field of modern world, a number of foreign words had been elicited across western Datooga dialects. Some variations are provided in Table 9. Notice also that some other worlds involve modern houses, modern clothing, cognition and modern food and drinks.

AMANI LUSEKELO

Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Words	Bianjira	Buradiga	Rotigenga	Kiswahili
motorcar	mutukjanda	mutuk	motoka	motokaa, gari
brick	matofalijanda	matafarajiiga	tofali	tofali
road	balbaljanda	balabala	ipàlàpàla	barabara
market	sokoo	munati	muteela	soko
floor market	mnadijanda	munati	muteela	mnada
motorcycle	pikpik	pikpik	pikpik	pikipiki
iron sheet	baati	mabatajeega	ipaati	bati
bucket	ndoojanda	ndobujanda	ndobu	ndoo
coat	kotijanda	gwanda	ikoti	koti
shirt	gwandijanda	gwandajenda	ishaati	shati
school	shule	shulejeega	shuli	shule
money	pesajanda	dabita, lapíya	helajiiga	pesa, hela
pupil	jepta shule	jefta shule	---	mwanafunzi
tin	debjaanda	debejeega	itepi	debe
cup	kikombejande	chombu	gharinyeenda	kikombe
nurse	neesi	nesajenda	nesi	nesi, muuguzi
doctor	maninyandi	daktari	daktari	daktari, mganga
notebook	daftarijanda	wewenda	wewiiga	daftari
book	kitabujanda	wewenda	gitabuura	kitabu
toilet	chorooni	chorooni	choloni	choo
table	meza	mezajenda	meza	meza
spoon	kijikojanda	gijikojenda	gíchiku	kijiko
plate	sahanijanda	sahanajeenda	sahani	sahani
central pole	mughamba	mughamba	---	nguzo

Figure 9: *Loans for the modern world, housing and food and drinks[5] (My Field Data 2018).*

Some observational points are outlined from the data in Table 9. We begin with the fact that the data shows that Kiswahili loans are robust in Datooga. We conclude that some terms

81

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

associated with the semantic fields of the modern world, modern houses, and modern food and drinks come from Kiswahili. This is a typical case of recent additive borrowing because very few Datooga people speak Kiswahili (BIHARIOVÁ 2015:32) to have helped to carry the loans into their language.

Another observation is that modern clothing integrates words from Bantu. The traditional dressing of the Datooga is hang'da 'a wrap or sheet'. Any foreign dress (gown, skirt, shirt, short, trouser etc.) may be used for official (government or church) gatherings. The term gwandajeega 'dress, shirt' is borrowed from Bantu communities. The essence of gwanda is varied across Bantu, as illustrated by data in (5) elicited from Bantu speakers. Nonetheless, each of the equivalent given is associated with dresses.

	BANTU	WORD	GLOSS
(5)	Ngoni	ligwanda	'shirt'
	Chasu	ibwanda	'shirt'
	Chasu	igwanda	'uniform'
	Sukuma	gwanda	'gown'
	Kibena	iligwanda	'shirt, gown'
	Kihehe	ligwanda	'shirt, gown'
	Kurya	gwanda	'heavy dress'
	Gogo	ligwanda	'military uniform'
	Giha	gwanda	'Rwandese local garment'
	Kiswahili	gwanda	'army uniform'
			(My Field Data 2018)

The Sukuma and Nyamwezi people of north-western Tanzania use the word gwanda for gown and dress. It is plausible to argue that even for modern dresses, the Datooga borrowed the words from Sukuma people.

Further evidence of the penetration of the Sukuma words into western dialects of Datooga is revealed in the word for the central pole of a house. The Buradiga-Datooga borrowed the

82

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

word *mughamba* 'pole' from Bantu languages. It is incorporated as *mghembajeenda gogwinda* 'the central pole of the *tembe* house'. Lusekelo exhibited the term *mughamba* 'central pillar' being common for the Bantu languages of Tanzania. Traditionally, huts of the Datooga were covered by animal skins. The adaptation of *tembe* houses attracted incorporation of terms used by Bantu speakers (LUSEKELO 2017a:22).

Moreover, the expression of the cardinal terms are specified in Datooga. The Buradiga have incorporated the Bantu terms *súgúma* 'north' and *rákáma* 'south'. This is confirmed by Lusekelo who found that these terms are common in languages of central Tanzania, mainly Gogo, Nyamwezi, Nyaturu, Nyiramba, and Sukuma. Therefore, this is a kind of additive borrowing from Sukuma (LUSEKELO 2018:67).

Furthermore, Bruckhaus did not report of any of these terms in Barbaiga and Gisamjanga dialects of Datooga (BRUCKHAUS 2015) but Mietzner with Pasch found the terms *suqumeera* expresses 'north' and *taqameera* 'south' [i.e. *rákáma* 'south' and *súgúma* 'north'] in Nilotic Datooga and Maasai of Tanzania (MIETZNER – PASCH 2007). The presence of these terms in western dialects of Datooga and in Maasai substantiates an exchange of cardinal terms occurred between Bantu and Nilotic languages.

The word *lapíya* 'money' comes from the word Rupee, which penetrated into the interior of Tanzania. Lusekel listed these words from *amahéra/empiíya* in Runyambo, *jiyera* in Ruuri and *pesa/sendi* in Gogo for money. The Runyambo case is an example of an interior Bantu language which incorporated the word *empiíya* 'Rupee, money'. The other words are similar to the Datooga word *pesajaanda* 'money' which comes from the Kiswahili word *pesa* 'money' (LUSEKELO 2013b:156).

The last point is associated with modern education. The formal education system has not penetrated deeper into the Datooga community (BIHARIOVÁ 2015:32). Given this backdrop, the word *wewenda* 'paper, book, notebook, newspaper' is adjusted from the native word for the *dermis*, i.e. the inner (whitish) layer of a skin of an animal. This is semantic broadening of the word to cover the concept of the white paper. In the previous study of incorporation of Bantu loans, adjustment of the meaning of the indigene words is reported for the names of crops (LUSEKELO 2016) and names of medicine-man (LUSEKELO 2013b). However, the case of *wewenda* is associated with semantic broadening in which it

83

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

retained its origin meaning of *dermis*, and acquired a new meaning of 'paper, book, notebook, newspaper'.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion in this article hinged on the penetration of Sukuma words into the western dialects of Datooga. It presented the essence of multilingualism in Singida and Tabora regions. The article intended to establish language shift from Datooga to Sukuma using the guidelines in the marked bilingualism model and the ethnolinguistic vitality theory, as presented in BATIBO (2005). As shown in the discussion, the Buradiga people have no signs of language shift though they borrow words from Sukuma and speak Sukuma as a second language. Therefore, the marked bilingualism model, which pre-empts that bilingual speakers will shift from their mother tongue towards an areally dominant and prestigious language, has not been satisfied in Igunga District of Tabora Region. However, the Bianjida people have given up Datooga language in favour of Nyaturu and Gogo. Probably this is an outcome of sedentarisation of the pastoral Datooga during *ujamaa* (socialism) era, as discussed by MHAJIDA (2019). The Datooga have become agro-pastoralists in Igunga District of Singida Region (CEPPI – NIELSEN 2014) and have shifted to Nyaturu and Gogo.

Another subject matter which is discussed in this article concerns Bloomfield's theory of language change (BLOOMFIELD 1933). The main premise in this theory is that speakers of one language may change the lexicon of their language by importing new terms from another language. These new terms will either substitute indigene terms and/or add to the existing lexicons to fill in lexical gaps. Mapunda with Rosendal presented cases of language change associated with additive and substitutive borrowing in Chingoni (MAPUNDA – ROSENDAL 2015), while Lusekelo presented additive and substitutive borrowing in languages of Tanzania like Hadzabe, Maasai, Ruhaya etc. (LUSEKELO 2017a, 2017b). This article concluded from the data obtained from kinship terms, modern world, and modern housing as found in western dialects of Datooga.

With regard to kinship terms, some Sukuma words penetrated into Datooga and replaced indigene ones, at least in the communication in Chagana village of Igunga District: ghuuku 'grandparent' [replaced: *qéambábàabà*], mami 'uncle' [substituted: *máamày*], seengi 'aunt' [substituted: *qámbàaba*] and mkwelima 'son-in-law' [replaced: *gátmòoda*]. This is a testimony that Sukuma people had had a strong impact on Datooga people to the extent that

84

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
**Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological
Implications**

substitutive borrowing occurred. Borges insisted that kinship terms are relatively stable
(BORGES 2013:24) but in Datooga, these terms have been penetrated with Sukuma ones.

As regards to additive borrowing, Sukuma words penetrated into the semantic fields of
agriculture in which names of crops, which are foreign to Datooga, had been incorporated.
This is a commonplace phenomenon, as discussed in HASPELMATH – TADMOR (2009)
and MAPUNDA – ROSENDAL (2015). Thus, the situation in Datooga is not unique because
additive borrowing is common across languages of the world.

The smaller amount of nativised Kiswahili terms is a phenomenon worth mentioning here.
Most studies of borrowing in Tanzania have highlighted the penetration of Kiswahili words
into interior languages of Tanzania (cf. LUSEKELO 2013b, 2016, 2017b; MAPUNDA –
ROSENDAL 2015; MOUS – QORRO 2009, among others). The mastery of Kiswahili by
the Datooga is very low, as had been highlighted by BIHARIOVÁ (2015). Thus, Sukuma
will continue to be the lingua franca of the Datooga villages in Igunga District. The potential
consequence will be the penetration of more Sukuma words into Datooga.

The foregoing discussion has historical implications as well. It is obvious that animal-related
Datooga words were incorporated into Hadzabe (LUSEKELO 2015), Iraqw (MOUS –
QORRO 2009), Nyaturu (EHRET 1970), and Sukuma (ROTTLAND – BATIBO 2001). This
is apparently motivated by the dominance of pastoralism by the Datooga. However, the
sedentarisation of the Datooga had allowed the Sukuma to pass many agriculture-oriented
words into Datooga. Thus, the suggestion by ROTTLAND – BATIBO (2001) is now
reversed in the sense that both Sukuma and Datooga influence one another. The direction of
impact is not only from Datooga to Sukuma but also from Sukuma to Datooga.

The remaining part which requires an explanation concerns the dialectological implications
of the language contact in Datooga speaking areas. The eastern dialects of Datooga, who
formulate the majority of the speakers (KLIMA 1970; BLYSTAD 2000; LOT 2009), are in
constant contact with the Afro-asiatic Alagwa, Burunge, Gorowaa, and Iraqw speaking
people (KIESSLING – MOUS – NURSE 2008; LUSEKELO 2013a, 2015). The penetration
of Datooga words into Iraqw is reported by MOUS – QORRO (2009). Since the Iraqw are
agro-pastoralists, there is a need to investigate the penetration of the Iraqw words into
Datooga. Consequently, a clear picture of the exchange of the linguistic materials between

85

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

the Nilotic Datooga, Afro-asiatic Iraqw, and Sukuma Bantu will depend on such future research work.

Bibliography

BAKER, Collins (1996): *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

BALDI, Sergio (2011): Swahili: A Donor Language. In *Lingua Posnaniensis* LIII (1), pp. 7-24.

BALDI, Sergio (2012): Arabic Loans in East African Languages through Swahili: A Survey. In *Folia Orientalia* 49, pp. 37-52.

BATIBO, Herman M. (2005): *Language Decline and Death in Africa: Causes, Consequences and Challenges.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

BATIBO, Herman (2015): The Prevalence of Cultural Diversity in a Multilingual Situation: The Case of Age and Gender Dimensions in the Shisukuma and Kiswahili Greeting Rituals. In *Journal of Multicultural Discourses* 10 (1), pp. 100-111.

BATIBO, Herman M. – ROTTLAND, Franz (2001): The Adoption of Datooga Loanwords in Sukuma and its Historical Implications. In *SUGIA* 16/17, pp. 23-24.

BIHARIOVÁ, Emília (2015): 'We Don't Need No Education': A Case Study about Pastoral Datoga Girls in Tanzania. In *Ethnologia Actualis* 15 (2), pp. 30-45.

BIHARIOVÁ, Emília (2016): Avoiding Christianity – a Weapon in Education 'Savage' Pastoralists: A Case Study of Nilotic Buradiga in Tanzania. In *Asia & African Studies* 25 (1), pp. 85-105.

BLENCH, Roger (2006): *Archaeology, Language, and the African Past*. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.

BLOOMFIELD, Leonard (1933): *Language.* London: Allen and Unwin.

BLYSTAD, Astrid (2000): *Precarious Procreation: Datoga Pastoralists at the Late 20th Century*. Doctoral thesis, Bergen: Bergen University.

BLYSTAD, Astrid (2005): Fertile Mortal Links: Reconsidering Barabaig Violence. In Vigdis Broch-Due (ed.): *Violence and Belonging: The Quest for Identity in Post-colonial Africa*. London: Routledge, pp. 112-130.

BORGES, Robert (2013): Linguistic Archaeology, Kinship Terms, and Language Contact in Suriname. In *Anthropological Linguistics* 55 (1), pp. 1-35.

BOSTOEN, Koen (2007): Bantu Plant Names as Indicators of Linguistic Stratigraphy in the Western Province of Zambia. In Doris L. Payne, Jaime Peña (eds.): *Selected Proceedings of the 37th Annual Conference on African Linguistics*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, pp. 16-29.

BRUCKHAUS, Stefan (2015): Locational Nouns in Datooga (Southern Nilotic, Tanzania). In Angelika Mietzner, Anne Storch (eds.): *Nilo-Saharan: Models and Descriptions*. Cologne: Koeppe Verlag, pp. 73-92.

CEPPI, Silvia L. – NIELSEN, Martin R. (2014): A Comparative Study on Bush-meat Consumption Patterns in Ten Tribes in Tanzania. In *Tropical Conservation Science* 7 (2), pp. 272-287.

CREIDLER, Chet – ROTLAND, Franz (1997): Noun Classification in Southern Nilotic: Datooga. In *Afrika und Ubersee* 80, pp.71-93.

EHALA, Martin (2010): Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Intergroup Processes. In *Multilingua* 29, pp. 203-221.

EHRET, Christopher (1971): *Southern Nilotic History: Linguistic Approaches to the Study of the Past.* Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.

ITANDALA, Buluba (1980): Nilotic Impact on the Babinza of Usukuma. In *Transafrican Journal of History* 9 (1/2), pp. 1-17.

HASPELMATH, Martin (2009): Lexical Borrowing: Concepts and Issues. In Martin Haspelmath, Uri Tadmor (eds.): *Loanwords in the World's Languages: A Comparative Handbook*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. pp. 35-54.

HASPELMATH, Martin – TADMOR, Uri (2009): The Loanword Typology Project and the World Loanword Database. In Martin Haspelmath, Uri Tadmor (eds.): *Loanwords in the World's Languages: A Comparative Handbook.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. pp. 1-34.

KARAN, Mark E. (2011): Understanding and Forecasting Ethnolinguistic Vitality. In *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 32 (2), pp. 137-149.

KIESSLING, Roland (2001): Number Marking in Datooga Nouns. In Rainer Vossen, Angelika Mietzner, Antje Meissner (eds*.): Mehr als nur Worte: Afrikanistische Beiträge zum 65 - Geburtstag von Franz Rottland*. Cologne: Köppe. pp. 349-366.

KIESSLING, Roland – MOUS, Maarten – NURSE, Derek (2008): The Tanzanian Rift Valley Area. In Bernd Heine, Derek Nurse (eds.): *A Linguistic Geography of Africa*. London: Cambridge University Press. pp. 186-227.

KLIMA, George J. (1970): *The Barabaig: East African Cattle-herders.* Illinois: Waveland Press Inc.

87

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

KUPER, Adam (1979): Zulu Kinship Terminology over a Century. In *Journal of Anthropological Research* 35 (3), pp. 373-386.

LIUA, Yu-Chang – GIJSENA, Johan – TSAIB, Chung-Yin (2013): An Empirical Evaluation of Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Language Loss: The Case of Southern Min in Taiwan. In *Folia Linguistica* 47 (2), pp. 425-447.

LOT (LANGUAGE OF TANZANIA PROJECT) (2009): *Atlasi ya lugha za Tanzania.* Dar es Salaam: University of Dar es Salaam.

LUSEKELO, Amani (2013a): Language Contact in Lake Eyasi Area in North-western Tanzania. In *Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria* 22, pp. 137-157.

LUSEKELO, Amani (2013b): Swahili Loanwords Nativisations in the Languages of Tanzania. In *Huria Journal of the Open University of Tanzania* 14, pp. 151-162.

LUSEKELO, Amani (2015): The Consequences of the Contacts Between Bantu and Non-Bantu Languages around Lake Eyasi in Northern Tanzania. In *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language* 3 (1), pp. 62-75.

LUSEKELO, Amani (2016): The Spread of Kiswahili Lexis into the Interior Bantu: The Case of Names of New World Cereals and Tubers in Tanzanian Bantu. In *Kioo cha Lugha* 14, pp. 50-73.

LUSEKELO, Amani (2017a): Additive and Substitutive Borrowing against Semantic Broadening and Narrowing in the Names of Architectural Structures in Tanzanian Bantu Languages. In *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities* 18 (1), pp. 19-45.

LUSEKELO, Amani (2017b): Education-induced Borrowing in Tanzania: Penetration of Swahili Nouns into Maa (Maasai) and Hadzane (Hadzabe). In *Language Matters* 38 (1), pp. 1-26.

LUSEKELO, Amani (2018): Terms for Cardinal Directions in Eastern Bantu Languages. In *Journal of Humanities,* 26, pp. 49-70.

MAPUNDA, Gastor – ROSENDAL, Tove (2015): Borrowing in Tanzanian Ngoni Lexicon: Some Semantic Trends in a Language Contact Situation. In *Language Matters: Studies in the Languages of Africa* 46 (2), pp. 180-194.

MASHIRI, Pedzisai (2004): A Sociolinguistic Interpretation of the Social Meanings of Kinship Terms in Shona Urban Interactions. In *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 22 (1-2), pp. 27-42.

MATIKI, Alfred J. (2016): Patterns of Lexical Borrowing in Chichewa. In *Journal of the Linguistics Association of SADC Universities* 4 (4), pp. 79-93.

88

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

MATRAS, Yaron (2009): *Language Contact*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

MHAJIDA, Samwel S. (2019): *The Collapse of a Pastoral Economy: The Datoga of Central and Northern Tanzania from the 1830s to the 2000s.* Göttingen: Göttingen University Press.

MIETZNER, Angelika, PASCH, Helma (2007): Expressions of Cardinal Directions in Nilotic and in Ubangian Languages. In *Skase Journal of Theoretical Linguistics* 4 (3), pp. 17-31.

MITCHELL, Alice (2015a): Words That Smell Like Father-in-law: A Linguistic Description of the Datooga Avoidance Register. In *Anthropological Linguistics* 57 (2), pp. 195-217.

MITCHELL, Alice (2015b): Linguistic Avoidance and Social Relations in Datooga. Doctoral thesis, Buffalo: University of Buffalo.

MITCHELL, Alice (2017): The Pragmatics of a Kinship Term: The Meaning and Use of *Íiyá* 'Mother' in Datooga (Nilotic). In Raija Kramer, Roland Kiessling (eds.): *Mechthildian Approaches to Afrikanistik: Advances in Language Based Research on Africa: Festschrift für Mechthild Reh*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe. pp. 287-301.

MOUS, Maarten – QORRO, Martha (2009): Loanwords in Iraqw, a Cushitic Language of Tanzania. In Martin Haspelmath, Uri Tadmor (eds.): *Loanwords in the World's Languages: A Comparative Handbook*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. pp. 103-123.

MSANJILA, Yohana P. (2003): Kushuka kwa hadhi ya lugha za jamii nchini Tanzania. In *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 12 (3), pp. 296-309.

MSANJILA, Yohana P. (2004): The Future of the Kisafwa Language: A Case Study of Ituha Village in Tanzania. In *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 68, pp. 161-171.

MUZALE, Henry R.T. – RUGEMALIRA, Josephat M. (2008): Researching and Documenting the Languages of Tanzania. In *Language Documentation & Conservation* 2 (1), pp. 68-108.

NURSE, Derek (2000): *Inheritance, Contact, and Change in Two East African Languages* (Language Contact in Africa 4). Cologne: Ruediger Koeppe Verlag.

PRINSLOO, Danie J. (2014). Lexicographic Treatment of Kinship Terms in an English/Sepedi-Setswana-Sesotho Dictionary with an Amalgamated Lemmalist. In *Lexikos* 24, pp. 272-290.

ROSENDAL, Tove, - MAPUNDA, Gastor (2017): Contact-induced Language Alternation in Tanzanian Ngoni: An Empirical Study of Frequency and Patterns. In *International Journal of Multilingualism* 14 (4), pp. 463-477.

ROTTLAND, Franz (1983): Southern Nilotic (with an Outline of Datooga). In Lionel

89

ETHNOLOGIA ACTUALIS
Vol. 19, No. 1/2019

AMANI LUSEKELO
Asaption of Sukuma Loanwords in the Western Dialects of Datooga (*Taturu*) and its Dialectological Implications

Bender (ed.): *Nilo-Saharan Language Studies*. Michigan: African Studies Center. pp. 208-38.

SEBONDE, Rafiki. Y. (2012): Code Switching and Social Stratification in Rural Chasu Community. In *Language Matters,* 43 (1), pp. 80-86.

STRÖM, Eva-Marie (2009): The Situation of Ndengeleko: A Coastal Tanzanian Language (P10). In Masangu Matondo, Fiona McLaughlin, Eric Potsdam (eds.): *Selected Proceedings of the 38th Annual Conference on African Linguistics*. Somerville: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. pp. 229-241.

THOMASON, Sarah – KAUFMAN, Thomas (1988): *Language Contact, Creolization and Genetic Linguistics.* University of California Press.

URT (UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA) (2013): *2012 Population and Housing Census: Population Distribution by Administrative Areas*. Dar es Salaam: National Bureau of Statistics.

Amani Lusekelo is a Senior Lecturer specialising in African languages at Dar es Salaam University College of Education, a Constituent College of the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania (East Africa). His research focuses on the ethno-linguistic and cultural matters related to contacts of societies in African settings. He publishes on themes related to the outcome of the contact of African languages, transformation of the naming systems in Africa, and general linguistics. Apart from the citations used in the article, he is the author of "African Linguistics in Eastern Africa" In H. Ekkhehard Wolff (ed.) A History of African Linguistics (Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom, forthcoming), "An Account of Intercultural Contact in Nyakyusa Personal Names" (African Study Monographs, Japan, 2018), "The Hadzabe Society of Tanzania: Contacts, Sociolinguistics and Onomastics" (John Archers Publishers, Nigeria, 2015), and "Linguistic Morphology: A Student Guide" (E&D Vision Publishing Limited, Tanzania, 2014). He conducts research in Tanzania. He participated in short-term teaching at the universities of Botswana (Africa), Gothenburg in Sweden and Saints Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (Slovakia).

A Semantic Analysis of Personal Names in Datooga Society

MARY ZACHARIA CHARWI

Department of Languages and Literature,
Dar es Salaam University College of Education, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
charwi.mary@duce.ac.tz

ABSTRACT

Naming can sometimes be associated with particular situations or someone's birth. This study intends to find out the association between Datooga names and socio-cultural backgrounds. The study employs a qualitative research approach, in which case the collected data was subjected to descriptive analysis. Data have been collected from Datooga speaking students studying at the Dar es Salaam University College of Education, through Interviews and Questionnaire. The analysis is based on the Kripke's three arguments in naming as described by Speaks (2007). The theory explains how naming is achieved with reference to the modal argument, the semantic argument and the epistemic argument. The findings of the study have revealed that in the Datooga society, naming is associated with different phenomena particularly time of birth and prevailing situations, traditions, norms and customs.

KEY WORDS: epistemic argument, personal names, semantic argument, socio-cultural context and associated meaning

Introduction

The present study is a semantic analysis of Datooga names and the determinants of the naming process. The analysis is based on personal names (PNs) as perceived in the Datooga society. The study specifically seeks to answer such questions as: "*What do personal names in Datooga reflect in terms of gender in social cultural context? What is their perception*

towards the meanings of the names? What are the factors which determine the naming process?" The main point in this study is that naming in Datooga is more than just giving labels to individuals; and this is in line with Dobrić, who opines that the naming process has a place within the framework of philosophy rather than within the linguistics (DOBRIĆ 2010). However, this is in opposition with the view of some linguists who assume that names have no function rather than denoting items (ANDERSON 2007:276). These are controversies which need to be addressed through studies which examine the naming process in different communities. While this study does not challenge those who think that naming is abstract, it supports the view that the naming process is conditioned differently in different communities. Indeed, "Various traditional and current theories concerning PNs have been proposed by philosophers and semanticists to account for naming in languages" (AL-GHAZALLI 2009:1). The scholar specifically states that, "the problem is that plausible arguments can be introduced to show that PNs have meaning, and others to show that PNs do not have meaning. The very simple reason behind holding the view that PNs have meaning is 'how is it possible for words having no meaning to serve systematic function in language?'" (AL-GHAZALLI 2009:2).

This study, therefore, assumes that in any human language, every word has a meaning including personal names. In that accord, this study provides some insights to the meanings associated with proper names in Datooga Society. The study is organized into sections and subsections on the basis of the factors which determine naming, which include socio-cultural and physical factors. The analysis is preceded by the theoretical framework which guides the analysis of the study, but before introducing the theory, we shall have a brief look on the Datooga society and its language.

Datooga belongs to the Nilotic language family which has been clustered as Southern group. It is spoken by Datooga people along the Rift Valley in Tanzania. The Datooga has different names, such as Datoga, Datog, Tatoga, Tatog, Taturu and Mang'ati. However, in this study, Datooga is used consistently. Muzale and Rugemalira estimate that the Datooga speakers are approximately 138,777 (MUZALE – RUGEMALIRA 2008:79). The Datooga are a pastoralist society, but apart from cattle rearing, families may have plots of maize, beans and sorghum (REKDAL – BLYSTAD 2004:630). Definitely, these activities are to a great extent determined by environmental factors, including terrain, rainfall and natural vegetation. On the other hand, the activities are also likely to influence the distribution of roles in terms of gender and age; and subsequently enlighten the naming process. This is further punctuated by the fact that, as in any other African societies, Datooga have their political and social ways of doing things. For instance, the Datooga community is linked together through rules and regulations as a system of organisation. More importantly, Datooga is a patrilineal society

whereby social issues and family matters are dominated and handled by males. One would thus expect that the naming process may be influenced by male dominance. They also have their own way of worship in which it is believed that the sprits are closely linked with people's lives. For example, in terms of respect, Mitchell argues that, "Datooga women avoid mentioning the names of their senior in-laws as well as any ordinary words in the language which sound like those names. In place of taboo forms, they use words from conventionalized avoidance vocabulary. This practice is known as *gˊiingˈˊawˆeakshˋooda*" (MITCHELL 2015:188).

From linguistic point of view, and semantically in particular, the quotation by Mitchell above means a lot. When someone avoids mentioning a name of someone or something, there should be a reason behind. Therefore, the Datooga language has its own system of naming which is well accommodated in the grammar of the language; social environment, gender and relationships of events and phenomena. This is to say, the Datooga society has their own culture which, in one way or another determine how they perceive the world. Although there is rich literature on the Datooga Society, most of it concentrates on grammar particularly morphology (MITCHELL 2015; TUCKER – BRYAN 1966). In this paper, I will concentrate only on naming, particularly the meanings associated with names, and their perception of the world which is reflected in names; and the factors which determine the naming process.

Rationale of the Study

It has been agreed by linguists that a proper name has no meaning rather than denoting an object. As proposed by traditional theories PNs should be described and accounted for naming in languages by the philosophers and semanticists. The present paper analyses the PNs in the Datooga society for accounting the semantic and naming process. The significance of this paper is to show that in Datooga Society the PN is beyond denoting the object. The meaning of Datooga PNs is well connected to social cultural context. The paper can give some insights for other research in this society.

Theoretical Framework

Traditionally, philosophers and semanticists proposed theories to account for the naming process, but there are controversies on whether proper names have meanings or not. For instance, Ullman contends that "a proper name merely serves to identify a person or object

by singling it out from among similar items" (ULLMAN 1962:73). As Ullman, quoted by van Langendonck asserts, "it does not make sense to ask: *What is the meaning of London? Or: What do you understand by London?*" (VAN LANGENDONCK 2008:85). Van Langendonck gives his view of an example of the proper name *Mary* that, "*Mary* functions as a genuine proper name …..as a derived common noun, it will be hard to tell proper names apart from common nouns, which also happens to be constructed as subject PNs and can have similar modifiers" (VAN LANGENDONCK 2008:19).

Van Langendonck synthesizes the function of proper names from a semantic, pragmatic and syntactic perspective; thus, proper names are approached constructionally, distinguishing prototypical uses from more marked ones such as theories in which names are used as common nouns (VAN LANGENDONCK 2008:321). The present paper has used Kripke's three arguments for data analysis.

Kripke's three Arguments against Descriptivism

The present study is based on three arguments of Kripke which he used to criticize the descriptive theory of naming. The theory of description is the theory of meaning and not a theory of use of names to refer to persons and objects. Popescu explained that, "Descriptivism would allegedly entail that the subject is thinking about the concepts he associates with the name, as opposed to thinking about the name's referent" (POPESCU 2013:3). The three Kripke's arguments include the modal argument, the semantic argument and the epistemic argument. The modal argument is based on the truth-value. It introduces the notion of rigid designation, that the ordinary proper names are rigid designators, whereas ordinary definite description is not. Kripke shows that when necessarily, 'n' is 'n' and there is no way necessarily 'n' is 'F'. That means, when the first sentence has the truth-value, the second will be false. In the semantic argument, Kripke associates the name with description and not with what is referred to. Furthermore, he contends that sometimes it associates wrong description with the name. The other argument, the epistemic argument, is based on the prior information which is known before; for instance, "If the *F* exists, then *F* is *F*" (SPEAKS 2007:6).

Determinants of Naming in Datooga

The analysis below has been categorised into groups based on the factors which determine the naming of persons; and it is indicated specifically that names are associated with time of

the day, seasons of the year, personal characteristics and events, physical appearance, animals, normal things and respect. Above all, gender tends to feature across the whole naming process. The next subsection starts with the time of the day: morning, afternoon and night as a factor for naming in Datooga.

Time of the day:	Morning, afternoon and Night	
Morning	**Sakteayda**	
Female	*Usakteayda*	one who was born in the morning
Male	*Gisakteayda*	one who was born in the morning
Afternoon	**Skweard**	
Female	*U-da-skweard*	one who was born in the afternoon
Male	*Getaknod*	Summer/Dry season
Night Eawed		
Female	*Uda-eawed* (*Udeawed*)	one who was born in the night
Male	*Gi-deawed*	one who was born in the night

As suggested in the data above, males who are born during the day time are named *Getaknod,* which is associated with 'drought' instead of afternoon, and no name exists for a female who is born in the afternoon. Instead of that, the name *Domelda* is associated with a dry season or area which is dry. *Domelda* has no grammatical gender such that it can be given to both male and female, although it is mostly given to male as opposed to female. Semantically, drought occurs due to the absence of rain for a long period of time. Pragmatically, it indicates that male is given this name in the sense that they are the ones who take care of the family; and may be when they were born, there was nothing in terms of food i.e. crops and animals due to drought. Next below are names associated with seasons of the year, although it is not all. There are names also associated with summer and spring while no name for autumn and female name for winter exist.

MARY ZACHARIA CHARWI

A Semantic Analysis of Personal Names in Datooga Society

Seasons of the year

Normally, in one year, we have four seasons which are summer, spring, winter and autumn. But the naming process in Datooga Society has names for summer, spring and winter. See examples below.

Summer	weidesh	
Female	*Udag-weidesh*	one who was born in the summer
Male	*Gi-weidesh*	one who was born in the summer

Spring		
Male	*Domelda*	one who was born during spring time
Female	*Domelda*	one who was born during spring time

Winter	Muwed(a)	
Male	*Qeambaropt*	one who was born during rainfall season
Female	------	

The male who was born during the daytime has been given the name *Getaknod* but the time is associated with summer/dry season, while they have another name which is *Domelda* associated with dry season or area, which can be given to both genders. But what this tells us is that females are not related to summer/dry season/area or the associated meaning does not reflect female gender. According to Kripke's theory, the modal of argument has been used in naming process to kids who are given names according to the time of the day and the seasons of the year, although there is a difference in winter time (SPEAKS 2007:4).

Names Associated with Characteristics/Habits of Parents/ Situation

There are also names which are given to a person according to the habit/characteristics of their parents. As we know, the process of naming is done when a mother gives birth to a

child, although later we will see that some names are associated with the child itself. There are also special names according to gender.

Female	*Mewechi*	the one who is not co-operative
Female	*Mejereksa*	the one who cannot be controlled
Female	*Mealangu*	one not satisfying (food)
Female	*Daqajat*	one who does not get satisfied (food)
Female	*Udanyash*	talking too much
Male	*Qeambanyesht*	noise making
Male	*Marish*	one who does not grow fat
Male	*Qutamuy*	ill-mouthed
Male	*Mangw'ala*	one who cannot get confused
Male	*Dusean*	black (colour)

From cultural point of view, discrimination is seen in this society. For instance, the name *Daqajat is* given to a female child. This indicates that when her mother was pregnant, there was no satisfactory food or other things. This name is given to female gender only and not to males. This tells us that male is not related to satisfaction; it is only females who need satisfaction. Kripke in his semantic argument states that "sometimes speakers not only do not have uniquely satisfied descriptions to associate with a name, but also associate the wrong descriptions with the name: descriptions are in fact not even true of the referent" (SPEAKS 2007:6). As if not enough, the name *Mejereksa* which is given to the female gender, is associated with meaning of 'cannot be controlled' presupposing that it is only women who can be controlled and not men because, in the Datooga society, this name is exclusively for women. The term has something to do with the one who should be under someone; and being subjected to. This has penetrated to some family matters such as planning and decision making. Women are controlled in making decision, organising, planning and even on how to handle things in the family. On the other hand the name *Mangw'ala* 'one who cannot get confused' is only for the men, my question here is how about the women who are not confused? This also indicates that men are more stable than women, which is not true.

Male	*Getabeak*	for the tears (*dabeak* – tears)

In Datooga society, the name *Getabeak* is given to a male child who is born of a woman who has been married in a polygamous family. For instance, a man may have five wives, and every wife has her own family (here it means the mother and the children); and may be one

family has some problems or something which has made them restless, maybe diseases, poverty or something else. The woman and her children are known as the family of tears. From the gender perspective, this indicates that in Datooga culture there is existence of classes according to the status of the family. In this case, children who are born in a certain family will be given names according to the class status of the family, such as higher, middle or poor. The name *Getabeak* is for the family which is not well off. However, it is given to the male children who are born of a woman who is poor, having a number of problems; which indicates the family which suffers from a number of problems.

As regards the semantic argument, Kripke concurs with the following argument, consider a name you are competent with using and count as understanding, like 'Cicero' or 'Richard Feynman.' What descriptions do you associate with the name? If you are like most people you don't know any uniquely identifying description of people like this. (If you do know such a description, we can come up with another case for you, where you can't.) But in these cases do we want to say that the name has no reference for you, just because the descriptions you associate with the name do not pick anyone out uniquely?... No, we don't want to say this (SPEAKS 2007:5).

Naming according to physical appearance

Male   *Mahetun*   one who does not grow/dormant

The name *Mahetun,* which means 'one who does not grow/dormant' may be associated with a lack of food or some nutrients. For someone to know one who is dormant, it needs time to observe the situation as the person grows. Unfortunately, the name is given to male gender without even reference to the growth progress. This is also an indicator of gender discrimination because it is only marked for males who are dormant; and this poses a question – what about the female gender? This implies that it is normal for females to be dormant, and that is why it is easy for the male gender to be marked because it is not normal.

Male   *Mearjeang'da* - one who is not at rest / restless.

The name *Mearjeang'da* means that when the mother of the respective child was pregnant, she was not at rest; or she liked to work rather than resting for some time. But the name is only for the male gender and not for female. Sometimes, it could be perceived that it is the males who make women restless especially when they are pregnant. This means that it is easy for male gender to be predicted before they are born.

Male	*Qedesh*	empty house
Female	*Udaqedesh*	empty house
Male	*Qamunga*	alcohol
Male	*Qerrabast*	guest house

In most African societies, the male gender has power as compared to the female gender. This is also revealed in Datooga society; the name *Qeambanyeasht* 'noise maker' is given to the male gender as the one who has power to speak, to complain, or to shout in the family. The Datooga community being male-dominant, this name is not expected to be given to females.

Female	*Qenyares*	the family of anger
Female	*Sitelu*	the one who never have been taken back home
Female	*Meafnya*	the one who cannot be hidden
Female	*Marish*	one who never grows fat
Male	*Gidamuy*	for the bad
Male	*Nyutean(a)*	the one who made me to become weak

The name *Nyutean*(a) is given to a male child who has caused his mother to become weak during his nine months of pregnancy. One question can be asked: what will happen when it is the opposite gender who is the causer?

| Male | *Balagi* | one who was born during shifting processes from one place to another. |

The name *Balagi* is only for men, although a child of either sex can be born in the shifting process. I would assume that, *Balagi* is named during villagization. Previously, people were living in scattered settlements. Therefore, it was not easy to the government to build schools, dispensaries, markets and offer other social services everywhere. This forced people to settle closer. On the other hand, pastoralists tend to shift from one area to another in search of good pasture for their cattle. But the name is given only to men because they are the ones who are supposed to own the land, and when it happens on the transition process, they should be identified, but not women. According to my view, this is because the Datooga are a patrilineal

society; and only males are supposed to own a land and thus they should be identified. This is because women can go anywhere, and nobody cares to know this.

Gafufean	one who does things step by step; no hurry
Mekeachi	one who is not greeted

The name *Gafufean* is used to name a male child suggesting the one who does things step by step. The Datooga society assumes that things can be done step by step only by men and not by women, which is not true. Every gender can do this, it depends on someone's mind, in the sense of how accurate he or she is.

Physical appearance of a child

These are the names which are based on someone's characteristics in terms of physical appearance. They do not refer to the situation which the mother faced during the nine-month pregnancy period or during the actual delivery of the child.

Male	*Ginyawish*	who born with a green colour.
Male	*Ginuwas*	short
Male	*Hiloga*	Fortress (thorns to suggest protection to the family)
Male	*Noga*	goat

In examples above, the names *Ginyawish* and *Ginuwas* are given to male children with reference to their physical appearance immediately after they are born. The names are based on the children themselves. Whereas the name *Hiloga* indicates security of the family, it also indicates the importance of male gender in the family. It is associated with the leader who takes care of the family. The name *Noga* refers to the oldest domesticated species, which is very important to family as it provides meat, milk, skin and fur.

Dangerous Animals

Names which are associated with dangerous animals have meanings to those who have been given these names. Such name is an indicator of the one who is taking care of the family. See examples below.

Male	*Gidang'adid*	lion
Male	*Gidamarird*	tiger / leopard
Male	*Gidabard*	traditional knife which is sharp both edges

The names *Gidang'adid* 'lion' and 'tiger/leopard' are given to men and not to women. This is because men are hunters and they tend to bring home food for the family. The name reflects jobs done by men. Also, the name *Gidabard* 'traditional knife which is sharp on both edges' is given to male gender and not to female gender. The traditional knife is used by men as a weapon. It is also sometime used for hunting and for cutting or chopping meat into pieces for easy carriage.

Normal Things

There are some names which are used to name female children to suggest unimportant meaning to the society. It seems that they are used purposely to demoralize women's role. Examples below are female gender names:

Female	*Gilenga*	leads
Female	*Udamearmeard*	for the worship
Female	*Udaqadawed*	for the worship
Female	*Udagayd*	for the giraffe
Female	*Udabulalid*	for the bed
Female	*Udendaneki*	the source of water / well /springs
Female	*Udagekul*	for the screaming
Female	*Mellang'u*	not be satisfaction
Female	*Merrun*	the one who cannot be taken for the punishment of the family.

The Datooga society has one punishment which is normally done by the members of the family of the woma: the woman who has been married to one family will be taken back to her parents' home by the members of the family, such as her brothers or parents when the family of a man (husband) misbehaves to them (the family of the woman). Then the family of the woman will come and pick their daughter (the wife of someone) until the other family comes and seeks forgiveness. In this society, they have to do some cultural rituals as an indicator to apologize for what has been done to the wife's family. Therefore, the name

Merrun, which means 'the one who is never taken back' (*Asiyetolewa njee*) is given to the one who is not used to the punishment of the family.

Respectful Names

In the Datooga Society, it is normal for an adult (the person who is married) to have a new name which will be used by the partner to both genders. The names are special for only the wife to be called by the husband and vice versa. See examples below.

Respectful Names for the Female Gender

These are names which are given to women after their marriages in which case they are used only by their husbands. These names are supposed to be used by their husbands only and not by anybody else, even if it may occur by co-incidence that the woman with that name will not respond because it has been called by someone who was not supposed to.

Damng'an	fowl bird
Majirjir	Not in harry
Shing'da	the one who is late
Meneaji	disagreement
Suiga	Beuty / decoration
Deaqwed	flower
Gasaghed	the one who is needed at home

Respectful Names for the Male Gender

In the same scenario, these are names are also supposed to be used by their wives and not anybody else. These are names which are given to them as an indicator of maturity.

Upwa

Jajaa

Jajid

Dadaa

Dataa

Neanna

Didaa

Bwabwaa

Hacha

Yeayya

Hanna

Mammwa

Odoo

Lealla

Nunnu

Dtiid

This indicates that there is a time the same person can have two names at a time. This is what is called as epistemic argument by Kripke as quoted by Speaks. In epistemic argument, Kripke states that

"If F exists, then the F is F.

The proposition expressed by this sentence appears to be known a priori. If so, it seems that every sentence of the following form is true:

It is known a priori that if the F exists, then F is F.

But now suppose that n is a name whose meaning, according to the description theory of names, is given by the description 'the F'. Then our principle of replacing synonyms without change of true-value leads us to the claim that the following sentence is true:

It is known a prior that if the F exists, then n is F" (SPEAKS 2007:6).

According to the epistemic argument, the respectful names which I can call as 'n' are those which have been given to the ones who are married without changing their previous names; which I call F, which still have the true-value since they have been named when they born.

Synthesis of the discussion

The point which I want to summarize here is that the names have some issues which are tied with them. We have seen a number of factors which are associated with names, and I can refer to them as connotative meaning. It is just associated with some situations which are socially constructed gender differentiations; and there is no reality or direct meaning to the situations which lead to those names. We cannot say that naming in the Datooga Society is related to what they want a child to become.

Conclusion

The system of personal naming in Datooga Society has been described in this paper. As we have seen, the system is mostly based on social and cultural issues. In particular, the naming process has been mostly based on the factors related to the physical environment factors, including terrain, rainfall and natural vegetation. Other factors are social and cultural which in turn are reflected in gender roles and subsequently in the naming process. For example, the economic activities are dominated by males and subsequently enlighten the naming process. This has been found to be the case in most African societies. For instance, in the Datooga community, being a patrilineal society, social issues and family matters are dominated and handled by males. It is not thus difficult for someone to predict that the naming process may be influenced by male dominance. It has been seen that naming is sometimes related to the mother of the children rather than to the child itself. The only factor which has the meaning associated with the children themselves is the physical appearance of a child during his or her birth. The system is also based on gender discrimination, as most names which have been given to the female gender have lower value or none at all as compared to male gender names. This indicates that the Datooga culture values the male gender at the expense of the female gender.

This paper has served to show that the linguists who think that naming is abstract are far removed from social realities as they only think in terms of language in isolation from social realities. As evident from the presented data and discussion, the naming process in Datooga is merely a social construction as reflected in language. In particular, gender has been the major consideration such that males are favoured at the expense of females. This gender balance can also be predicted in other life circles including politics, economy and participation in social and economic development of the Datooga community and the nation at large.

Bibliography

AL-GHAZALLI, Mehdi F. (2009): *A Semantic Analysis of Personal Names in English and Arabic.* Baghdad: AlMustansiriyiah University. Retrieved from: https://www.iasj.net/iasj?func=fulltext&aId=35771.

ANDERSON, JOHN (2007): *The Grammar of Names.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

BLYSTAD, Astrid – REKDAL, Ole Bjørn (2004): *Datoga*.

Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238114575_Datoga.

DOBRIĆ, Nikola (2010): Theory of Names and Cognitive Linguistics – The Case of the Metaphor. In *Filozofija I Drustvo* 21 (1), pp. 31-41.

ERICH, Round (2015): *Knowing the Meaning of Names in Use, with Particular Reference to the Appellative Use of Names in English and Swedish.* The University of Queensland. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/43498343.

MITCHEL, Alice (2015): Extra-Ordinary Morphology in an Avoidance Register of Datooga. In Ruth Kramer, Elizabeth C. Zsiga, One Tlale Boyer (eds.): *Selected Proceedings of the 44th Annual Conference on African Linguistics*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, pp. 188-198.

MUZALE, Henry R. T. – RUGEMALIRA Josephat M. (2008): Researching and Documenting the Languages of Tanzania. In *Language Documentation and Conservation* 2 (1), pp. 68-108.

POPESCU, Şerban (2013): *The Description Theory of Names.* Budapest: Central European Universty.

SPEAKS, Jeff (2007): A Guide to Kripke's Attack on Descriptivism in Lectures I and II of Naming and Necessity. Retrieved from https://www3.nd.edu/~jspeaks/courses/2006-7/93515/handouts/kripke-descriptivism.pdf.

TUCKER, Archibald N. – BRYAN, Margaret A. (1966): *Linguistics Analyses: The Non-Bantu Languages of North-Eastern Africa.* London: Oxford University Press.

ULLMANN, Steohen (1962): *Semantics, An Introduction to the Science of Meaning.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

VAN LANGENDONCK, Willy (2008): *Theory and Typology of Proper Names.* London: Walter de Gruyter.

Mary Zacharia Charwi (1971) is a Tanzanian lecturer at Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE), in the Derpartment of Languages and Literature since 2009. Her Research interest / Consultancy /Area of specialization is Bantu Linguistics; more specific in: Bantu Morphosyntax, Swahili Morphology, Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics. Dr. Charwi has published few documents, as follow: Charwi M.Z. (2012). Vowel Harmony in Kuria, Journal of Education, Humanities and Sciences (JEHS), Volume 1, No. 2, 2012: 105-114. Charwi M.Z. (2013) Unyambulishaji wa Vitenzi vya Kikuria na Athari zake Kisintaksia, KIOO CHA LUGHA JOURNAL, Vol. 11: 58-77. Charwi, M. Z. (2017). *Morphosyntactic and Semantic Aspects of Verb Extension Systems in Bantu Languages: A Case Study of Kuria (E43) in Tanzania.* Bayreuth: University of Bayreuth. Currently she has submted her two papers, one, to Utafiti Journal in 2019; the second is to the Journal: *Dynamika přirozeného vývoje a perspektiva funkčně orientované lingvistiky: sborník z 16. mezinárodního setkání mladých lingvistů.* (2019) BEDNAŘÍKOVÁ, B. a STŮJOVÁ, P. eds.. Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci. 190 p. (in publish). One book chapater to the book of Morphosyntactic Variation of Bantu Languages (in publish - SOAS).

Toponyms and Identity in Hanang' District: Their Origin and Meaning

CHRISPINA ALPHONCE - ELIAKIMU SANE

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature,
University of Dodoma in Dodoma, Tanzania
chrispina.alphonce@udom.ac.tz, *sane.eliakimu@udom.ac.tz*

ABSTRACT

This article is centred on place identity in Hanang' District. Informed by the literature about place identity, the study describes the origin and the sociolinguistic meaning of place names following the analysis of 110 names that were collected from different places around Hanang' District. Snowball sampling was appropriately used to obtain 15 informants for face-to-face interviews. Our analysis revealed that many place names in Hanang' are predominantly from Datooga language and a few from Kiswahili, Nyaturu, Iraqw, Alagwa and Maasai. The qualitative analysis of the names revealed that the names have informative content deriving from landscape features, plants, people, animals and names of birds, events, activities, and the behaviour of some objects in the place. Sometimes, post-modification is done for descriptive specification. This is to say that marked geographical features and events in a particular place characterise the place in Hanang'. Therefore, place names in Hanang' serve to describe the people's history, beliefs, or label important features. There is a trend of shift in a number of place names in Hanang' as a result of contact with the Bantu speakers. This has, consequently, contributed to the replacement of some indigenous sounds by the Kiswahili sounds that contributed to the loss and/or hybridization of names in terms of spelling and pronunciation.

KEY WORDS: Datooga, Hanang', origin and meaning of names, place names, toponymy

Introduction

Onomasticians have recently developed interest to deal with toponyms and their identities (See for example SANE 2016:16; 117-127; HELLELAND 2012: 95-116; ALDERMAN 2000:672-684; GUYOT-SEETHAL 2007:55-63; OMARAU 1997:31-41). These have

generally come into an agreement that place names are a display of memories and experiences of the indigenous population of that place. Eliakimu Sane has added that place names and meaning shape and affect interactions among society members (SANE 2016: 69). However, the role of place names worldwide is not uncommon and there are no new ideas to further illustrate their significance. Instead, research is required to understand the memories and experiences carried in the place names for the naming system consistently depends on the language and cultural values of the society in question. This is to say, on the other hand, that the naming practice and the meaning of the place names are never universal. Crystal had earlier argued that meaning is not some kind of entity separated from language any more than meaning of a word "length." That is, the meaning of a name is determined by the context of the use. Crystal continues this discussion arguing that the meaning of a name cannot be considered independent of its referent or other associations (CRYSTAL 1987:58). The place names in Hanang' District suffice to illustrate this point and this article illuminates how the Datooga society in the District use place names to narrate their history and cultural values that seem peculiar. Several terminological remarks are important here. The term place is used here consistently with Shukram Qazimi's conceptualization of the term as "location" (QAZIMI 2014:306-307). In this study, they are all geographical locations with official names in use. Hanang', with the apostrophe as opposed to the common spelling in the offical documents which mistakenly drop the apostrophe is one among the five districts in of Manyara Region in Tanzania.

We are aware that place naming practice is not peculiar to Hanang' and our emphasis is that each society displays its own values, feelings, and experience which require independent studies. We are also of the view that these names, and the values, feelings, and experience attached to them need to be identified and documented owing to the fact that changes in the societies have a bearing on language and culture. In the attempt to document the values, feelings and experience of the people in Hanang', this article illuminates the origin and meanings of place names in the area using 110 place names that were collected from different areas of Hanang'. An account of the naming practice and meaning shows that the process is historical and common to societies. Lyons uses sacred stories of creation and claims that the basic semantic function of words is that of naming to illustrate the practice and its significance. In this account, he argues that Adam gave names to all living creatures and that the name given to a living creature became its name (Genesis 1:20) (LYONS 1977:174).

Methodology

The data for this article were generated from Hanang' District during the period of September 2018 to January 2019. The data collection and analysis procedures were predominantly qualitative. 110 place names were collected from Hanang' District, followed by interviews with 15 informants who were sampled through snowball technique. These informants helped to group the names based on their origin and meaning. The interviews were done using the Kiswahili and Dagoota languages with the help of a translator. The information obtained was later on translated into English for qualitative analysis. The names collected included the name of the District itself and streets and villages around the District.

Results and Discussions

The results of this investigation are categorised based on the origin of names and meanings of place names (i.e. the core and the sociolinguistic meaning). The analysis of 110 place names along with the findings of the interviews with the informants revealed that a large majority of the place names in Hanang' District have their origin from the Dagoota society, followed by a few from the Kiswahili, Nyaturu, Iraqw, Alagwa and Maasai languages. This has an implication that the Datooga were the first inhabitants of Hanang' but the contact with other societies, as listed above, has had influence in some of the place names. Table 1 below illustrate the point.

Origin of the Place Name	No. of Place Name	%
Dagoota	97	88.2
Kiswahili	06	5.5
Nyaturu	02	1.8
Alagwa	02	1.8
Iraqw	02	1.8
Maasai	01	0.9

Figure 1: *Place Names and their Origins.*

With regard to meanings of Hanang' place names, the study revealed that the meanings of place names arose from human responses to certain landscape (both natural and manmade)

features, people's names and characteristics, animals, plants, birds, insects, behaviour of a person or people, events and activities. Figure 2 below informs the meaning of the place names collected from Hanang'.

Figure 2: *Place Names in Hanang' and their Meaning.*

Place name	Meaning in English
Balang'dalalu	Salty lake/area
Barjamoda	Thorny trees (acacia species)
Bashanga	A sand gully
Basodagwargwa	Elders' pond, elders ritual place Ghost
Basotughwati	A pond where people die often
Bassodeshi	A pond with white water
Bassotu	A pond with black water
Bassotudamwanang'	A small pond with black water
Dabaschenda	A pond
Dangeida/Dangaida	Salty area special for grazing animals
Darajani *(Kisw)*	A bridge
Dawari	A man seen it
Dejameda	High land area with speedy wind
Dilingang'	High mount which is difficult to climb
Diloda	An area with elephants whose movement lead rise of dust
Dirma	Fertile soil best for farming activities
Dumbeta	An area with Commiphora african species of trees
Endagaw	A deep well, long river
Endamudaiga	A well/river where there is species of marsh plants
Endasaki	One well/river
Endashaboghechanda	A well where there a species of Commophora africana
Endasiwolda	A well/river with Eland animals
Galangal	Large or big rocks

Ganana	Gully water where Ganana[1] was taken away
Garbapi	Something cold
Garawja	The name of a person who first settled in the area
Gasabway	Discouraged, despair
Gawali	The area where the community frequently got loss of cattle
Gawidu	A grazing area where big animals (elephants get pasture)
Gawlolu	Black soil, long to cross because of water, marshy area
Gebadawi/Gewibadawi	Highland
Gegheta/Gewigheta	Long tree, long neck
Gehandu	Highlands
Gemunda/Gidamunda	A big bush, plain, with larger skin
Gendabi	A river with thick a forest
Getaghul	A type of tree
Getaki	A place where there is one tree
Getanuwasi	Short trees with shades
Getesemu	An area with trees, trees of lion colour
Gidabwanja	The name of a person who was first to settle at the area
Gidagemowd	A deep well where water is drawn using a bucket or calabash
Gidaghalelenda	A place with thorny trees
Gidamula	A mountain
Gidangu	The name of the person who was first to settle at the area

---

[1] Ganana is a male personal name in Datooga. Other persons taken by gully water are Sebasi and Lamay. Both are male personal names.

Gidichiboda	A snake found in the area
Gidika	The name of the person who was first to settle at the area
Gijega	Mountainous
Gijetamuhoga	A high mount/calve mountain
Ginirishi/Girinish	A fat person
Gisambalang'	Salty area/area with salt water
Gishaji	An area with bones from cattle or wild animals
Gitting/Giting'	The name of the person who was first to settle at the area
Gocho/Gwechoda	The name of the person who was first to settle at the area
Gwadaat/Gwada/at (*IQ*)	An area with type of trees called Dombeya rotundifolia
Gwarimba	Rocks, echo
Hanang'	Black mountain
Hidet/Hidedda	An area with Thespesia garckeana trees
Homari/Haumera	Bare land, without tree
Hombeeba	The name of the person who was first to settle at the area
Ishponga	An area with species of Commiphora african trees
Jarodomu	Plain with lions with brown colour
Jorjaji/Jorjaj	An area with snail shell
Kasaboy/Kosabway	The name of the person who was first to settle at the area
Kinachere (*AL*)	A name of a person who was first to settle at the area
Kinyamburi (*NY*)	A goat
Kateshi/Qatesh	White neck, mount without trees or forest
Laghanga	Stone/rocks
Lalaji	Hot water, boiling water
Lamay	Gully where its water took away Lamay

Lambo *(Kisw)*	Pond
Majengo *(kisw)*	An area with plenty of buildings
Mara/Merra	A bare mountain
Masakta	Many trees
Masgharoda	Types of trees with whistling thorn (species of acacia)
Masusu	Alcohol makers
Matangarimo/Matanganimo(*AL*)	A name of a person who was first to settle in the area
Measkron/Measchironi	Tree with good shades
Ming'enyi	Plains
Mlimani (*Kisw*)	At a mountain
Mogitu	A pond with a black water
Mooram	An area with pieces of stones
Mugucha	The name of a person who was first to settle in the area
Mulbadaw	Barabaig drum made of skin
Munyungura/Gidamyungura	The name of a person who was first to settle in the area
Murera	Temporal yards
Murumba (*NY*)	A tree
Muungano (*Kisw*)	Unity
Mwanga	The name of a person who was first to settle in the area
Naangwa	The name of a person who was first to settle in the area
Ng'abwati	A high mountain
Ng'alda	Shovel, unearth
Ngorongoro (*MS*)	A gully, a wide valley
Orbesh	Bushes/forest/park with an elephant colour
Qalosendo/Qalosendoda	A gully having trees with leaves
Qarebai/Qareba/i	The area with many doves

Quteshi	The name of a person who was first to settle in the area
Qedang'onyi	An area where a jealous community resided
Sangong'/Sagonga	An area with many lovers
Sarjenda/Sararjenda	A clan name, settlement of the clan chief
Sebasi	A gully which its water took away Sebasi
Simbai	The name of a person who was first to settle in the area
Sirop/sirobu	Deep rivers/well
Sorari	Calves separated
Udageka	Their cattle died in the area
Udamascheka	An area with many ticks
Waama/Wa/aam (*IQ*)	A gully/river that carries boulders, logs or trees
Waranga	A stone
Wareta	A tree with short thorns
Wendela	The name of a person who was first to settle in the area
Yudeng/Yudeda	An area with Caesalphinia decapetala species

AL = Alagwa, IQ = Iraqw, Kisw = Kiswahili, MS = Maasai and NY = Nyaturu.

Reading through Figure 2 above, one would understand that many of the place names in Hanang' are derived from geographical (landscape) as well as features and names of people. In the cases where a strange event happened in the community, the place is also named after the event; take the example of *Udageka* which is a place where many cattle died; *Gawali* which is the area where the community frequently lost cattle and *Ganana* which is a place where a Barbaig man was taken by a river.

A couple of place names are derived from tree and/or plants, such names are *Yudeda*, *Barjamoda, Dumbeta, Getaquli,* etc. (as described in table above). Yet, some other names originate from fauna like animals, birds and insects; e.g. *Udamascheka, Jorjaj, Gidichiboda, Diloda*.

Datooga community in Hanang' District has been in long time contact with Cushitic languages (Iraqw and Gorowa), Nilotic-Maasai and Bantu (Kiswahili and Nyaturu). These

languages also contributed to the place names in Hanang' District. Through the contact, some Kiswahili sounds replaced some sounds of the Datooga. These are such as *gh* and *k* which replaced *q*, *a* and *i* are used instead / [ʕ] of a pharyngeal fricative, *sk* for *sch*, etc. There is a tendency of insertion and deletion of prefixes in a number of place names. All these are presented in Table 3 below. The researchers also noted a trend of shift of the indigenous place names for simplification purpose; hence, endangerment of indigenous place names, in this case the Datooga names.

Native Spelling	Current Spelling/pronunciation
Masqaroda	Masgharoda
Measchironi	Measkroni
Qatesh	Kateshi
Wa/ama	Waama
Merra	Mara
Haumeri	Homari
Girinish	Girinishi
Qutesh	Quteshi
Basotu	Bassotu
Gewibadawi	Gebadawi
Gidichiboda	Gichiboda
Gwechoda	Gocho
Giting'	Gitting
Gidamunyungura	-Munyungura
Yudeda	Yudeng

Figure 3: *Datooga names that have changed in spelling and pronunciation due to the influence of contact with other societies.*

Reading through the data in the table above, one could safely argue that contact with other societies, especially officials from other societies, have in one way or another contributed to

the loss of the community identity. This also gives a lesson that the indigenous inhabitants of a place need to be consulted in printing place names to avoid losing the freshness.

Conclusion

A general conclusion from the findings of the study on the names of the Datooga indigenous population shows that the local community tends to preserve the history, values and feelings about certain objects in a place by attributing the features of the object to the place. The local community has preserved this knowledge and could share it only by word of mouth. The threat is that the knowledge would be lost once those knowledgeable society members disappear. Contact with other societies is also a threat to the knowledge mainly because the chief means of storage was oral tradition; see for example the change in spelling and pronunciations of some place names in Hanang'. This article is, therefore, a significant documentation of the knowledge carried in Hanang' place names along with rectification of the misspelled and mispronounced names in the society.

Bibliography

ALDERMAN, Derek H. (2000): A Street Fit for a King: Naming Places and Commemoration in the American South. In *Professional Geographer* Vol. 52 (4), pp. 672-684.

CRYSTAL, David (1987): *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

GUYOT, Sylvain – SEETHAL Cecil (2012): Identity of Place, Places of Identities, Change of Place Names in Post-Apartheid South Africa. In *The South African Geographical Journal* Vol. 89 (1), pp. 55-63.

HELLELAND, Botolv (2012): Place Names and Identities. In *OSLa* Vol. 4 (2), pp. 95-116.

LYONS, John. (1977): *Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

OMARAU, Chaibou Elhadji (1997): Context and Meaning: A Semiotic Interpretation of Greetings in Hausa. In *Folklore Forum* Vol. 28 (2), pp. 31-41.

QAZIMI, Shukram (2014): Sense of place and place identity. In *European Journal of Social Sciences Education and Research* Vol. 1 (1), pp. 306-311.

SANE, Eliakimu (2016): *Space and Communication: An Ethnolinguistic Study of the Maasai Society of Tanzania.* Dodoma: The University of Dodoma.

Chrispina Alphonce is a linguist working in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at the University of Dodoma. She completed her PhD in linguistics in 2016 from the University of Dodoma. Her interest is in syntax, sociolinguistics, ethnic language description and documentation (Southern Cushitic and Nilotic Languages). She is author of: the Significance of Word Order Variation in Iraqw Sentences, the Syntax of Iraqw Relative Clauses and co-author of Linguistic Landscape of Urban Tanzania. She supervises research in Status of Ethnic languages in Tanzania, Language Endangerment, Lexical Changes, Place Names and Personal Names to students of Masters in Linguistics and Syntax of Chindali Relative Clauses and Suprasegmental features of English to students of PhD in Linguistics. Currently, a member of Language Supportive Teaching and Textbooks Project as well as Rift Valley Linguistic Network.

Eliakimu Sane is a linguist working in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at the University of Dodoma. He received his Ph. D. in linguistics in 2016 from the University of Dodoma. His interest is in language and culture and language and education. He is (co-) author of several publications on teaching and learning of English and through English, and language and culture. He supervises research in learning second language and through second language and language and culture to students of Masters in Linguistics. He currently serves as the assistant coordinator of the Language Supportive Teaching and Textbooks Project, which is collaboration among the University of Dodoma, St. John's University of Tanzania and Bristol University and financed through the Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education.

ESSAY

Folk and Literary Reflections on the Culture of Northwest Coast Indians of the Puget Sound Area of North America

MARTA BOTIKOVÁ

Department of Ethnology and Museum Studies,
Faculty of Arts, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovak Republic
marta.botikova@uniba.sk

ABSTRACT

Vi Hilbert, collector, performer and activist who worked with the folklore material of the north-western region, has found somebody to follow in her footsteps in the promotion of the local culture and literature. This somebody is Sherman Alexie, a writer, publicist, poet and script-writer who has published around 30 books to date. Like Vi Hilbert, Sherman Alexie, who is three generations younger, proclaims his Native American heritage. He represents it and helps other readers and interested people understand, or join the path towards building this identity. His texts are characterised by a humorous distance as well as an excellent gift of observation. Alexie is one of the most significant figures of the literature of the indigenous Americans and is a textbook example of a new type of narration, which has deep roots in this region and is nurtured. His early works were a great surprise at the time of their publication, both for readers from the Native American community and other Americans. From an ethnological point of view, they are not only a factual source of knowledge, but also provide a perspective for evaluating the culture emically.

KEY WORDS: folk and literary tradition, storytelling, storytelling opportunities, trickster

In the following discussion, I will be dealing with the issue of folk tradition and the appropriation or continuation of some of its principles in literature. I have chosen an example

ESSAY

from the area of the north-western cultural and geographical area, or part of it, on the territory of the present-day state of Washington in the north-western US.[1] The borders of this region, as in the case of other regions, have been defined in anthropological texts based on a combination of geographical criteria and the characteristics of the culture of its original inhabitants (SUTTLES – STURTEVANNT 1990:1-52). There are several examples of anthropologists, writers and storytellers who dedicated their life and work to preserve and further develop the oral literature treasures by either fixing them in text collections or considering them as an inspiration for their own literary work. They are examples mostly of the continuity and change within the tradition. The area of the Northwest coast[2] is hundreds of miles long and wide cultural area populated by several Native American tribes. An overview of the historical and current attempts could be of great use to understand the processes in the general overview. For this article, I have chosen the examples of the Puget Sound area people. Vi Hilbert and Sherman Alexie are the two authors whose works and activities I will discuss. I had an opportunity to meet both of them in person, studied their works more deeply than the other authors whose names and works are just as important if not better known within the thematically defined discourse[3].

The north western region is very fragmented and varied also from a linguistic point of view. Linguists have identified over forty languages which belong to over ten linguistic families. For the most part, they are polysynthetic languages, creating words out of many elements and including in them concepts such as subject, object, tense, aspect and mood. These circumstances make it clear how difficult folk or linguistic research there was. Understanding texts was also made more complicated by the fact that these tribal languages have a relatively well-established system of consonants, but the system of vowels is relatively poor. It was practically impossible to record the acoustic side of the talks using the letters of the Latin

---

[1]   The whole area is composed of a coastal region which spreads along the Pacific coast from the Gulf of Alaska to the Oregon-California boundary (BOTIKOVÁ 2000:15).

[2]   It covered a long narrow arc of the Pacific coast and offshore islands from the Yakutat Bay, in the north eastern Gulf of Alaska, south to Cape Mendocino, in present-day California. Its eastern limits were the crest of the Coast Ranges from the north down to the Puget Sound, the Cascades south to the Columbia River, and the coastal hills of what is now Oregon and north western California (https://www.britannica.com/topic/Northwest-Coast-Indian, accessed 26.5.2019).

[3]   E.g. Richard Dauenhauer (1942-2014), an American poet, linguist, and translator, an expert on the Tlingit nation of southeastern Alaska, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Dauenhauer, accessed 26.5.2019.

ESSAY

alphabet. As a result, the oldest folk texts were recorded in English, based on retelling and translations by the people accompanying anthropologists in their field research.

In the 1950s, technology started to help collectors. Recordings were made in the field. It took a long time for them to be transcribed as there were no bilingual assistants and writing down the texts was, as we have already mentioned, made more difficult by the lack of symbols for phonetic transcription.

One of the folklorists was Leon Metcalf[4] who in the 1950s, on his own initiative and at his own expense, collected Native American stories/tales in eastern Washington. His collection of folk texts is a valuable part of the documentation in the Burke Museum, University of Seattle. Leon Metcalf was a musician and music teacher at the University of Washington in Seattle. He had only a passive knowledge of the language of the local Native American tribes, but thanks to his feel for music, he was well qualified for understanding, for example, the many nuances in the texts which the narrators expressed using the melody of their voice. Translations and further research on his collection only took place at the end of the 1960s, thereby gradually making the texts accessible to the wider non-Native American and Native American public. It was an inspirational work for other anthropologists such as Thomas Melville Hess[5], the author of a dictionary and grammar of the Lushootseed language and the basics of his phonetical transcription, as well as for the anthropologist Melville Jacobs[6], who brought Vi Hilbert to the transcription and translation of folk texts by ancient storytellers, based on what was in fact an accidental meeting. I have already written about this exceptional woman from the Lushootseed tribe in a separate study, which also includes a list of her publications (BOTIKOVÁ 1999). Here I would just like to mention her not only as a respected self-made woman, but also for her patient and professional work on the transcription and translation of old recordings which she then used to prepare many collections of folk texts. I believe that the merits of Vi Hilbert (1918-2008) do not lie solely

---

[4] On Leon Metcalf (1899-1993) see https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leon_Metcalf, accessed 5.3.2019.

[5] Thomas Melwille Hess († 2010) worked at that time at the University of Victoria. In the 1970s, he initiated an independent master's degree in Native American languages (Native Indian Language Diploma Program) (https://www.uvic.ca/news/topics/2011+in-memoriam-dr-thom-hess+ring accessed 5.3.2019).

[6] Melville Jacobs (1902-1971) was an American anthropologist known for his extensive fieldwork on cultures of the Pacific Northwest. He was born in New York City. After studying with Franz Boas he became a member of the faculty of the University of Washington in 1928 and remained there until his death in 1971 (https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/jacobs_melville_1902_1971_/#.XIVdk6DJ_IU, accessed 10.3.2019).

ESSAY

in the scientific field. Her work was rewarded by several national prizes. Alongside all her merit in preserving a cultural heritage and her academic work, the basis of many of Vi Hilbert's activities lay in resurrecting the language and the tradition of storytelling[7].

She strove to achieve this not only through evening classes, language classes at the university and in private, but mainly through her lectures and organising storytelling meetings. I experienced several of her lectures which explained the contexts of folk texts, the life stories of the narrators as well as the research circumstances of when and how the texts were recorded. She had much information and knowledge on these contexts thanks to the archive documentary work and meetings with researchers and their memories from the field. The culmination of the experience of each lecture and of the meeting with Vi Hilbert was listening to her own reciting of the folk text. She always recited first a short excerpt in Lushootseed and then the whole story in its English translation. Like the original narrators, she used her voice to add character to the main figures: greedy Crow, clever Mink or the wistful sisters staring into the night sky to choose their Star husbands from among the stars. Her further activity consisted in participating in events for the nearby Native American tribes for whom she organised a storytelling festival. She was able to bring together interested parties in various public spaces and provide an overview of contemporary Native American storytellers, their performances and their repertoire. Perhaps this type of activism did not meet with a large response in terms of the numbers of participants and spectators. After all, in the case of traditional folk texts this is a particular type of intimate and fundamentally slow expression which does not have to address a large number of people. However, the publications, performances and the storytelling festival certainly contributed to the building up of a specific, in this case *north-western*, identity among many individuals and groups of offspring of the original inhabitants of this region.

Pow-wow dance celebrations, annual gatherings for the Sun Dance or wearing regalia at these celebrations help to cultivate a Native American identity, often in some sort of pan-American form, which is of great importance in the cultivation of its specificity, self-respect, self-

---

[7]   *Haboo* is an expression used by those listening to the stories to ask for another story – something like "what happened next?" or "tell us more!" This term was used by the editor and translator as the title of one of her collections of stories, the introduction of which was written by Thomas Hess and which was illustrated by Ron Hilbert. This collection was published in 1985. More on the life of Vi Hilbert https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vi_Hilbert, accessed 14.3.2019.

ESSAY

discovery and cultural chronicity[8]. But these quiet and "slow" folk events also belong here: publishing folk texts, bringing the language to life and telling stories.

Through his literary work, Sherman Alexie, a master of storytelling, a Native American from the Spokane reservation in the eastern part of Washington State has become another offspring of original Americans.

Perhaps it is symbolic that when I had the opportunity to meet and experience Sherman Alexie and Vi Hilbert, they were sitting next to each other in the grandstand. It was a ceremony for the opening of the Longhouse, the centre for Native American Studies at Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA[9]. Of course, there were other notable guests there, from the rector of the college to the state governor. To this whole gathering, a discreet petite woman, Vi Hilbert, told a story of how her ancestors lifted up the sky by joining forces, when they thought it was too low. After her, a pleasant young man read an excerpt of his story. He did not tell a folk text, but he told a story. With humorous distance, he sketched his fellow tribe members who on the one hand preserve and on the other, consciously or unconsciously, destroy their traditions by their very way of living, traditions which in an ordinary, everyday life lose their sacredness and gravity and which can perhaps be the source of laughter in a literary work.

Sherman Alexie, full name Sherman Joseph Alexie, Jr. (*1966), was then in September 1995 a fresh graduate and budding author and recipient of his first writing prizes, now according to his encyclopaedia entry a writer, author of short stories, poet and film-maker who has published 25 books. He was born on a Native American reservation in Wellpinit, WA. His childhood was marked by illness and a subsequent complicated head surgery. Not only did he survive the surgery, but he also became an exceptional reader and pupil. He attended primary school on his native reservation, but he longed to leave. He eventually left to attend secondary school in the town of Reardan in Washington State, 20 miles away. There he was a star basketball player and an excellent student. He then studied for a short time at the Jesuit University in Spokane, from where he transferred to Washington State University with the intention of studying medicine in the future. After an unsuccessful attempt to pass the basic

---

[8] Pow-wow ceremonies and Sun Dance meeting are the subject of many literary and visual works, but are not the subject of our interest here.

[9] This ceremony took place on Saturday, September 9th 1995 on the campus of The Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA.

ESSAY

examination in anatomy, he changed his main subject to American studies, specialising in literature. Shortly afterwards, he won awards and grants in the field of literary creation.

As a student, he had problems with alcoholism. However, he faced the addiction and has been tee-total since the age of 23. Today he lives in Seattle with his wife and two sons.

His literary and film work is wide-ranging and award-winning. His first collection of short stories, "The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven" (1993) won the PEN / Hemingway prize for the best first work. He continued with his first novel, "Reservation Blues" (1995) and second, "Indian Killer" (1996), both receiving prizes[10]. In 2010 Alexie won the PEN / Faulkner prize. Alexie, whose work is mainly based on his experience as a Native American on the reservation and outside it, is praised by critics for his developed storytelling technique, and his lyrical yet humorous stories[11]. From 1997 Alexie began to cooperate with Chris Eyre, a Native American Cheyenne/Arapaho director. Together they rewrote one of Alexie's short stories "This is what it means to say Phoenix, Arizona" into a script. The resulting film, "Smoke Signals", premiered at the Sundance film festival in 1998 and won several awards. Alexie continues to write and direct films (*Business of Fancydancing* in 2002, *49?* in 2003, *The Exiles* in 2008 and cooperated on *Sonicsgate* in 2009).[12]

Alongside all these important literary awards, it is important also to mention the fact that Alexie's stories/narration served as a basis for several textbooks and theoretical works on narratology[13], or teaching manuals for working with text (BRUCE – BALDWIN –

---

[10] Excerpts of these texts have been translated into Slovak and published in HOLÁ-TERENOVÁ 1996.

[11] Verlyn Klinkenborg, writing for the *Los Angeles Times* noted: "Alexie has been called a lyrical writer, but to call him that is to miss how deadpan he really is, how much his humor depends on saying what hurts in a matter-of-fact voice. *Klinkenborg, Verlyn (18 June 1995). "America at the Crossroads : Life on the Spokane Reservation: RESERVATION BLUES, By Sherman Alexie". Los Angeles Times. Retrieved 19 March 2018* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reservation_Blues, *accessed* 14.3.2019).

The *New York Times* wrote, "It's difficult not to make *Indian Killer* sound unrelievedly grim. It is leavened repeatedly, however, by flashes of sardonic wit, the humor that Indians use to assuage pain. By *Nicholls, Richard E. (November 24, 1996). "Skin Games". The New York Times* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Killer, accessed 14.3.2019).

[12] By Mark Flanagan, Updated September 27, 2017. (https://www.thoughtco.com/profile-of-sherman-alexie-851449 accessed 31.1.2019).

[13] „It also explains how narratology can be didactic, and how information and knowledge can be presented as a narrative…. Alexie is a writer who explores his life experience as a Native American and who has taken on a similar role of a storyteller and trickster employed in his fiction as a means to survive reservation life through exaggeration and humor, mirroring the Native American

ESSAY

UMPHREY 2008).

Alexie is considered one of the key creators of autochthonous – and "nationalist" in the literary meaning – literature partially because he used traditions as his sources.[14] However, let us break down this statement by the literary and film critic Mark Flanagan into *small* parts. Without any doubt, the "I" figure of the visible narrator is rooted in tradition. He leads the whole story, the action into which characteristic figures enter, sometimes expectedly, sometimes bizarrely. Thus the story in which a black man finds himself in a Native American reservation and at an encounter with the first Native American he is surprised as he's never seen a live Native American before. But the narrator can also be a third person, who presents the heroes to us. In Alexie's first short stories, the action is set in motion by Thomas Make the Fire. Small, dark-skinned, with tidy plaits, a stocky figure, even with a slight paunch. He was not ugly, just marked by loneliness…says the author. He was sometimes a link to the world of mythology; the reader (spectator) might think he is talking nonsense: about the great fire which he flew out of (Viktor's father saved him), about the fried bread with which Viktor's mother filled the stomachs of the whole settlement. At other times, Thomas is a joking fool who manages despite all this to capture the attention of a ballet dancer in a plane/bus, or of a nurse who last saw Viktor's father. He "shoves himself" into Viktor's life, he is pushy, but also helpful. He finances their journey together to collect his father's remains; when the news of his father's death arrives, he admits his meetings with Viktor's father, which he had kept hidden, sorts of secret messages which did not find their way even to his biological son…Thomas is a soothsayer and storyteller. This is an important figure in folklore from all around the world, *a trickster, a liar, the friendly one and sometimes also a rascal...*[15] On the contrary, Viktor, who appears to possess many autobiographical traits, is pensive, sometimes angry at the world and about his origins and identity and is also a hero looking for a boyish certainty, a rebel who needs Thomas as a helper on his journey. You can make fun of him, swear at him, but you can also listen to him, even obey him. This ambivalent relationship between the two boys, later men, from the Spokane reservation, where there is nothing to do, even when the local radio broadcasts the weather forecast and girls living on

---

storytelling tradition…. My goal is to offer a narratological approach to his work which connects narratives with reality through a coherent line called didactic" (DROMNES 1993:8).

[14]   "Alexie has been a key contributor to Indigenous Nationalism literature, drawing on his experiences with ancestry from several tribes." Mark Flanagan, c.d.

[15]   For more about the trickster, see HYDE 1998, also KOMOROVSKÝ 1986, who says that the crow as liar and the rascal has survived in myths much longer than the crow as demiurge and bringer of civilisation (KOMOROVSKÝ 1986:32).

ESSAY

benefits drive their cars backwards to make something happen….this is the author's discovery of tradition and the current status of the Native American and his identity, which doesn't always have to mean long hair… Family relationships ripped apart, repeated excesses with alcohol, basketball in the local gym and all the deadlocked emptiness of the reservation's banality do not fall upon us without qualification. Thanks to Thomas, even the rebellious Viktor can cope with it. Sometimes we can even laugh, and I do not have to offend anyone by enjoying the life of contemporary Native Americans whom we have never met.

However, why am I mentioning Vi Hilbert and Sherman Alexie, these two literary figures, cultural activists in the same breath, so to speak? What links them and what are they following on from? They both discovered for themselves the power of unwritten literature, from mythical tales to stories from life. And their many prizes and awards show that they have found understanding, found their audience, not only among their own people, but rather in the wide spectrum of the non-Native American public. Their work, each on a separate front, has contributed to the knowledge of the disappeared, disappearing and surviving culture of the Native American north-west.

Ethnic, tribal, personal identity is based on self-knowledge and self-respect. Both Vi Hilbert and Sherman Alexie, three generations apart, have brought different types of material in their work, but in both cases we are witnesses to the construction of a cultural self-image and identity through folklore or literary material.

Acknowledgments

Bibliography

ALEXIE, Sherman (1993): *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

ALEXIE, Sherman (1995): *Reservation Blues*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

ALEXIE, Sherman (1996): *Indian Killer*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

BOTIKOVÁ, Marta (1999): "Je to len iný druh kanoe-" : (ženy rozprávačky a zberateľky). ["It's Just Another Type of Canoe-" : Female Storytellers and Collectors] (Suppl. ad Acta

ESSAY

Musei Moraviae Vol. 84). In *Folia ethnographica* 33, pp. 39-61.

BOTIKOVÁ, Marta (2000): *Tradície kultúry Indiánov severozápadného pobrežia Severnej Ameriky*. [Traditions of the Culture of the Native Americans of the North-West Coast of North America] Bratislava: Stimul.

BRUCE, Heather E. – BALDWIN, Anna – UMPHREY, Christabel (2008): Sherman Alexie in the Classroom: This Is Not a Silent Movie, Our Voices Will Save Lives (The Ncte High School Literature Series). Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English.

DROMNES, Tanja (1993): *Storytelling – In Our Minds and In the Classroom: A Narratological and Didactic Analysis of Sherman Alexie's The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven.* Master thesis, Tromsø: University of Tromsø.

HOLÁ-TERENOVÁ, Danica (1996): Sherman Alexie. Blues z rezervácie [Reservation Blues]. In *Revue svetovej literatúry* 4, pp.150-161.

HYDE, Lewis (1998): *Trickster Makes This World*. Mischief, Myth and Art. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.

KOMOROVSKÝ, Ján (1986): *Únoscovia ohňa: mýty a legendy o kultúrnych hrdinoch a zrode civilizácie*. [Kidnappers of the Fire: Myths and Legends about Cultural Heroes and the Birth of Civilisation] Bratislava: Tatran.

SUTTLES, Wayne – STURTEVANNT, William (eds.) (1990): *Handbook of North American Indians*, *Volume 7: Northwest Coast*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press.

Electronic sources (According to non-accessibility of the primary sources, this essay uses biographical footnotes from Wikipedia)**:**

Richard Dauenhauer: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Dauenhauer, accessed 26.5.2019.

Melville Jacobs:
https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/jacobs_melville_1902_1971_/#.XIVdk6DJ_IU, accessed 10.3.2019.

Leon Metcalf: https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leon_Metcalf, accessed 5.3.2019.

Thomas Mellwil Hess: https://www.uvic.ca/news/topics/2011+in-memoriam-dr-thom-hess+ring accessed 5.3.2019.

Mark Flanagan, Updated September 27, 2017: https://www.thoughtco.com/profile-of-sherman-alexie-851449 accessed 31.1.2019.

ESSAY

Indian Killer: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Killer, accessed 14.3.2019

Nortwest Coast Indian: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Northwest-Coast-Indian, accessed 26.5.2019.

Reservation Blues: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reservation_Blues, accessed 14.3.2019

Vi Hilbert: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vi_Hilbert, accessed 14.3.2019.

REPORT

Search for Indian America 3
[Hľadanie indiánskej Ameriky 3]
Conference Report

RADOSLAV HLÚŠEK

Department of Ethnology and World Studies,
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovak Republic
radoslav.hlusek@ucm.sk

On February 11-12 2019 the third year of international conference called Search for Indian America took place at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (UCM), Slovakia. This event is becoming a tradition, a traditional meeting of mostly Slovak and Czech Americanists working on topics of native American cultures. Unlike the second year (2018) the organizers welcomed "only" their colleagues from Czech Republic and Slovakia that is why the official languages were Slovak and Czech. The conference was organized again by Radoslav Hlúšek and Adam Uhnák from the Department of Ethnology and World Studies at UCM in cooperation with Center for Mesoamerican Studies at Comenius University in Bratislava.

The two days long event, which brought together the researchers from various related disciplines (history, ethnology, social and cultural anthropology, religious studies, archaeology), was not focused on any specific topic, what has been an intentional purpose of the organizers since the beginning in 2017. In fact, one of the main goals of the conference is to create a network of Slovak and Czech Americanists with ambition to broaden it within the course of time more and more abroad. I can say that this goal is slowly getting achieved and the participants keep in touch and cooperate in different fields (conferences, workshops, research, papers, etc.). The second goal, the presentations of the researches of each participant, is equally important. The third year was divided in three panels according to the

REPORT

geography (North America, South America, Mesoamerica) and to the subject of interest of individual participants. Of course, it was not always possible due to the number of participants and different topics of their interest.

After the welcome address by which Radoslav Hlúšek opened the conference, Marta Botiková from Comenius University made her speech called *Obraz amerického Severozápadu v modernej literatúre na príklade diela Shermana Alexieho (The Relfection of American Northwest in Modern Literature in the Works of Sherman Alexie)*. She was followed by Martin Heřmanský from Charles University in Prague whose contribution *Estetika indiánského hip hopu: mezi rezervací a ghettem (Aesthetics of Indian Hip-hop: between Reservation and Ghetto)* took the attendees from North American native literature to North American hip-hop music. Lívia Šavelková from University of Pardubice presented the contribution elaborated in cooperation with Jana Kocková from the Czech Academy of Sciences (unfortunately she could not come to Trnava) called *Irokézové v českých a v německých zemích v 70. letech 19. století (The Iroquois in Czech and German Lands in the 1870s)*. The first panel was concluded by the first Mesoamerican presentation elaborated by Radoslav Hlúšek who presented his research on ritual landscape of the Nahuas in Central Mexico under the title of *Tentzohuehue – od božstva dažďa k Diablovi (Tentzohuehue – from the Rain Deity to the Devil)*.

The second panel was completely Mesoamerican and was opened by Monika Brenišínová from Charles University. Her Mexican contribution bore the title *Barbarství a civilizace. Nástěnné malby v Ixmiquilpanu (Barbarism and Civilization. Murals in Ixmiquilpan)*. The rest of this panel was dedicated to the Maya topics. Zuzana Kostićová from Charles University presented the theoretical paper called *Proměny diskursu elitní mayistiky: Eliadovy teorie, neošamanismus a new age (Changes of Discourse in Elite Maya Studies: Eliade´s Theories, Neoshamanism and New Age)*. She was followed by Jakub Špoták from Comenius University whose contribution bore the name *Prírodné úkazy v mayských kódexoch (Natural Phenomena in Maya Codices)*. The panel was concluded by Milan Kováč from the same university whose archaeological presentation called *Letecké laserové scanovanie pralesa v oblasti Uaxactúnu, Guatemala – od objavu inovatívnych poľnohospodárskych techník k zmenám definície hustoty mayského obyvateľstva (Aerial Laser Scanning of the Rainforest in Uaxactún Area in Guatemala – from the Discovery of Inovative Agricultural Technologies to the Changes of Definitions of Maya Population Density)* presented new and revolutionary findings on Maya demography based on Lidar survey in Guatemalan Petén.

The third panel which could be labelled Mexican panel was opened by Marek Halbich from Charles University with his presentation named *Hledání etnické identity Indiánů*

REPORT

---

severozápadního Mexika (The Search for Ethnic Identity of the Indians of Northwestern Mexico). Nikol Quardová from Comenius University dedicated her speech called *Tzik haab – úvodný glyf mayských kalendárnych zápisov (Tzik haab – Introductory Glyph of the Maya Calendar Records)* again to the Maya. The last contribution of the event was presented by then student of Comenius University Dominik Čisárk who concluded the conference with a presentation called *Milenarizmus, mesianizmus, profetizmus a indigenizmus v ľudových mayských rebéliách neskorého koloniálneho a ranorepublikánskeho mexického obdobia /so zreteľom na Vojnu kást na Yucatáne/ (Millennialism, Messianism, Prophetism and Indigenism in Plebeian Maya Rebellions of Late Colonial and Early Republican Period in Mexico).*

The third year of the Search for Indian America conference showed that researchers in Slovakia and Czech Republic deal with very different topics and it is good that the conference created a platform where they altogether can present them and share their knowledge. The organizers are looking forward to welcome them in Trnava again, since the fourth year will take place there in the first week of the summer semester in February 2020.