A linguistic reconsideration of Swahili origins


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# A linguistic reconsideration of Swahili origins

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A Linguistic Reconsideration

A Linguistic Reconsideration
of Swahili Origins
Derek Nurse

The Swahili: their language and history

Discussions of Swahili history, culture, and religion have invariably been
dominated by mention of derivation from Arabia or the 'Persian' Gulf: the Indian
subcontinent and south-eastern Asia are also mentioned as minor sources for
culture. What follows is an hypothesis about the origins of the Swahili language.
Since Swahili is a Bantu language, its roots are to be sought in Africa, not the
Islamic homelands. Hence reference to external influence is minimised in this
study. Coastal people, being Muslims, would object that a language cannot be so
crude separated from the culture of the community carrying the language. To
this we would answer that the culture of any community may now be rather
different from that of the linguistic ancestors of the community. Both language
and culture are modified over the centuries. What we are interested in here is
primarily linguistic evidence for certain aspects of the language and culture of the
early Swahili community before it was touched in a major way by extra-African
influences.

A Swahili is here defined linguistically, as a speaker of one of the primary
dialects of Swahili, namely, from north to south: i. Northern dialects (ND): Miini
(spoken at Barawa, on the Somali coast, also
known as (ki)Barawa, (chi)Mwiini, (chi)Mbalazi); Bajuni (spoken on the southern
Somali and northern Kenya coast: also known as (ki)T'ik'uu,
(ki)Gunya); Siu; Pate; Amu (also known as (ki)Lamu).
2. The dialects of the Mombasa area, including minor dialects such as
Jomvu/Ngare
and Chifundi (southern Kenya coast). The Mombasa dialects are an early offshoot
of ND, with some later SD overlay.
3. Southern dialects (SD): Vumba, Mtang'ata (northern Tanzania coast); Pemba;
Mafia; Makunduchi-Hadimu; Tumbatu (the last two on Zanzibar Island); the
speech of most of -the minor Tanzania offshore islands; Mgao (southern Tanzania
and northern Mozambique coast); Mwani (northern Mozambique).
4. Unguja (Zanzibar town and island, adjoining mainland: the basis for Standard
Swahili). Unguja is an SD with an ND overlay.

Any attempt at explaining Swahili history must note first that all traditions of
Swahili migration, since the earliest coherent records, involve movements from
north to south. Apart from very localised phenomena, there are no traditions of
major movement from south to north. Many of these accounts of movement start
x. The original draft of this study arose as an attempt to find linguistic correlates
for the archaeological data presented in the paper by T.H. Wilson (1982), to
whom it owed its initial inspiration. It has benefitted from comments from H.
Akida, J. Allen, H.N. Chittick, M. Horton, T. Spear and T.H. Wilson. The author would like to express his thanks to them.

2. The question of who is a Swahili has been argued for a long time. The definition given here is not meant to be comprehensive, but is intended as a working base for discussion.

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at points in Arabia or the Gulf, thence to the Somali coast, and eventually further south. If we excise the parts before the Somali coast3 (on the grounds that they may have applied to a limited number of prestigious immigrants, being primarily of socio-religious, not-linguistic, significance for Swahili), we are still left with a solid body of traditions about north-south movement within the region from the Somali coast to Kenya, Tanzania and the Comoro Islands. If we are looking for an internal point of departure within Africa for Swahili, we are therefore led to consider the northern end of this spectrum. This line of thinking is supported on other grounds, as follows.

Within any sizeable Swahili community, when a clan or mtaa name refers to a place some distance from the community and on the coast, it is usually to a place further north." Thus among the Twelve Tribes of Mombasa we find, inter alia, the Mtwapa, the Kilifi, the Pate, the Faza and the Gunya, all places or peoples from further north. Among the Bajuni (Gunya) in turn, we find the Koyama, Chanda and Shungwaya clans, and these are all places in what is now Somalia. Kilwa traditions also mention (Ali of) Shungwaya. During past centuries Swahili dialects have absorbed vocabulary from each other. Such mutual influence would not have been difficult, since before the nineteenth century few, if any, Swahili towns are likely to have exceeded 10,000 inhabitants. With the exception of relatively recent material (from Unguja to Mombasa, from Mombasa to the Lamu Archipelago), the most obvious massive loans have always taken place historically from north to south. These loans can easily be distinguished on phonological grounds. When the Swahili dialects first started to emerge, they became distinguished by certain regular and statable sound changes, for example:

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i (in certain environments)

We however find many words - especially in the SD - in which these constant differences appear to be contravened. This is because vocabulary has been borrowed at some point in the past from one dialect to another. Almost invariably it is northern forms which have been absorbed by the SD, indicating historical movement of speakers from north to south within the Swahili spectrum. This has nothing to do with migrants of outside origin, as the vocabulary in question is Bantu. Thus, to illustrate the preceding:
5. Except Miini, where I is retained.

Derek Nurse
ND form expected SDI form actual Unguja form
-an-dika 'write' -anjika -andika
fundi 'specialist' funzi fundi
mzee 'old person' myyele mzee
-soma 'read' -fyoma -soma
-taka 'want' -chaka -taka

There are hundreds of such cases.

Related languages and Proto-Sabaki
Any account of the history of a language must at some point consider its relationship with the languages to which it is most similar and thus most likely to be closely related historically. Swahili's closest relatives are Malankote (also known as Ilwana, Elwana) and Pokomo (both spoken along the Tana River in northern Kenya); Mijikenda (Giryama, Kauma, Chonyi, Rabai, Ribe, Jibana, Kambe, Duruma and Digo, also Segeju, stretching from roughly Malindi, on the central Kenya coast, to Tanga, in northern Tanzania); and the four dialects of Comorian. Seen on a pan-Bantu scale, the differences between Malankote, Pokomo, Mijikenda, Comorian and Swahili are very small. The degree of difference between them is such that a thousand or so years would be needed to account for their divergence from a single proto-language. When we ask where this proto-language might have been spoken we must consider that some Swahili, and most Pokomo (the lower Pokomo, at least) and Mijikenda, have a unanimous tradition of leaving 'Shungwaya/Singwaya' (Spear, 1981). The latter is an ill-defined area in southern Somalia, and the exodus is frequently ascribed to the period between ca. 1450 AD and 1650 AD. How long they lived in 'Shungwaya' before that time is not stated, nor do these people have any memory of any location before Shungwaya. All this suggests that the proto-language from which Swahili, Pokomo and Mijikenda derive was spoken by a community originating in 'Shungwaya', that is somewhere in southern Somalia.

When closely related languages have cognate vocabulary, we assume that the items to which this refers were present in the proto-language and used by the proto-community. Examination of certain cultural vocabulary for SwahiliMalankote-Comorian-Pokomo-Mijikenda reveals that we can make limited assumptions about the economic activities of their proto-community, henceforth referred to as (the) Proto-Sabaki (PS). (The) Sabaki is a cover term for SwahiliMalankote-Comorian-Pokomo-Mijikenda or their languages today. We find evidence that the Proto-Sabaki people were familiar with certain food-types, agricultural techniques, iron-working, pot-making, fishing, hunting and limited cattle- and stock-raising. In the appendices, we have set out those items which can, or cannot, be derived from a Bantu source. The evidence is primarily linguistic but takes into account current thinking - archaeological, ethnobotanical and culturalhistorical - about the likely time of their arrival in East Africa.
6. Many of the SD have both the expected, etymologically correct, forms and the borrowed, northern, imports, side by side. Speakers often characterise the older forms as 'archaic' and 'not really used today'. Replacement of the older forms seems to have radiated from Unguja or Standard Swahili. In Unguja there is a predominance of the northern forms, so Unguja, in this respect, as in others, is an atypical SD.

7. Many Mijikenda would object to the inclusion of Segeju. On purely synchronic linguistic grounds, Segeju is a member of the Mijikenda.

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Appendix i contains vocabulary for objects or activities which, with minor exceptions, do not derive from any extra-African source. They are almost all of Bantu origin which points to an unbroken tradition deriving from Proto-Bantu. Appendix 2 consists of a limited number of food-types which are of outside provenance, but likely to have been used early along the coast, possibly in ProtoSabaki times. Appendix 3 shows food-types which are of non-African origin but do not lend themselves to absolute dating by linguistic methods. Since in shape many of them have diverged but little from their foreign originals, they must be assumed to be of relatively recent appearance. In several cases this is supported by their not having undergone the sound changes which have differentiated Sabaki dialects since Proto-Sabaki times: they must therefore post-date these changes.

Beginning then with foods, we see that certain grains, legumes and groundfruits formed the mainstay of Proto-Sabaki diet. While most are of Bantu origin, a few, notably rice, were introductions to East Africa. That these introductions date back to Proto-Sabaki times may be assumed since the vocabulary representing them is cognate among Sabaki languages, although not necessarily referring to the same items as in Proto-Bantu.

Some other items - notably coconut, wheat, certain legumes, potato, sweet potato, taro, and many treefruits and spices - seem to be cognate within Sabaki. However, since they are not reconstructed for Proto-Bantu (or are known to have been introduced in the last millennium or so), they cannot be safely assumed for Proto-Sabaki. It should be emphasised that the present state of linguistic technique does not allow us to deny at least some of them for Proto-Sabaki. Items which are Proto-Bantu in origin and present in cognate form today can be asserted with confidence. Those of non-Bantu or unknown origin, but which are apparently cognate in the Sabaki languages, cannot be assigned so satisfactorily.

The problems with making firm assumptions about the presence in ProtoSabaki of some of these items may be illustrated by examining the evidence for 'banana'. Al-Mas'udi mentions bananas on the coast in the tenth century. Within East Africa alone, there are today many terms for 'banana', both generic and specific. For Proto-Bantu, Guthrie reconstructs basically three roots. All have relatively localised distributions which implies that their assumption for ProtoBantu must be regarded as open to some doubt. Of one there is no evidence in either Sabaki or North-East Coast languages. Of a second the evidence within Sabaki is so sparse that it cannot with any confidence be attributed to Proto-Sabaki: SD kikondo 'type
of banana', possibly () khonde 'cultivated ground', and a twelfth century reference by Al-Idrisi. The third (nko) appears within Sabaki only in Pokomo, but since it occurs in many North-East Coast languages, it can be assumed for Proto-Sabaki, having been replaced later by other terms. Within Sabaki the most widespread word for 'banana' is izu, which is related to similar terms in Chaga, Central Kenya, etc., and can be assumed to have filtered down to the coast from these upland communities. The upland terms are borrowed from some Southern Cushitic language, and a Proto-Southern-Cushitic root is reconstructed by Ehret (1980b). Contemporary Southern Cushitic forms of the root refer to 'banana', although Ehret reconstructs a meaning 'ensete', which he justifies by saying that the modern Southern Cushitic meanings must be presumed to be a transfer of meaning from the older referent at the time when bananas were introduced into East Africa.

The linguistic evidence would thus allow the reconstruction of two terms, the etymons of today's nko and izu, for Proto-Sabaki, the former being the earlier form, the latter its widespread replacement. Using the same kind of argument as Ehret, we might find it hard to say whether these referred to 'banana' or 'ensete' on linguistic grounds, but in view of al-Mas'udi's words, we can assert 'banana'. The linguistic data would not allow us to make any claim about how long the banana might have been present before the Proto-Sabaki period.

Also surprising perhaps is the absence from the list of any kind of common leaf vegetable such as 'spinach' (e.g. ND/Pokomo mdewere, SD mchicha). The reason is that words for this are all localised and no generalisation can be made about earlier distribution on the basis of current vocabulary.

This general picture based on linguistics accords well with what both recent investigators and older sources tell us. All the items in Appendix i appear to belong to the earlier group of crops cultivated in East Africa. Most are of West African or Ethiopian origin, with one or two from India or South-East Asia. The Book of the Zanj, a traditional history of which only late nineteenth century versions survive, states that the Kashur (that is, the Pokomo and the Mijikenda of Shungwaya) cultivated '.... beans and millet, but they had no fruit save that of the bush'. Al-Mas'udi mentions bananas and millet (sorghum?) on the coast in the tenth century. Al-ldrisi, in the twelfth century, tells of fruit, sorghum and, in Zanzibar, rice. Chittick (1974, pp. 52, 236) reports traces of sorghum in the lowest levels at Kilwa.

Let us now turn from the crops to cultivation techniques. Although cognates are inadequate or missing for a few obvious items ('clear field, weed(s), plant, rub grain'), nevertheless there is more than enough evidence for basic activities and instruments to support the assumption of agriculture for the Proto-Sabaki. Nowadays the Pokomo, Malankote and Mijikenda are basically farmers, and the Book of the Zanj makes the same claim for their ancestors, the Kashur. Among the Swahili there is now much variation, some urban groups hardly practising any agriculture, others mixed farming and fishing. Historical accounts of the Swahili often mention agriculture.
For iron-working, as commonly occurs with cultural activities, vocabulary has been subject to distortion through borrowing. (See again Appendix i: items in brackets have been borrowed, usually from Swahili.) Pokomo and Malankote are particularly affected. There is no ore for smelting, at least in the Upper Pokomo/Malankote area, and many terms are taken from Swahili (in brackets) or Orma (omitted). Even Swahili itself and Mijikenda have been similarly affected. The word m(u)hunzi 'smith' (Swahili, LP), apparently derived from Proto-Bantu *-ponda 'pound', must have been borrowed from some other Bantu group because of phonological irregularities, probably at an early date. Likewise, Swahili msana, MK msanya 'smith', Sw. -sana, MK -sanya 'forge', probably derive from a non-Sabaki source, either Pare, Gweno, Taita or Chaga (Proto-Bantu *-fiana).

Little of the terminology currently associated in Bantu languages with iron-working can be ascribed to Proto-Bantu as exclusive to iron-working; the words could have had more general reference and become more specialised only later (Dalby, 1976). It is most likely that iron-working spread among Bantu communities as they fanned out across eastern and southern Africa. With the exception of 'tongs', all the terms in Appendix i are of Proto-Bantu origin or are widespread within East Africa with the same or similar meanings. There is the well-known

9. Unpublished translation by H.N. Chittick. For other literary references to the coast in this paragraph and elsewhere, see in the first place Freeman-Grenville, 1962.

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archaeological site at Kwale, dated around the third century AD, which is associated with iron-working, and there is no doubt that the earliest archaeological sites on the coast of the late first millennium AD-Shanga, Manda, Kilwa and Chibuene (southern Mozambique) -were fully iron-working. All these factors support the assumption of iron-working for Proto-Sabaki, based on an inherited Bantu tradition.

With pot-making similarly, certain important items are missing across the Sabaki spectrum, some because there is non-cognate variation due to borrowing, others because they are of general semantic reference and not specific to pottery, still others because the objects they denote (such as kiln) are not used. Nowadays the Pokomo and Mijikenda do make pottery; Swahili practice varies considerably. The word given for 'waterpot' in Appendix i raises a problem. The LP, Mijikenda and southern Swahili forms are not cognate, being recent borrowings from norohere: Swahili. The word is not reconstructed for Proto-Bantu and its origin is undoubtedly Persian. Dahalo, a Southern Cushitic language spoken at the mouth of the Tana River, has mutsunki, which must be a borrowing from either Pokomo or Mijikenda. Taken together with the Comorian form, and Mijikenda kitsunji 'bird's nest', this points to older cognates, which have since been replaced by northern Swahili mtungi. It is thus reasonable to assume this for Proto-Sabaki.
Similarly, the lines for 'potsherd' and 'pot' (-biga) contain certain phonological problems, but both items can be assumed for Proto-Sabaki. All Sabaki languages have additional, non-cognate, vocabulary for cooking-, water- and serving vessels. Given that most of these items derive from Proto-Bantu, and that most Sabaki peoples today continue to make pottery, there is enough material here to support the assumption that pots and their manufacture formed a part of Proto-Sabaki (that is, pre-Swahili) culture. Moreover, on coastal archaeological sites, 'local' wares constitute at least 80 percent, and more often over 90 percent of all pottery found. In fact, pottery is always found on Iron-Age sites, early and late alike, throughout the Bantu-speaking area, and the relevant lexis is reconstructed for Proto-Bantu. Familiarity with fish and fishing can be assumed for the Proto-Sabaki. The comparative vocabulary demonstrates knowledge of hook and line, net, fish-trap and spear, and is derived from Proto-Bantu. The Malankote, Pokomo and Mijikenda today fish mainly in rivers, although the latter do venture a short distance offshore as well. Xwahili and Comorians are sea-fishermen.

The question of what craft the Proto-Sabaki may have used is opaque. The only Sabaki term directly derivable from Proto-Bantu vocabulary referring to any kind of boat is Pokomo waho 'kind of dug-out canoe', although Swahili mtumbwi 'canoe' can be derived from a Proto-Bantu verb meaning to 'cut out'. The Swahili and Comorian words for 'paddle', 'oar' are also directly derived from Proto-Bantu. Otherwise Sabaki vocabulary for boats (e.g. Swahili jahazi, mashua, dau, hon, ngalawa, etc.), and for most of the principal parts of such craft, are taken from non-African sources. While the Pokomo and Mijikenda today use mainly canoes, the Swahili dispose of a great variety of boats. Where these are also used by Pokomo or Mijikenda, they have been taken from Swahili. We have to assume that the Proto-Sabaki employed only canoes and paddles, at least in their early stages. This should not be interpreted as meaning that larger ocean-going craft were unknown along the coast at the period under discussion, for outsiders had been sailing to these shores since the earliest centuries AD, as the Periplus tells. That document records the use of sewn boats and baskets for fishing in the second century.11 Hunting and weapons. Nowadays, knowledge of hunting with weapons other than guns is increasingly limited among Sabaki-speakers, being largely restricted to older people, especially Malankote, Pokomo, Mijikenda and Bajuni. But, as can be seen in Appendix i, this was not the case in the past. Bow and arrow, spear, shield and traps were familiar to the Proto-Sabaki. Swahili literature, for instance the Fumo Liongwe songs and the Bajuni vave, makes constant reference to such weapons.1 Hunting and weapons. Nowadays, knowledge of hunting with weapons other than guns is increasingly limited among Sabaki-speakers, being largely restricted to older people, especially Malankote, Pokomo, Mijikenda and Bajuni. But, as can be seen in Appendix i, this was not the case in the past. Bow and arrow, spear, shield and traps were familiar to the Proto-Sabaki. Swahili literature, for instance the Fumo Liongwe songs and the Bajuni vave, makes constant reference to such weapons.1 Cattle and other domestic stock. Peoples who live exclusively or almost exclusively by pastoralism invariably have an extensive taxonomy for cattle and stock, involving type of animal, then subcategorisation based on age, sex, breeding capacity and colour. This is not the situation among the Sabaki. Reconstruction of such items for the Proto-Sabaki is rendered difficult since the comparative lexis has suffered borrowing in recent centuries. The Pokomo and
Malankote have taken over much of their lexis and their cattle-husbandry practice from the Orma (Galla). The considerable Mijikenda vocabulary for the same lexical area is largely borrowed from some Central Kenya Bantu language, either Kamba or Daisu-Segeju. Both Pokomo and Mijikenda today have a fairly complex cattle and stock terminology, but that is a recent and separate development. The Swahili system, although simpler, has been similarly affected by outside sources, mainly Arabic. Reconstruction is further hindered by the nature of Sabaki word-formation. Whereas many pastoral groups in East Africa have distinct lexical items for their (sub-)categories, Sabaki languages favour, or favoured, a system of compound nouns, e.g. Swahili ng’ombe dume ‘bull’, literally ‘cow male’, or Giryama mwana ng’ombe ‘calf’, literally ‘child cow’. The amount of basic and distinct vocabulary used is thus small, and affords but a slender basis for comparison. Despite these obstacles to comparison, the impression given is that the ProtoSabaki were certainly acquainted with cattle, goats and fowl (as well as dog, cat and maybe camel): also with milking and milk products. However, cattle and stock husbandry were not extensively developed among the Proto-Sabaki, and this remains true to this day of many Swahili communities. Even among those Swahili (for instance, the Bajuni) who keep cattle, their role is secondary to fishing and agriculture. This accords with what recent observers have noted: see Abdulaziz (1977, p. 42) and Prins (1967, p. 64).

Besides ascertaining what did obtain among the Proto-Sabaki, it is equally important to discern the forms of economy and culture which were not practised. It is a matter of common observation that a majority of Bantu-speaking peoples are principally agricultural rather than pastoral. (Murdock's maps, pp. 18, 20, remain useful impressionistically.) This is reflected by the vocabulary reconstructed for Proto-Bantu, in which lexis for agriculture is extensive while that for cattle and stock is more limited (Guthrie, vol. 2, pp. 176-78). Most have no maritime pursuits for obvious geographical reasons. Even fresh-water activities are limited, and this is also reflected in a relative paucity of Proto-Bantu vocabulary for these.

Swahili culture, on the other hand, is based on maritime activity. It is in a sense exclusively coastal, the Swahili being fishermen, sailors and traders. Many Swahili primary settlements are or were on islands. Many aspects of their culture,
buildings, food and religion are heavily influenced historically from without Africa.
Swahili vocabulary for these adopted components of their culture is largely drawn from Arabia, Persia and India: witness names of ships, boats and nautical terminology generally, and the lexis for religion, law, trade, numerous crops and fruit trees, cuisine, components of 'stone' houses, personal ornaments and other items.
The geographical compass of outside influence on coastal settlements was, at least initially, largely determined by tides and monsoons. Sailors from southern Arabia and the Persian Gulf could reach the shores of Somalia, Kenya and Tanzania with the northern monsoon and return with the following south-eastern monsoon, all within one 'season'. The areas so attainable are precisely the areas of Swahili primary settlement. Travel further south, to the Comoros or Mozambique, was hindered by adverse currents and unreliable winds, and one could not be sure of making the round trip from Arabia or the Gulf.
All this is irrelevant for the Malankote, Pokomo and Mijikenda. They are not maritime, but primarily agricultural. The Lower Pokomo and a few Mijikenda are not even Muslim, and the Upper Pokomo and most Mijikenda have become Islamised only since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Neither Malankote nor Pokomo, nor again Mijikenda, build or built houses of coral rag like the Swahili. Their whole culture and food are far less influenced from outside than those of the Swahili.
On the basis of reconstruction of vocabulary we see that the Proto-Sabaki were primarily agricultural. The Malankote, Pokomo and Mijikenda have continued thus, whereas the Swahili and Comorians, at some point in their history, reacculturated themselves from the hinterland to the sea and its shore.
The location of Proto-Sabaki:
Southern Somalia and north-eastern Kenya
Given what precedes, any original area of Proto-Sabaki settlement would need to conform to certain parameters. It would have a locale where farming could be pursued; adjacent to the sea, but preferably on the mainland, rather than islands, since the early Swahili/Comorians were not yet sailors; adjacent to historical trade routes from at least southern Arabia and the Gulf, and possibly India; and probably in the north of the Sabaki continuum, in view of most Pokomo/Mijikenda and some Swahili traditions. It would be at or near a cluster of early archaeological sites with evidence of 'stone buildings', since we are assuming an equation of 'Swahili' with such sites.
The region that best meets these parameters is that part of the northern coast bounded by the Webi Shebelle in the north, and the Tana River in the south, with the Juba in the middle. This includes the coastal towns from Mogadishu to the Lamu Archipelago. It is to the central part of this area that the name 'Shungwaya' was later applied. Although oral traditions of Shungwaya bring Sabaki-speakers south from Somalia around the sixteenth century, there is good reason to think that there were also Sabaki-speakers along the Tana earlier in this millennium, if not
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before. (The argument is set out in greater detail in a separate paper: Nurse, 1982c.)

Looking at the issue agriculturally, north of Mombasa, along the coast, the two most fertile areas are the valleys of the Tana and the Juba-Shebelle rivers. The Tana is somewhat less fertile than the Webi Shebelle-Juba region and seems to have had a less stable course over the centuries. Both the Webi Shebelle and the Juba have long histories of cultivation by so-called 'Bantu', of whom isolated pockets remained until at least very recently. If late testimony to the fertility of the two rivers be required, it is noteworthy that during the colonial period Italian farmers were attracted to both, especially the Webi Shebelle. The Webi Shebelle, as it approaches the coast near Mogadishu turns south and runs more or less parallel to the coast till it drains into a swamp south of Barawa. Exactly adjacent to this stretch, on the coast nearby, are seven mainland archaeological sites from Mogadishu to Barawa.13 Southwards along the coast, by contrast, there are no known ancient sites for the next 275 kilometres between Barawa and Kismayu. This corresponds, inland, to a largely uninhabitable and uncultivable swamp. Kismayu itself is of later date, according to the archaeological record,14 as are also the smaller sites to the south, many of them on islands. It is therefore likely that the original area of settlement in Somalia for the Proto-Sabaki was centred on the Webi Shebelle/Mogadishu/Merka/Barawa, rather than further to the south, at Kismayu or along the Juba.

Looking southward to the Lamu Archipelago, recent archaeological work by Chittick, Wilson and Horton has suggested that sites in the Archipelago, and possibly along the Tana River, were also occupied from the ninth century. We can reasonably infer that the occupants were Sabaki-speakers (as defined above). As for the Tana valley, such linguistic evidence as we have tends to support Sabaki presence before the final emigrants arrived there from 'Shungwaya' around the sixteenth century. It is reasonably clear (see Nurse, 1982a) that Pokomo has undergone a major imposition of linguistic material from some northern Swahili dialects(s), indicating the possibility of relatively recent contact with a body of northern Swahili-speakers. There is likewise evidence of a minor imposition of Mijikendalike material. If these two layers are removed, we are left with a historical skeleton which is Sabaki in shape, but considerably less like modern Pokomo. Since these two layers are likely to have been added in the last four centuries, the remaining skeleton must represent a pre-sixteenth century shape. Consideration of Malankote, spoken further up-river near Garissa, strengthens this view. It is closer to Swahili than to Pokomo in certain significant ways and retains many archaic features. Such Malankote traditions as have been collected (see Bunger, 1973) point to long residence on the Tana. All this leads us to reaffirm the possibility that Malankote and the earlier Pokomo skeleton are not the remains of yet another, earlier, migration from the north, but rather that the Tana was the southern limit of an expanded 'Shungwaya', whose northern limit would be the Webi Shebelle-Mogadishu-Merka-Barawa complex, and whose middle point
would be that of Juba-Kismayu-Bur Gavo. The whole area should be imagined as having a thin population of early Sabaki-speakers.

15. This would seem to be supported by a chance remark made to the author in 1980 by an elderly Dahalo near the mouth of the Tana. When asked if he had any notions about who had lived earlier along the Tana, he replied: 'We did... and those other Pokomo' (hawa wapokomo wangine).

Swahili origins
Turning now to the broader context of the issue, the trade route of the Indian Ocean, from Arabia, India, and maybe linking South-East Asia, passed along the Somali coast and touched at the Mogadishu-Barawa area before proceeding farther south. According to our written records, this has been so for at least a thousand years (and there is evidence of yet older activity). The earliest records, which contain recognizable place-names, mention Merka and Barawa, somewhat later Mogadishu. Yaqut, writing about 1200 AD, describes Mogadishu as the most important town on the entire coast at that time. Ibn Battuta's allusion, over a century later, to the language situation in Mogadishu is ambiguous, and there is therefore no clear written evidence of Bantu-speakers in the Mogadishu-Barawa area at this date.

Now, Pokomo, Mijikenda and some Swahili traditions mention 'Shungwaya'. By the sixteenth century at least, the name is commonly interpreted as Bur Gavo and/or the adjacent hinterland. This probably represents a relatively late localisation of an earlier more general area, or the result of a southerly migration from a more northerly settlement.

The recent and very illuminating study by T.H. Wilson surveys coastal archaeological sites from Mogadishu to southern Kenya. He considers carefully certain parameters: location of site (mainland or island), quality of harbour, size of site, probable date of inception and length of occupation. For Kenya, Wilson surveys earlier reports and supplements them with his own work. For Somalia he surveys the earlier reports. Thus for Kenya and Somalia the overview is uniform in that it is done by one person. He does not deal with Tanzania, for which however the older reports are reasonably comprehensive. Known stonework earlier than the thirteenth century is virtually all in the north. Of the sites from Mogadishu to Barawa, three are early twelfth century, one is early eleventh or late tenth century, and one (Gezira) is ninth century. In the Lamu Archipelago, there are two sites (Manda, Shanga) which date from the ninth century, and Wilson (pers. comm.) feels that Pate may also be of comparable date. Thus the Mogadishu-Barawa area and the Lamu Archipelago are the two earliest clusters on the coast. Further south, the dates are somewhat later, and relate to individual sites: Mombasa, early thirteenth century; Kizimkazi, twelfth century; possibly Chibuene and Kilwa.'6

The Proto-Sabaki and their differentiation
A possible scenario for the Proto-Sabaki and their subsequent diaspora would run as follows. Sometime in the early second half of the first millennium AD, a group
of the North-East Coast Bantu move up to the area bounded by the Tana and
Webi Shebelle Rivers and the intervening coastal plain. These are the Proto-
Sabaki, primarily agriculturalists, with some cattle and stock. By the ninth century,
traders
primarily) from southern Arabia are passing along the adjacent coast. A section of
the Proto-Sabaki start to spend less time on farming and more on trading. Local
entrepots are established on the coast. Some local people join the traders, others
work on dhow-connected activities, which are, and presumably always were,
labour-intensive. The traders need local supplies and some eventually settle.
There is intermarriage. Out of this situation, and its repetition further south, and
later, the Swahili start to emerge. When some of the locals become familiar with
dhows and sailing, and when they start to sail south, the scene is set for Swahili
expansion.
6. At Kilwa there are few or no stone houses until the fourteenth century, with a
stone mosque of the early thirteenth century, and short lengths of masonry wall
from the tenth century. Types of imported pottery indicating settlement at least as
early as the tenth century have also been picked up at other points on the Kenya,
Tanzania and Mozambique coasts.

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Migration out of this northern homeland - to southern Kenya, Tanzania,
Mozambique and the Comoro Islands - must have taken place continuously from
almost the earliest period.
During this economic transformation, linguistic development is also occurring. It
seems likely that even on their arrival along the northern coast dialect
differentiation is occurring among the Sabaki. This proceeds apace. By the time of
the earlier stages of the diaspora (see below), there are clear linguistic differences.
The distinctions between the five Sabaki languages, well developed by the
sixteenth century, must certainly have existed in dialect form many centuries
before. Barawanese, the form of Swahili spoken at Barawa, but possibly also
earlier in the towns further north, was used in the later stages as a lingua franca
between the (Pokomo, Mijikenda) farmers and the (Swahili) coastal people,
because the Barawanese dialect shows some signs of having been influenced by
Pokomo and Mijikenda.17 This could only have taken place at 'Shungwaya'.
The date at which Shungwaya finally disintegrated, when Pokomo, Mijikenda,
and Bajuni fled south before the Orma, is established as the sixteenth century, but
it is hard to suggest with certainty when the earlier stages occurred. There is no
way of fixing a date for the arrival of the Proto-Sabaki by linguistic methods since
historical linguistics does not deal in such absolutes. There is no archaeological
way either, as no comprehensive work has been done along the Webi, Shebelle,
the Juba, the Tana, or the spaces in between. The best method of fixing a date at
present is by extrapolating from the archaeological data from the coast. Chittick
(1969, pp. 117-18) found ninth- or tenth-century ceramics associated with a wall
of cut stone at Gezira, twenty kilometres south of Mogadishu.
There is additional reason for positing such an early date. The early settlements in
the Lamu Archipelago bear witness to a culture with mud-and-wattle housing,
practising agriculture, eating fish, making pottery, working iron and doing some trading with outsiders. On the same sites a couple of centuries later, stone buildings start to appear. If we assume an equation of a culture having these components with Swahili-speakers, and if we accept Swahili origins as outlined above, then we need to assume settlement along the northern coast slightly prior to the dates further south. However, that may be an unnecessarily simplistic requirement. Some pre-Proto-Sabaki may have remained along the coast on their way north (although in locales as scattered as Zanzibar, Kilwa and possibly further south?) and then became associated separately with the outsiders. Other Proto-Sabaki or Swahili may have travelled south again, before the major migrations (see following) from Somalia took place.

The Swahili Diaspora
It is not possible here to deal with all the details of the diaspora area in the north, partly for reasons of space, partly because the minutiae are not yet clear. What follows here is a suggested outline, based on linguistic evidence which I have set out in greater detail elsewhere (1982a).

Stage i: southern dialects of Swahili (SD)
Along the northern Tanzania coast and adjacent islands - Pemba, most of Zanzibar, parts of Mafia - and probably the southern Tanzanian and Mozambican coasts, there are communities speaking a closely related cluster of Swahili dialects,

17. See Nurse, 1982d.

Swahili origins
referred to above as the Southern Dialects. Phonologically they have innovated little since Proto-Sabaki, even in fact since Proto-North-East-Coast, Proto-Sabaki's ancestor. The simplest interpretation of this would be that the ancestors of SD were the first to leave the dispersal area, not participating in the changes which later affected ND. This early departure is supported by the fact that collectively they have little or no memory of 'Shungwaya', which presumably means that their exodus took place long ago, and has since been overlaid by other traditions in the meantime. We may tentatively date their departure to the ninth-tenth-eleventh centuries.

Stage 2: the dialects of the Mombasa area
These have undergone two phonological shifts (innovations) which link them to early ND, but they do not share all later ND developments. They must therefore have split off at an early stage in the emergence of the ND (see below).

Stage 3: Comorian dialects
All the Comorian dialects share certain late phonological developments with Swahili ND (excluding the Mombasa dialects), alone among the Sabaki dialects. This points to a time when Comorian and the ND were contiguous, the changes starting in one and spreading to the other. After this period of common development the early Comorians hived off and moved south. Comorian verbal morphology bears certain striking resemblances to that of SD. In both cases these are innovations. This would be best interpreted by positing that, after leaving the northern coast, they acquired the SD verbal features by
sojourning some time in the SD area - already established as a result of Stage x - before crossing to the Comoro Islands.

Stage 4: northern dialects of Swahili

Wilson (1982, Appendix I) demonstrates a great flowering of building along the southern Somali and northern Kenya coast, including the islands of the Lamu Archipelago, starting around the fourteenth century. This corresponds almost exactly to the area in which ND are spoken (or were spoken, until recent political developments). Although ND have collectively innovated considerably since Proto-Sabaki and even Proto-Swahili times, the internal differences between them are relatively small and could well be explained by the last six centuries of development.

The Miini community, at Barawa, did not participate in this southern move. Its isolation at the northern end of the Swahili spectrum suggests a possible alternative explanation, namely, that, within the general early Proto-Sabaki area, early Swahili communities were centred on the Tana River and northern Kenya, and that it was the early Barawanese who moved north, not the other ND communities who moved south.

We do not know the exact location of the Swahili - assuming there was a single location - within the general dispersal area. We might thus either assume a northerly location, with a move south into the Lamu Archipelago by the ancestors of ND around the fourteenth century: this would leave the Barawanese more or less in situ. Or we might assume the opposite - a general expansion in the Lamu Archipelago, with the Barawanese and some Bajuni going north along the coast.

In the four preceding stages there can be perceived a certain chronology. For the reasons outlined, Stage i is likely to have occurred first. Stage 2, movement south

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of the community ancestral to the Mombasa dialects, probably followed, in order to allow time and space for the innovations which affect Comorian and the main ND. But there is no obvious reason why Stage 3 (Comorian movement south) should have preceded Stage 4 (general ND expansion). Linguistically, Stage 3 could have preceded or followed Stage 4.

Stage 5: Unguja

Unguja seems originally to have been associated with the south-west part of Zanzibar Island. With the expansion of the power and influence of Zanzibar Town, it spread across much of the rest of the island and onto adjacent islands and mainland. Unguja is a mixed dialect, having an SD base with a considerable ND overlay (Nurse, 1982a). This is most easily explained by assuming an earlier SD settlement superimposed on by a later southern movement of ND speakers, who, judging by the linguistic nature of the overlay, originated from the Lamu-, Pate- or Siìspeaking area. Unguja must therefore have originally come into existence as a result of Stage i, and the later overlay suggests that its final, mixed, form is a post-Stage 4 development. Such an overlay is likely to have resulted from the arrival of a large or prestigious group of ND immigrants. No such large movement of people is recorded by the Portuguese, who arrived in the sixteenth century. The older inhabitants of Zanzibar Island, the Tumbatu and Makunduchi-
Hadimu, speak of the establishment of Zanzibar town as a dimly remembered event. It is thus likely to have occurred considerably before the sixteenth century.

Stage 6: final Shungwaya dispersal
By the sixteenth century or thereabouts, the focal point of the remaining Sabaki peoples in Somalia had shifted south, because the Pokomo, MK and Bajuni, forced out by the Orma at that time, all have traditions of coming from 'Shungwaya', which is usually placed on or around the Juba River. The Barawanese stayed on in Barawa. Some northern Bajuni clung on to the Somali coast, mainly by dint of temporary evacuation to the offshore islands. Also left behind were scattered Bantu-speaking (Sabaki) farmers along the Juba and Webi Shebelle rivers.

The zenith of Sabaki, and especially Swahili, extent and power would therefore be placed between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Difficulties in the scenario
There is an implicit assumption in the foregoing that Swahili and its speakers have been associated with the so-called stone buildings of the East African coast more or less since their inception. Although there is no concrete proof for this assumption - since ruins do not speak - it can be supported in indirect ways. For example, there is a close correlation between the present or past coastal Swahili-speaking communities and the sites of stone buildings. There are also allusions to such buildings in Swahili traditions and literature; whereas other people, from Somali in the north to Makua in the south, usually regard them (and their rdins) as Swahili, if not in some way 'foreign'.

Another problem is that whereas early occupation of the stone sites on the Somali and Kenya coasts is, as seen, well supported by archaeological work, the idea of early (Proto-Sabaki) occupation of the hinterland adjacent to the coastal sites has suffered from a total lack of coherent archaeological research. Not only has the area not been covered, but techniques for dating mud-and-thatch or wattle structures have been little applied along the East African littoral and hinterland.

To this extent the thesis presented in this article awaits archaeological confirmation. Movement southwards from the northern dispersal area raises the question of how Sabaki Bantu-speakers came to be there in the first place, namely how, when and why did the Proto-Sabaki move northwards to the fertile land around the Tana, the Juba and the Webi Shebelle? The common assumption is that the NorthEast Coast Bantu, and thus the Proto-Sabaki, spread out from a dispersal area in or near the Taita Hills or Kilimanjaro.'s There is no concrete general evidence for this. In its support we might say that the other North-East Coast Bantu communities to which the Sabaki languages are most closely related are all spoken in that part of north-eastern Tanzania just south of this hypothetical dispersal area.

Since not a single one of them has a unanimous tradition of coming from Somalia or northern Kenya, '9 it is more sensible and economical, on the contrary, to assume that it was the Proto-Sabaki who moved north. Further, the Early-Iron-
Age pottery known as Kwale-ware is found in much of the area concerned and might be held to form part of the cultural complex associated with early North-East Coast language communities. The earliest date recorded for Kwale-ware is around the second century AD from a site just southeast of Mombasa. This is in fact close to the Taita Hills, and it is not unreasonable to infer a spread outwards thence. But, even if this is roughly right, the routes and settlement history of this expansion can, at this stage of knowledge, only be guessed.

The time period envisaged accords well enough with the undoubted presence of Bantu-speakers in the eastern half of Kenya and Tanzania in the first millennium AD. By the second half of that millennium, or the start of the second millennium, the ancestors of the Central Kenya Bantu, Taita, Chaga, Shamba and others, were established as farmers in relatively well watered and fertile locations in the mountains, usually between 3000 and 6000 feet (Soper, 1982). The contrast with the Proto-Sabaki, who settled the lower and generally less fertile country towards the coast, is striking.

Summary

Sometime in the middle of the first millennium AD, the Proto-Sabaki, a subset of the larger North-East Coast Bantu who now live mostly in north-eastern Tanzania, moved north to the area between the Tana River, in north-eastern Kenya, and the Webi Shebelle River, in south-eastern Somalia. They were primarily farmers, with some cattle and stock, and were familiar, inter alia, with iron-working, pot-making, fishing and hunting. Contact with outside traders using sea-routes mainly from southern Arabia and the Gulf attracted a section of the Proto-Sabaki to trading themselves, and eventually to sea-fishing and ocean-going vessels. These were the ancestors of the Swahili. By the end of the first millennium, Proto-Sabaki had differentiated into Swahili, Malankote, Comorian, Pokomo and Mijikenda. At about that point, the Comorians and some Swahili groups started to move south along the coast and islands, followed later by other Swahili divisions. I8. As described in Oliver and Mathew, 1963, p. 89. I9. Isolated clans, e.g. among the Taita, do claim such an origin. 20. It is also found further afield, even in the area now occupied by the Central Kenya Bantu. 21. This should not be interpreted as meaning that all existing Swahili people have such ancestors. We are tracing the origins of the community carrying Swahili culture and language. The community has obviously been swelled during its evolution by accretions from other coastal people, and by outsiders.

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Finally, under pressure from the Orma (Galla) in the sixteenth century, most Bajuni, the Mijikenda and the Pokomo also left, leaving only isolated cultivators and the Barawanese in or near their original location.

Appendix 1. Ancient items in Swahili vocabulary, mostly indigenous of Africa

Key

LP is Lower Pokomo (a citation in the LP column normally indicates presence of the item in both LP and UP); UP Upper Pokomo; Ma Malankote; MK Mijikenda; ND Northern Dialects (of Swahili); Ba Bajuni; Mi Miini; SD Southern Dialects (of Swahili); Mw Mwani; PB Proto-Bantu. A superscript circle * in the ND
column means 'also present in Miini' (lack of 0 usually means 'no data'); a 0 in the SD column means 'also present in Mwani'; a * in the LP column means 'also present in Malankote'; brackets round a whole word mean 'noncognate, borrowed, often from another Sabaki language or dialect'; a question mark? means 'doubt about the cognateness of of the item', or, before a PB item, 'given by Guthrie, but doubt about the attribution to PB, on the grounds of limited distribution and/or ultimate derivability from a non-Bantu source', or, alone in the PB column, 'no clear PB etymology'; a slot left blank in a column means 'no data'; a dash - in a column means 'doesn't exist'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food plants, food</th>
<th>LP</th>
<th>MK</th>
<th>ND</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Comorian</th>
<th>PB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food plants, food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mpunga</td>
<td>muhunga</td>
<td>mpunga0</td>
<td>mupunga0</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food plants, food</td>
<td>'rice'</td>
<td>'rice'</td>
<td>'rice grain'</td>
<td>'maize'</td>
<td>wedding gift</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mtsee</td>
<td>matsere</td>
<td>mtee*</td>
<td>mchleleo</td>
<td>mtsee</td>
<td>-cel-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>metsere</td>
<td>of rice and money</td>
<td>wali</td>
<td>wari</td>
<td>wali (wali)</td>
<td>bu-gali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'cooked'</td>
<td>'maize'</td>
<td>rice'</td>
<td>porridge'</td>
<td>ugali</td>
<td>Malagasy, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kagari</td>
<td>maize</td>
<td>'dimin.'</td>
<td>porridge'</td>
<td>mawee*</td>
<td>mere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'grain in rice'</td>
<td>'sorghum'</td>
<td>Mi. mtama</td>
<td>'maize'</td>
<td>probably Southern Cushitic, 'stem, stalk, sorghum etc'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mbaazi</td>
<td>mbaazi</td>
<td>mbaazi</td>
<td>mba (1) azi?</td>
<td>'pigeon pea'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UP ncoloko</td>
<td>Ba. thoko</td>
<td>chho (r)ooko</td>
<td>The root -gimbi is widespread in Eastern Bantu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'gram sp.'</td>
<td>Mi. ntboko</td>
<td>in Eastern Bantu shenga</td>
<td>tshenga</td>
<td>chhenga</td>
<td>shenga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kmunde</td>
<td>kmunde</td>
<td>kmunde</td>
<td>nkunde, etc</td>
<td>n-kunde</td>
<td>'cow pea'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>suke</td>
<td>kisuche</td>
<td>Ba. kisike</td>
<td>suke</td>
<td>'ear, cob of corn, etc'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dzungu</td>
<td>dzungu</td>
<td>yungu</td>
<td>-ungu</td>
<td>'pumpkin'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
hanga thango tanga tango* trango -tanga 'pumpkin (pip)'
'cucumber  gourd seed sp. ground and
cooked'

SWahili origins
Comorian  PB
UP rhikirhi 'water melon' (njugu)
mbonywe mufuha 'simsim'
muwa°
Ma izo 'banana'
nko 'banana' mubuyu
mnkju
mukindu
LP
ndzugu
mbono ufuha muwa izu
muyu mukuyu mukindu mulala MK
UP mboga mboga
unga mukahe. mtsuzi matsaza, soup, curry, porrid ' munyuUP ntumbo 'palm wine'
-mbika
-hokosa
unga mukahe mtsuzi
munyu thembo
-kalanga
-hokosa
thupa 'bottle' tikiti Mvita njuu mwono ufuta
unyuwa, muwa° izu*
mvuu, muu* hikuyu mkindu mwaa ND mwanji
(mboga)
ungao mkateo mujizi°
mataza
munyu° thembo
-pika0
-kanga
-tokosa°
chhupa
tikiti njugu mbono ufuta (muwa)
?(mzuzu)
mbuyu mkuyu mkindu mnyaa SD
mwanzi mlanzi mboga Mw. mboa unga mkate mchuzio machaza
munyu thembo
-pikao
-kaangao tokosao
ntsuva 'calabash' (tikiti) (njugu) mbono
muwa
n-cupa 'calabash'
n-jugu 'groundnut'
-bono 'caster oil plant'
-kuta 'oil, fat' muguba 'sugar cane'
dzu, etc Proto-Southern-Cushitic
?arigw- 'ensete', also
Chaga, Central Kenya;
Ziguia izigu. etc
nko, widespread in North East Coast Bantu languages mbuyu mu-buyu
'baobab tree'
(mkuyu) mu-kuyu 'wild fig tree'
mu-kindu 'wild date palm'
mu-lala 'dwarf palm' Comorian PB
rrlandzi ? mu-landi 'bamboo'
(mboga)
unga muhare mtsuzi
m-boga 'vegetable'
bu-unga 'flour' mu-kate 'bread' mu-culi 'gravy'
munyo munyu 'salt'
(thembo) ?
-piha
-haanga
-rohotsa
-ipika 'cook'
-kalanga 'roast'
-tok- 'boil (in liquid)'

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Cultivating techniques and tools
SD Comorian PB
nkonde
'cultivated field'
-ima°
-tsimba
-vuna° mbeju0 gembe Ma izebe 'axe'
-hema UP-pfalila 'weed'
kinu° muntsi
mundc
-rima
-tsimba
-vuna mbeu jembe
lutsaga 'raised grain sto
kinu mutshi
-pfepfenta -hehetha
mpuye -hulula
'maize grains' also
phure
'husked maize' Ma -Iwa Digo -hua
- pfunda
- tsunga
(-paaza) also
mpaazo 'ground flour'
- honda
- tsunga
- halaza (-balaza)
khonde
munda°
- limao
- imba*
- vuna° mbeu yembe°
- tema
- palia
utaa
re
khonde
mgunda
- lima°
- chimba°
- vuna° mbegu° jembe°
- tema
- palia
nkode kondze mnda
- lima 'cultivate'
- tsimba
- vuna mbeu (jembe)
- rema
connected to
- kode 'banana'? mu-gunda 'cultivated field'
? - cimba 'dig'
- buna 'break, harvest' m-begu 'seed'
- gembe/jembe 'hoe'
- tema 'slash' from -pal- 'scrape'
uchaga
kinu kin, mthi mchhi°
- phepeta* - phepetaO
Ba-pua°
- twa° 'grind'
- ponda
- unga
- paaza 'grind'
- saga 'grind'
sira 'grind with one stone'
laya 'sow, plant'
shinu muntsi
-pura, upuзи 'chaff'
-twanga°
-ponda
-chunga
-paza
-saga (0)
-rwa I
-vonda
ki-nV 'mortar' mu-inci 'pestle'
-pepenta 'winnow'
-pul- 'thresh'
-tu- 'pound'
-ponda 'pound, etc'
-cunga 'sift'
-pal- 'scrape'
-ci- 'grind'
'powder from broken pots'
-ala 'spread'
(uteo)
utseo
wishwa wishwa
Ba wisha ushwa
kisu
upanga" kiloka
kilo
upanga shoka
? upanga ?soha
-ccl- 'sift, clean' connected to -ci- 'grind'? ki-piu 'knife' lu-panga 'machete'? -coka 'axe'
yutseo° 'winnowing tray'
wiswa
Ma oswa 'chaff' (kisu)
yupfanga
(shoka)
wiswa
kishu upanga tsoka

144
LP
-fuya chuma nyundo
fuawe 'anvil' (nkolea) ,tongs'
-umba
ny-ungu etc. 'cooking pot' (miungi) 'water pot
Swahili origins
MK
chumao nyundo mvuo
-vukuta mfuzio 'smith' fua(w)e
(khwelelo)
-umba -umba°
'create'
-finyanga -sinyanga
'squeeze' 'make pottery
msinyandi
'potter'
yu-ungu etc. u-ungu°
etc.
(miungi) mlungi°
kitsunji 'bird's nest'
biga
kijaye lw-ayo
UP lw-ae kidzaza
kidzaya
nswio -
kilo°
(miushi) Digo msivi nyavu
ubia kijaya 'potsherd'
nsi, isi
-ova, -va kioo°
mshipi°-avu
(y) ema
SD
Ironworking
-fua°
chumao nyundo° mvuo
-vukuta mfuo
fuawe
koleo
Pot-making
umba 'create'
-fmuyangao mfinyanzi 'potter' ny-ungu° ch-ungu j-ungu (mtungi)
biga, kibiga (bia, kibia)
kigae kigaa
Fishing, boats
swi
(-loa)o -vuaO
Mw kiroo
mshipi
wavu°
lema, dema
Comorian PB
-fula, -fua shurna nundro
mfuzi, mfila, mfua fulawe koleo umba
-tula 'forge' ki-uma 'iron' nyu.undo 'hammer' mu-gubo 'bellows'
-lukuta 'blow bellows'
-tul- 'forge'
-tul- plus -bwe 'stone'
-bunba 'mould pottery'
-piny- 'squeeze'
ny-ungu etc. -ungu 'pot'
mtsungi mtsunji (m-tungi)
fī, mīfī
-loa
uloo,
shīloo
wavu sg. dema pl. malema
see text, from Persian
-bīga 'pot'
n-cui 'fish'
-loba 'to fish using line'
-luba 'to fish'
-lobo 'fish hook'
? -abu 'net' Persian ? Persian (also Hindi, etc) 'fish trap'
(-loa)0
-vuya boo Ma kiloa (mshipi)0 'line' nyavu

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LP MK
yutsatsa° lutsatsa
'matting' 'fish weir'
mono° mugono
yutsoma 'fish spear'
uchi uchi
uhao uha
muvwi muvwi
arrow
shaft'
ND
utata
-toma 'spear fish' khasia khasia uki uta Ba muvi
SD
(utata) mgono -choma
khafi
(khasia)
Hunting, weapons
uta mvi
Comorian PB
-cac- 'tie up'
mugono 'fish trap'
-coma 'pierce'
nkasi n-kapi 'oar, paddle'
bu-uki 'honey'
bu-ta 'bow'
mu-gui 'arrow'
w-ano larrow shaft'
u-pote 'bow string' (mshale)
wno
upote mshale
ch-embe (chembe)
'arrow head' (mrembe)
ch-ano 'poisoned arrow' ? lu-hore
? mu-rembe 'wooden arrow with several heads' kigumba 'metal arrow head' firno
mu-hi
manyoga
utsungu
ngao thero 'sling'
-indza
-hega
ng'ombe
-kama 'milk'
kigumba weapon head' fimo
uti
unyoya
uchungu ushungu ngao (theo)
-winja (-winda)
-tega
Cattle, stock
ng'ombe°
-kama
-bano 'shaft'
-pot- 'twist'
?mucaale 'arrow' ? -tale 'iron' ? Central Sudanic
(shembe)
(ugumba) 'bow' fiunu
uri
shungu
mbe, etc
-hama
-gumba 'porcupine'
-tumo 'spear'
-ti 'tree wood'
-oga, -oya 'feather' bu-cungu 'poison' n-gabo 'shield'
-tel- 'slip'
-bing- 'chase'
-tega 'trap' n-gombe 'cow', ultimately from Central Sudanic
-kama 'squeeze'

ntsaye arrow
(c-embe) arrow head'
Ma luguba 'fish spear fumo0 UP mu-rhi 'shaft' manyo-j-a
'feathering' utsungu

ngao
-windza° 'hunt' UP rhega
ngombeo
filmo
u-ti*

Ba ushingo ngao theo
-wina Jomvu
-tea ng'ombeo
-kama

Swahili origins
maziwa'
-sukasuka 'churn'
mazia
-suka
UP -lumika -lumika
wee' 'udder'
zizi
'cattlepen'
mbuzi*
(ngozi)* 'sheep' nkuku*
UP nkolo 'hen' Ma bua
mpaka
-risa
graze mbuzi kabuzi 'kid' ng'ondzi
khuku kholo
phaka
LP ngamia ngamira
ND ziwa'
-suka0 Ba -sika
-umika
kiwee
zzi
-lisa
-lisha° mbuzi* kabuzi ng'ondi 'sheep sp.' khuku° khoo
mbwao imbwa phakao
ngamia Mi ngamii-a 1
SD
maziwa°
Comorian PB
dzia -liba 'milk', ultimately
fr-m Southern Cushitic
-suka (suka) -tsuha
-umnika ndumiko kiwele zizi
-lisha mbuzi
kuku khoo mbwaO ji-bwa phaka°
ngamia
-lisa mbuzi gondzi
(n) kuhu
mbwa
paha
ngamia
Southern Cushitic
-hwmika 'bleed by cupping' c.f. -luma 'bite'
-beele 'breast'? Central Kenya causative of-li- 'eat' m-buli 'goat' Southern Cushitic
n-kuku 'domestic fowl' m-bwa 'dog' m-paka 'cat', not necessarily domestic
?; from Arabic, 'camel'
Appendix 2. Items of outside provenance, probably early introductions
These are assumed to be early imports for phonological reasons; they have
undergone some post-Proto-Sabaki sound changes (I-loss in most Swahili dialects
before Ou, t to r in Comorian etc). Older shapes often to be seen in Miini.
'clove'
tambuu (I-loss)
popoo
(I-loss)
jimbi, but e.g. Amu ma-imbi, where j to zero
tunda, but t to ch in Ba and Pate/Siu
most Swahili
karafuu (1-loss)

m-rambuu (t to r) vovoo (1-loss, p to v)
Comorian Miini Linguistic source
(karafuu) kharafuuri e.g. Arabic qaranful
(tambu) polpAoo
e.g. Arabic tanbul Hindi tambol Western Asia? India?
trunda, pl matuunda
marunda 'orange'
kitunguu, but shirunguu t to ch in Ba and Pate/Siu
shtuun&tl
Other imported items, some mentioned (e.g. 'waterpot, camel'), others unmentioned (e.g. 'mosque, kanzu') are also likely to have been introduced early in at least Swahili, for the same reasons. 'betel' 'areca nut', 'taro' 'fruit' 'onion'

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Appendix 3. Undatable, probably later, introductions
Key
A Americas (mostly introduced by the Portugese); WA Western Asia; I Indian subcontinent; SEA South East Asia; etc means 'and similar forms'; by source is meant 'likely botanical origin of the item', although most of the names are also of foreign origin. Item (Swahili term) Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (Swahili term)</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maize (mahindi, buru)</td>
<td>A, I? lablab bean (fiwi) I?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cassava (muhogo)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coconut (nazi, dafu)</td>
<td>mango (embe, hembe) jackfruit (fenesi) avocado (mparachichi) bitter orange (mdanzi) jujube (mkuvasi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mulberry (mforsadi)</td>
<td>almond (mlozi) ginger (tangawizi) aubergine (bilingani) red sorrel (ufuta wa barar) fengrek (uwatu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee (kahawa, etc)</td>
<td>WA oil palm (mchikichi, etc) ? safron (zafarani) WA, I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item (Swahili term) wheat (ngano) cluster bean (gwaru) (sweet) potato (ndoro: kiazi): both terms are local, the latter Southern Cushitic, with meaning-shift form? pawpaw (papai, etc) orange (chungwa, etc) guava (pera, etc) grapefruit (mbalungi) citron (mfurungu) Java plum (mzambarau) fig (mtini) okra (bamia, binda) garlic (saumu, etc) coriander (gilgilani) fennel (shamari) tobacco (tumbako, etc) sisal (kitani, mkonge) olive (mzeituni, etc) henna (hina, etc) So urce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item (Swahili term) barley (shayiri) lentil (dengu) banana (izu, etc) this term is of Southern Cushitic origin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lime, lemon (ndimu, limau)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA ?</td>
<td>cashew (korosho, bibo, kanju, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>tamarind (mkwaju)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA, I</td>
<td>pineapple (nanasi) date (tende) sweetsop (mstafeli)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>pomegranate (komamanga) WA, I pepper (pilipili) WA cumin (bizari)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>tomato (nyanya, tindi) both terms are apparently local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>mint (nanaa, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>marijuana (bangi)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WA kapok (msufi)
WA indigo (nii)
WA, I turmeric (manjano, kichweo)
? cardamom (iliki, etc) WA, I cinnamon (dalasini)
SEA
? via I
I
SEA ? via I
A
WA? WA from China WA
WA
I
I, WA
Source
WA WA
SEA originally
WA or I
A
WA? WA, I?
WA
WA, I WA
A
WA WA, I WA I?
SEA, via I ? WA or I from China
durian (mduriani)

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