

The Afro-Asiatic Languages

Classification and Reference List

Roger Blench
Mallam Dendo
8, Guest Road
Cambridge CB1 2AL
United Kingdom
Voice/ Fax. 0044-(0)1223-560687
Mobile worldwide (00-44)-(0)7967-696804
E-mail R.Blench@odi.org.uk
<http://www.rogerblench.info/RBOP.htm>

CIRCULATED FOR COMMENT

Cambridge, 14 November, 2006

This is a preliminary list circulated with a view to establishing a standard order and system of data entry and presentation of lexical data. The present version of the list has benefited from the comments of a number of scholars, in particular Amzha Azeb, Giorgio Banti, Václav Blažek, Bernard Caron, Joachim Crass, Hal Fleming, Dick Hayward, Hermann Jungraithmayr, Maarten Kossmann, Rudolf Leger, Alan Kaye, Naima Louali (†), Maarten Mous, Fabrizio Pennachietti, Jim Roberts, Helmut Satzinger and Henri Tourneux to whom I am grateful. Nonetheless, there are still many problems and I would be grateful for further additions and emendations. All comments should be sent to the address above.

In many cases the status of individual lects is unknown. This presentation usually follows the sources in presenting members of a cluster or chain of languages as lects. A problem is created by epigraphic languages, which change over time. I hope to present these languages in chronological trees in a future version.

Family	Branch/Group	Subgroup	Language	Lects/Dialects
I. OMOTIC				
North	Ometo	North	Wolaitta (=Welamo)	
			Dache	
			Dorze	
			Laha	
			Gamo	
			Gofa	Highlands
				Lowlands
			Kullo-Konta	Kucha
			Malo	
			Oyda	
			Ganjule	
			Zala	
			Balta?	
			Gidicho	
			Kachama	
			Dokka	
			Doko-Dolo	
			Misketto (=Basketto)	
		East	Gatame (=Haruro)	
			Zayse	Zergula
			Koorite (Koyra) (=Badittu)	
		South	Maale	
		Unclassified	Ch'ara	
	Gimira		Benc Non	

			Mer	
			She	
	Yem		Yem (=Yemsa)	Fofa
				Toba
	Kefoid		Kafa	Bonga
				Manjo
			Mocha	
			Boro (=Shinasha)	Amuru
				Wembera
				Gamila
				Guba
			Anfillo	
	Dizoid		Dizi	Jeba
				Adikas
			Nayi (=Na'o)	
			Sheko	Dorsha
				Bulla (=Daan)
	Mao		Mao	of Bambeshi
				of Didessa
			Hozo	
			Sezo	
			Ganza	
South (=Aroid)			Hamer	Karo
				Banna
			Aari	Bako
				Biyo
				Galila
				Gozza
				Laydo
				Seyki
				Shangama
				Sido
				Ubamer
				Zeddo
			Dime	
Unclassified			Bosha †	
II. CUSHITIC				
Beja			Beja (=Bedauye)	Hadareb
				Bisharin
				Hadendowa
Agaw	Southern		Awngi	
			Kunfāl	
	Northern	Western	Kemant	
			Qara†	
		Northeastern	Xamir	
			Xamta	
			Bilin	
Eastern	Highland		Burji	
			Sidamo	
			Gedeo (=Darasa)	
			Kambaata	Kambaata
				Ṭambaro

				Alaaba
				K'abena
			Hadiyya	Leemo
				Libido (=Marāqo)
				Soro
		Unclassified	Agamja	
			Shashago	
	Yaaku-Dullay	Yaaku	Yaaku (†?)	
		Dullay	Dihina	
			Dobase	Lohu
				Mashole
			Gaba ?	
			Gawwada	
			Gergere	
			Gollango	
			Gorrose	
			Harso	
			Tsamako	
	Lowland	Afar-Saho	Afar	Northern
				Central
				Aussa
				Ba'adu
			Saho	Asawurta etc.
				Minifire etc.
				Irob
		Omo-Tana	Dasenech	
			Elmolo	
			Arbore	
		Macro-Somali	Bayso	
		Sam	Rendille	
			Aweer (=Boni)	
		Somali ¹	North-Central	Northern
				Darood
				Lower Juba
			Benaadir	
			Northern	Abgaal
				Ajuraan
				Gaaljacal
			Southern	Xamari
				Bimaal
			Ashraaf	Shingaani
				Lower Shebelle
			Maay (=Jabarti)	Northern
				Buur Hakaba
				Southern
			Digil	Garre
				Tunni
				Dabarre
			Jiiddu	

¹ The classification of Somali generally follows Lamberti (1984) although I am aware that this is controversial and a different view is presented in Ehret and Nuuh Ali (1984)

Roger Blench Classification of Afroasiatic Circulation Draft

			Yibir ?	
			Midgaan?	
		Unclassified	Girirra	
		Oromoid	Western	Maca
			Shewa	Tuulama
				Arsi
			Eastern	Harar
			Southern	Ajuran
				Borana
				Gabra
				Garreh
				Munyo
				Orma
				Sakuye
				Waata
		Konsoid	Bussa (=Mossiya)	
			Mashile	
			Turo	
			Gato	
			D'iraassh (Gidole)	
			Konso	
South	Rift	East	Asax †	
			Kw'adza †	
		West	Iraqw	
			Gorowa	
			Alagwa (=Wasi)	
			Burunge	
Unclassified			Boon (<i>ex</i> Lamberti)	
			Dahalo	
			Ma'a	
III. CHADIC				
1. West	Hausa		Hausa	
			Gwandara	Karshi
				Cancara
				Toni
				Gitata
				Koro
				Nimbia
	Bole-Angas	Angas	Angas	
			Mwaghavul (=Sura)	inc. Mupun
			Cakfem-Mushere	
			Miship (Chip)	inc. Doka
			Jorto	
			Kofyar cluster	Kofyar
				Mernyang
				Doemak
				Kwagallak
				Bwol
				Gworam
				Jipal
			Goemai	
			Koenoem	
			Pyapun	

			Tal	
			Montol	
		Gerka	Yiwom	
		Ron	Bokkos	
			Daffo-Butura	
			Sha	
			Kulere	
			Karfa	
			Shagawu	
			Fyer	
			Tambas	
			Mundat	
	Bole	North	Karekare	
			Gera	
			Geruma	
			Deno	
			Bure	
			Kubi	
			Giiwo	
			Galambu	
			Daza	
			Bole	
			Ngamo	
			Maagha (=Maaka)	
			Beele	
			Pali	
		South	Kwaami	
			Pero	
			Piya-Kwonci	
			Kholok	
			Nyam	
			Goji (=Kushi)	
			Kutto	
			Tangale	
			Dera (=Kanakuru)	
	Bade/Warji	Bade group	Bade	
			Duwai	
			Ngizim	
			Auyok †	
			Shira †	
			Teshena †	
		Warji group	Diri	
			Pa'a	
			Warji	
			Vinahə (=Kariya)	
			Mburku	
			Miya	
			Zumbun	
			Siri	
			Ciwogai	
	South Bauchi			
	Zaar group			
	Barawa cluster	Geji cluster	Bolu	
			Geji	

			Zaranda	
		Polci cluster	Zul	
			Baram	
			Dir	
			Buli	
			Nyamzak = (Langas, Lundur)	
			Luri	
			Polci	
		Zeem cluster	Zeem (†)	
			Caari	
			Danshe (†)	
			Lushi (?)	
			Dyarim	
			Tule (†)	
		Das cluster	Lukshi	
			Durr-Baraza	
			Zumbul	
			Wandi	
			Dot	
		Zari cluster	Zakshi	
			Boto	
			Zari (=Kopti)	
		Saya cluster	Guus (=Sigidi)	
			Zaar	
	Guruntum		Zangwal	
			Tala	
			Ju	
			Guruntum-Mbaaru	Gurdung Mbaaru
	Boghom		Boghom	
			Kir-Bala	
			Jum	
			Mangas	
			Jimi	
	Unclassified		Poki	
2. Central	Tera		Tera	
			Pidlimdi (=Hinna)	
			Jara	
			Ga'anda	
			Gabin	
			Boga	
			Ngwaba	
			Hwana	
	Bura-Higi	Bura	Bura-Pabir	
			Kyibaku (=Chibbuk)	
			Nggwahyi	
			Huba (=Kilba)	
			Putai	
			Margi Babal	
			South Margi	
		No data	Kofa	
		Higi	Kamwə (= Psikye, Higi)	Psikye
				Zləŋə
				Wula

Roger Blench Classification of Afroasiatic Circulation Draft

			Hya (=Ghye?)	
			Bana	
	Bata (=Gbwata)		Bacama	
			Bata (=Gbwata)	Zumu
				Malabu
				Koboci
				Wadi
				Ribaw
				Demsa
				Garoua
				Jirai
			Tsuvan	
			Sharwa	
			Gude	Gude (of Mubi)
				Gude Dərəbəs
			Fali cluster	Uroovin (=Fali of Vintim)
				Bahuli (=Fali of Bahuli)
				Madzarin (=Fali of Muchella)
				Uramḅwiin (Fali of Bagira)
			Ulan Mazhilvən (Fali of Jilbu)	
			Jimjimən (=Jimi)	
			Gudu	
			Holma	
			Njanyi	
	Yedina		Yedina	
	Mandage			
		South	Msər (=Kousseri)	Mser
				Kalo
				Gawi
				Huluf
				Kabe
			Lagwan (=Logone)	
		North	Afaḁə	
			Maslam	Maslam
				Sahu
			Malgbe (=Gulfey)	Douguia
				Dro
				Malgbe
				Mara
			Mpadə	Bodo
				Digam
				Mpadə
				Shoe
				Wulki
		Unclassified	Jilbe	
	Daba group			
		North	Buwal (=Gadala)	
			Gavar (=Kortchi)	
		South	Besleri (=Hina)	Besleri
				Jɨŋjɨŋ
				Gamdugun

			Daba	Daba
				Mazagway (=Musgoy)
				Nive
				Pologozom
				Tpala (=Kola)
			Mbødam	
	Wandala-Mafa			
	Wandala	East	Wandala	Wandala
				Mura
				Malgwa (=Gamergu)
				Kamburwama
				Masfeima
				Jampalam
				Zlogba
				Mazagwa
				Gwanje
			Glavda (=Gəlvaxdaxa)	
		Central	Parəkwa (=Podoko)	
		West	Gəvoko	
			Guduf-Gava	Guduf
				Gava
				Cineni
				Cikide
			Dghwede	
			Xədi (=Hide, Tur)	
			Mabas	
			Vemgo	
			Laamang	Taghwa (=Zələdvə)
				Ghumbagha
				Ghudəvən
				Vizik (?)
			Woga	
		Sukur	Sakwun (=Sukur)	
	Mafa	Northeast	Pəlasla	Pəlasla (=Gwendele)
				Ndreme (Vame)
				Mbørem (Vame-Mbreme)
				Dəmwə
				Hurza
			Mbuko	
			Gaduwa	
		Northwest	Matal (=Muktele)	
		South		
		a)	Wuzlam (=Ouldémé)	
			Muyang	
			Maða	
			Mələkwə	
		b)	Zəlgwa-Minew	
			Gemzek	
			Dugwər	
			Merey	
			Mikere	
		c)	Giziga N.	Maroua
				Dogba

				Tchééré
			Giziga S.	Lulu
				Muturwa
				Mijivin
			Mofu N.	Duvangar
				Durum
				Wazang
			Mofu S.	Gudur
				Mokong
				Zidim
			Mbazlam (=Baldamu)	
		d)	Cuvok	
			Mefele	Mefele
				Sirak
				Muhura
			Shügule	
			Mafa	West
				Central
				East (Soulede, Roua)
	East-Central	Kaċa	Kaċa (=Gidar)	Lam
		Munjuk	Muzuk† (=Musgum)	
			Mpus	
			Beege (=Jafga)	
			Vulum (=Mulwi)	
			Mbara	
		Mida'a	Jina	Jina
				Muxule
				Sarassara
				Sede
			Majera	Majera
				Kajire-'Dulo
				Hwalem
3. Masa	North			
	Masa		Masa	Gumay
				Bayga
				Yagwa
				Domo
				Marao
				Walia
				Gizay = Guisey
				Bongor
				Hara
				Bugudum
	Zumaya		Zumaya †	
	Musey-Azumeina	Musey (=Banana)	Jaraw-Domo	
			Bongor-Jodo-Tagal-Berem-Gunu	
			Pe-Holom-Gamé	
		Azumeina	Marba	
			Kolong	
			Lew	
	South			
	Zime		Zime	Bero

				Zamre
	Peve-Kado	Peve	Peve	
			Tari	
			Lame	
			Batna	
			Cimiang	
		Lamé	Dzəpaw (=Lamé)	
			Sorga-Ngete	
			Hefe-Rong	
4. East				
A Branch		Sibine	Sibine (=Sumrey)	
			Tumak	
			Motun (=Mod)	
			Mire	
			Mawer	
			Ndam	Ndam
				Ndam Dik
		Miltu	Sarwa	
			Gadang	
			Boor (=Bwara, Damraw)	
			Miltu	
		Buso	Buso	
		Nancere	Nancere	
			Lele	
			Kimré	Kimruwa
				Buruwa (=Bordo)
				Tchéré-Aiba
		Gabri	Tobanga	
			Gabri S. cluster	Buruwa
				Darbe
				Moonde
			Kaba Lai	
		Kwang	Kera	
			Kwang	Aloa
				Kawalke
				Cakin-Ngam (=Modgel)
				Kwang
				Mobu
				Gaya
				Mindera
B. Branch		Mokilko	Mokilko	Doliki
				Gugiko
				Mezimko
				Mokilko
				Moriko
				Seginki
		Dangla	Dangla	
			Mabire (?†)	
			Ubi	
			Migama	Migama
				Doga
				Gamiya
			Bidiya	Garawgino
				Jekkino

				Bigawguno
				Nalguno
				'Oboyguno
			Musunye	
			Djonkor Bourmataguil	Duny
				Karakir
			Mogum	Mogum Abu Deia
				Mogum Melfi
				Kofa
				Jegu
		Mubi	Birgit	
			Mubi	Monjul
			Masmaje	
			Kajakse	
			Jelkung	
			Toram	
			Zirenkel	
		Sokoro	Sokoro	Sokoro
				Bedanga
			Temki	
			Mahwa	
			Barain	
			Saba	
		Kujarke (?)	Kujarke	
IV. Egyptian			Ancient Egyptian †	
			Demotic †	
			Coptic †	Achmimic
				Bohairic
				Fayyumic
				Lycopolitan
				Old Coptic
				Sa'idic
V. Semitic				
East			Eblaic (?)†	
			Akkadian †	Assyrian
				Babylonian
Central			Deer °Alla †	
			Ugaritic †	
	Aramaic	Old Aramaic †		Ya'udic
				Assyrian
				Tel Fekkeriye
		Achmenaeen †		
		Middle Aramaic †	West	Nabatean
				Palmyrean
			East	Syriac
				Talmudic
				Hatrean
				Mandaean
		Neo-Aramaic	West	Ma°lula
				Bax°a
				ubba°diin
			Central	Turoyo

			East	Sureth
				Jewish dialects
				neo-Mandaean
	Canaanite		Hebrew	Classical Hebrew †
				Hebrew
			Phoenician †	Phoenician
				Punic
				Neo-Punic
	Arabic		Arabic*	Classical Arabic
				Eastern Arabic
				Western Arabic
				Chadian Arabic
				Shuwa Arabic
			Maltese	
			Jakati	
	South Semitic	Epigraphic	Epigraphic South Arabian †	Sabaeen
				Minaean
				Qatabanian
				Hadramautic
		Modern Arabian	S. Soqotri	
			Mehri	
			Baḥari	
			Ḥarsūsi	
			Hōbyōt	
			Jibbāli (=Shahri)	Kurya Murya islands
	Ethio-Semitic	Ge'ez		
		Tigre		
		Tigrinya		
		Amharic		
		Argobba		
		Harari		
		Gafat†		
		East Gurage	Selṭi	Ulbarag
				Ḥnāqor
				Azārnāt-Mugo
			Wolane	
			Zway	
		West Gurage	Caha	Gura
			Endegeṇ	Ennär
			Ennemor	Mägär
				?Gumär
			Ezha	
			Gyeto	
			?Mesmes	
		North Gurage	Soddo	
		Gurage unclass.	Gogot	
			Muher	
			Mäsqaṇ	
VI. Berber				
Guanche			Guanche†	
East Numidian			East Numidian † (=Old Libyan)	

Berber		Eastern	Siwa	
			Awjila	
			Sokna	
			Ghadames	
			Zurg (=Kufra)	
			Fezzan	Tmessa
				Al-Fojaha
		Twareg	Tawellemet	Abalagh (=East)
				West
			Tayirt	Ingal
				Gofat
			Tamesgrest	Azerori
			Tafaghist	
			Tahaggart (=Ahaggar)	
			Ghat	
		Western	Zenaga	
		Northern		
		Atlas	Tachlit (=Shilha)	
			Tamazight	
		Kabyle	Kabyle	
		Zenati	Riff cluster	Shawiya
				Tidikelt
				Tuat
				Tariifit (=Riff)
				Ghmara
				Tlemcen
				Sheliff Basin
			Mzab-Wargla	Gurara
				Mzab
				Wargla
				Ghardaia
				Tugurt
				Seghrušen
				Figig
				Senhaja
				Iznacen
			East Zenati	Tmagurt
				Sened
				Jerba
				Tamezret
				Taujjut
				Nefusi
				Zrawa

***Arabic.** Numerous lects have been described for Arabic. For a more comprehensive listing see Ethnologue.

Queries:

Ongota. (Gemu-Gofa, Ethiopia). Probably Afroasiatic. See Fleming et al. (1992), Fleming (2006).

Omotic

Bosha. This language is elsewhere listed as unclassified, but Ethnologue says it is a lect of Kafa.

Cushitic

Boon. Not the same as Boni. A language spoken in Somalia. Lamberti (1986) has recorded fragmentary materials making final classification impossible.

Dahalo. Recent work has suggested that this language might be East Cushitic or even another branch of Cushitic (Václav Blažek, p.c.)

Ma'a. Studies by Mous indicate that it is a 'register' of a Bantu language and the Cushitic content of the lexicon is largely Eastern rather than Southern Cushitic as originally claimed by Ehret.

Yibir, Midgan. These lects, spoken respectively by magicians and hunters among the Somali are said to differ substantially in lexicon from standard Somali. Whether this differentiation is in the nature of a code or these represent distinct languages remains unknown. For description see Kirk (1905).

Chadic

Luri. This language, spoken in Bauchi State, Nigeria, has been recorded as Chadic (unclassified) (Crozier & Blench, 1992). Recent work by Bernard Caron with the last speakers shows that it is closely related to Langas.

Poki. A language mentioned by Campbell & Hoskison (1972) in Bauchi State, Nigeria. Another language mentioned in this report, **Dulbu**, is in fact Jarawan Bantu, not Chadic.

Pali. A language presumably of the Bole-Tangale group recently reported by Rudolf Leger.

Kofa. This language, spoken near Song in Nigeria, is said to be related to Bura, but no data is available.

Jilbe. An unclassified language of the Mandage (Kotoko) group recently reported.

Lame. There appear to be two different but related languages with this name. The more well-known one is here given the name **Dzəpaw** as the head-name.

Zumaya. (Masa, Chadic) This language is known only from a few words recorded from the last speaker. It was apparently part of the Masa group.

Kujarke (E. Chadic) is very remote from other languages in this group and may be another type of language with a high proportion of Chadic loanwords (see Doornbos and Bender, 1983).

Kofa. (E. Chadic). A language mentioned by Alio and Jungrathmayr as related to Bidiya.

Kwang. Wagner and Vanderkooi (1992) report that Ngam and Tchaguine are essentially the same lect, and that Modgel is simply a village name, in contrast to earlier sources.

Berber

Guanche. The Berber affiliation of this extinct language is questioned by some scholars.

Selected Sources:

Crozier, D. and Blench, R.M. 1992. *Index of Nigerian Languages*. Second Edition. SIL, Dallas, Texas.

Fleming, H.C., Yilma, A., Mitiku, A., Hayward, R., Miyawaki, Y. Mikesch, P. and Seelig, J.M. 1992. Ongota or Birale: a moribund language of Gemu-Gofa (Ethiopia). *Journal of Afroasiatic Languages*, 3,3:181-225.

Fleming, H.C 2006. *Ongota*. Wiesbaden: Harassowitz.

Gordon, R. (ed) 2005. *Ethnologue, 15th Edition*. Dallas: SIL.

Kirk, J.W.C. 1905. *A Grammar of the Somali Language with examples in Prose and Verse and an account of the Yibir and Midgan dialects*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Wagner, S. & Vanderkooi, M. 1992. *Rapport sur une Enquête Sociolinguistique parmi les Kwang du Tchad*. ms. SIL, N'Djamena.