

Names of the days in the seven-day week in Bantu languages of Tanzania

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Studies about the names of the days of the week in Eastern African societies have previously focused on a single ethnic group. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the names across Bantu¹ languages of Tanzania in order to set apart the traditional names of days from the contemporary one. Findings revealed that African societies reckoned days of the traditional week in relation to working days, resting days, and days to worship the deity. Names of the weekends still affirm this claim. But due to language contact, many borrowed names of the days of the week occurred, which makes it difficult to project the number of days in a traditional week.

Keywords: days of the week, names of days, Bantu languages, Tanzania

Introduction

The theme considered in this article concerns the mechanisms used by members of African societies to reckon time within a week, month or year. This subject of study was prompted by earlier studies by Dundas (1926), Evans-Pritchard (1939), Beidelman (1963), and Dietler and Herbich (1993) on Chagga of Tanzania, Nuer of Sudan, Kaguru² of Tanzania, and Luo of Kenya, respectively. Their findings revealed the similar traditional way of reckoning of seasons of the year based on the rain (wet) and dry seasons in all African societies. The variation of findings emanated from other sources of lexical words for expression of time. Some African societies, for example the Chagga, Luo and Nuer, developed mechanisms to express seasons of the year using atmospheric cues and celestial bodies such as the moon and stars (Dietler & Herbich, 1993; Dundas, 1926; Evans-Pritchard, 1939). Other African societies, for instance the Kaguru, did not reckon time with reference to celestial bodies. Beidelman (1963: 17) pointed out that ‘the Kaguru seem to take little account of the stars and planets in reckoning time. Stars have little significance; even falling stars seem to hold little or no significance.’ In this article, I want to unearth the names of the days of the week and explore any remnants of the traditional mechanisms of expressing seasons of the year in Bantu-speaking societies in Tanzania in East Africa.

On the general pattern across African societies, there are different mechanisms used to express time frames over a longer period in time. Based on the studies of Kamba, Kikuyu and Kiswahili, Mbiti (1969) argues that African societies had elaborate names of the time frames for the past, which extended to the ancestral time frame, while the names for

the future time is relatively narrower because the members of the society have not yet experienced the future time frames hence could not reckon it elaborately. Based on data from Tanzanian Bantu languages, Lusekelo (2023) argues against this claim by showing lexical evidence to substantiate that the time frames for the future are as elaborate as the time frames for the past. This article continues to show evidence to substantiate that African societies, represented by Tanzanian Bantu, express names of the week elaborately.

Specific to this paper is the lexicalisation of the names of the months and weeks in African languages. Research has shown that the Chagga accounted for the different months using the waxing and waning of the moon (Dundas, 1926). The Chagga construed six weeks in a month and each week comprised of five days. They called each week with a different name. For instance, the name *telu* had reference to the third week, *maana* referred to the fourth week, and the name *reema* denoted the fifth week (Dundas, 1926: 141). It appears that this naming system of the weeks in the months is in the verge of change due to the influence of Kiswahili, Islamic and Christianity (Kihore, 1997). This is shown today in Machame-Chagga whereby the name *nsu* refers to fog and mist (Rugemalira, 2008) instead of the names of the days in the third week (Dundas, 1926). Since change of the names of weeks occurred in Chagga, I elicited names of the week in order to determine whether the Tanzanian societies still use the traditional names of weeks or they lexicalised new names.

Research has also shown that the patterns of naming of weeks and days of the week differ significantly. While Chagga comprised specific names of their six weeks in a month (Dundas, 1926), the Luo and Kaguru did not lexicalise any traditional mechanism to account for the names of weeks

1 The idiom Bantu is used in this regard to refer to the group of 500+/- languages of the Niger-Congo phylum. The alternative name is Sintu. In this article, I prefer the name Bantu, which is commonly used in East Africa to refer to the languages.

2 Two orthographic representations of this language are Kaguru and Kagulu. Thomas O. Beidelman uses the name Kaguru (see Beidelman, 1963), while Malin Petzell has Kagulu (see Petzell, 2008). I use the names as offered by authors I cite.

(Beidelman, 1963; Dietler & Herbich, 1993). It is reported that the 'Kaguru have no traditional week or names of days, but indicate days with reference to the present, 'today'. Common names of the day include *digulo* 'yesterday', *nosiku* 'tomorrow', *sindocho* 'three days from today' etc. (Beidelman, 1963: 13). Given the variations in the lexicalisation of the names of the weeks in Chagga and Kaguru, I elicited names of the week in order to determine whether the Tanzanian societies still use the traditional names of weeks or they lexicalised new names.

Language contact has had an enormous impact on the strategies used to express names of the days of the week in Africa (Dietler & Herbich, 1993; Kihore, 1997). For instance, the Luo society experienced contact with Kiswahili speakers over a period of time which motivated the incorporation of foreign names of the days of the week (Dietler & Herbich, 1993). Similarly, Kiswahili lexicon reveals many names of the days of the week incorporated from Arabic (Kihore, 1997). Perhaps it is plausible to assume that the impact of Christian and Islamic civilisations upon mechanisms of expressing time is enormous, even in African societies (Rosenfeld, 1994; Falk, 1999; Johansen, 2002). But researchers have not looked into the details of the names of the days of a week across Bantu languages to allow us to accept the proposition that language contact yielded foreign names of the days. In this article, I compare names of the seven-day week in Bantu languages of Tanzania and look at the mechanisms used to arrive at the naming system.

Literature about the names of the days of the week in Eastern Africa

The conceptualisation of time frames in African societies was traditionally divided into four cycles, namely the seasonal cycle (rainy and dry seasons), the structural cycle (generational time), the weekly cycle in a month, and the quotidian cycle (day and night time) (Dietler & Herbich, 1993). Anthropological studies were carried out in four native societies, namely the Chagga Bantu inhabiting the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro (Dundas, 1926), the Kaguru Bantu of central Tanzania (Beidelman, 1963), the Luo in the Lake Victoria area of Kenya (Dietler & Herbich, 1993), and the Nuer people of Sudan (Evans-Pritchard, 1939). In the following paragraphs, I reveal how each society shows some variation in reckoning time frames.

Research has shown that seasons of the year contribute significantly to the lexicalisation of the names of the time frames in East Africa (Beidelman, 1963; Dietler & Herbich, 1993; Dundas, 1926; Evans-Pritchard, 1939). Since East Africa lies in a savanna climatic zone, two seasons of the year are common, namely the wet and rainy season (mainly June to November) and the dry and hot season (primarily December to May). The beginning of rainfall marked the beginning of the year, hence the Luo call it *chwiri* (Dietler & Herbich, 1993) and the Nuer call it *deng* (Evans-Pritchard, 1939). Numerous economic activities are carried out during this period and get terminated during the dry season, which is called *tot* by Nuer (Evans-Pritchard, 1939) and *keyo* by Luo (Dietler & Herbich, 1993). The traditional marking of the seasons of the year is not unique to African societies, rather it

occurred in Guahibo who are native to Columbia (Morey, 1971) and Mayan who are native to Mexico (Rice, 2008). However, the naming of the seasons in East Africa differed slightly from Western African societies who reckoned time with reference to worship, festivals and market-days carried out in a year. These parameters were common in Igbo and Yoruba societies (see Jeffreys, 1956; Oduyoye, 1971), but were less utilised in East African societies which refer to the rainy-dry seasons of the year.

In the conceptualisation of the seasons, the literature shows that the main variation manifest in the two major sources of the lexical entries for names of the days of the week. The Chagga, Luo and Nuer represent societies whose naming system relied much on cosmological bodies such as the moon waxing and waning and sun rising and setting (Dietler & Herbich, 1993; Dundas, 1926; Evans-Pritchard, 1939), while Kaguru represents societies which did not use the celestial bodies like that (Beidelman, 1963). In this paper, I provide lexical evidence to substantiate the names of the days in a week which emanate from the celestial bodies.

There are societies which exist in the age-set system, which accounts for time differentiation of persons as per life cycle popularly called structural cycle or generational cycle (Dietler & Herbich, 1993). Bantu societies do not practise age-set system but the Nilotic Maasai do. Hodgson (1999: 45) pointed out that 'for men, differences in age were marked formally by designated age grades (*olajililajjik*), a set of life stages that men moved through as part of their age-set, or group of men, known by a unique name, who were circumcised during the same time period.' The Nilotic Luo do not have a system of formal age-set, 'but rather a conception of idealized life-cycle stages through which individuals pass over the course of their lives. These stages are reckoned on the basis of both biological ontogeny and changes in social status, and each stage has expectations of appropriate gender-specific behaviour' (Dietler & Herbich, 1993: 252).

With regard to weekly cycle and the quotidian cycle, two issues arise. On the one hand, there are African languages which make use of numerical names of the days of the week, as illustrated in (1) for Kiswahili and (2) for Kinyakyusa (Kihore, 1997). On the other hand, there are African languages that distinguish time frames counted from time of speech or today to the past as well as the future, which may represent days, as illustrated in (3) for Kaguru (Beidelman, 1963), (4) for Nilamba (Lusekelo, 2023), and (5) for Setswana (Kgolo, 2018). The main variation of the two systems is that the numerical names of the days of the week are seven, while the sequences of the time frames could be more than seven as in Kaguru, seven as in Nilamba or less than seven as in Setswana.

- (1) Kiswahili (Kihore, 1997: 154)
jumapili 'second day – Sunday'
jumatatu 'third day – Monday'
jumanne 'fourth day – Tuesday'
jumatano 'fifth day – Wednesday'
alhamisi 'Thursday'
ijumaa 'Friday'
jumamosi 'first day – Saturday'

- (2) Kinyakyusa (Kihore, 1997: 154)
unndungu 'day of God – Sunday'
ikilembela 'Monday'
ikibili 'second day – Tuesday'
ikitatu 'third day – Wednesday'
ikinna 'fourth day – Thursday'
ikihano 'fifth day – Friday'
umpyagilo 'sweeping day – Saturday'
- (3) Kaguru (Beidelman, 1963: 13)
dijusi dia 'three days ago'
dijusi 'the day before yesterday'
digulo 'yesterday'
diyelo 'today'
nosiku 'tomorrow'
chisindo 'day after tomorrow'
chindocho 'three days from today'
chamiagwe 'four days from today'
ifia 'five days from today'
- (4) Nilamba (Lusekelo, 2023: 251)
majuli 'long time ago'
juli 'the day before yesterday'
gyiulo 'yesterday'
ntende 'today'
mudau 'tomorrow'
mudau lea 'day after tomorrow'
kali na kali 'eternity'
- (5) Setswana (Kgolo, 2018: 22)
maloba 'three days before today'
maloba a maabane 'two days before today'
mabaane 'yesterday'
tsatsi jeno 'today'
kamoso 'tomorrow'
kamoso yo mongwe 'day after tomorrow'

Further observations are worth noting from the data in (1) through (5). Firstly, Kihore (1997) noted the presence of the foreign names for two days in Kiswahili, which disrupted the numerical system of the names of the week. The literature shows that the penetration of the lexical entries for the names of the days of the week differed based on the Islamic civilisation, Christianization, and colonial administration (Falk, 1999; Johansen, 2002; Rosenfeld, 1994). Some societies had had earlier contacts with Persians and Arabs, which is the case of Digo, Kiswahili and Yao societies (Abdallah, 1919; Kihore, 1997; Nurse & Spear, 1985). The Arabic calendar system was introduced earlier in these societies. The Christian missionaries also introduced the seven-day week in East Africa. Similarly, the European calendar was introduced to Africa during colonial labour (Johansen, 2002). Consequently, Islamic and Christian names of the days in the week, which are split into numerical and astrological names (Rosenfeld, 1994; Falk, 1999), were incorporated into names of the days of the week in African societies. However, since variations of the contacts occurred, it becomes plausible to argue that Eastern African languages borrowed different names. For instance, Kihore (1997) and Rosenfeld (1994) found Arabic and Persian names in Kiswahili, e.g.,

Alhamisi 'Thursday' and *Ijumaa* 'Friday' which come from Arabic names *al-kamis* (Thursday) and *al-jum'a* (Friday) respectively. Based on example (2), Kinyakyusa lexicalised the numerical names of these two days. This variation is another motivation for conducting an investigation of the names of the week in Eastern African languages.

Secondly, the literature shows that African languages split twice, namely those which comprise actual lexical entries for the names of the week as shown by Kiswahili, Kinyakyusa and Luo (Dietler & Herbich, 1993; Johansen, 2002; Kihore, 1997) and speakers of languages who do not construe the actual names of days of the week thus use sequences of time frames as in Kaguru and Setswana (Beidelman, 1963; Kgolo, 2018). The variation manifest because some African societies did not construe a week, as Beidelman (1963: 13) pointed out that 'Kaguru have no traditional week or names of days, but indicate days with reference to the present, today.' Similarly, while Kgolo (2018) provides the list of the sequences of the days, other researchers (see Bennett, 2018; Lukusa, 2005; Matumo, 1993) propose that Setswana and other languages in South Africa refer to the days of the week numerically with the weekends related to religion, e.g. *mosopologo* (the beginning, Monday), *labobedi* (the second, Tuesday), *laboraro* (the third, Wednesday), *labone* (the forth, Thursday), *labutlhano* (the fifth, Friday), *matlhatso* (cleaning/washing day, Saturday), and *tshipi* (the bell, Sunday). The naming in Setswana is suggested to correspond with Kiswahili in (1) and Kinyakyusa in (2). In the course of the presentation of data, I shall show evidence to substantiate that this is not strange because Bantu societies adopted both the traditional and modern names of the days of the week.

Thirdly, the lexicalisation of the names of the week relied much on the deity in West Africa (Jeffreys, 1956; Oduyoye, 1971) and less on deity in East Africa (Dietler & Herbich, 1993). Based on examples above, it appears that Kinyakyusa has a system that followed the worship of a deity, as has been the case in Western Africa. For instance, the name for Saturday has to do with preparations for the deity (holy) day, while the name for Sunday is related to God (Kihore, 1997). In other Tanzanian languages, lexicalisation of the names of Sunday has been associated with Christianity, as the case of *dominika* 'Dominica' and *ekerezia* 'ecclesia' in Ruhaya and Runyambo (Lusekelo, 2013). In this article, I shall show evidence to substantiate that the phenomenon of using deities as sources of names of days of the week is common in other Bantu communities in East Africa.

Lastly, research has shown that language contact brought tremendous changes in the lexicon of the names of the week in African languages (Dietler & Herbich, 1993; Johansen, 2002; Kihore, 1997) and in other societies as well (Falk, 1999; Rosenfeld, 1994; Zurubavel, 1985). Zurubavel (1985: 46) pointed out that 'due to Christianity and Islam, the seven-day week has become an integral part of the current African scene'. Similarly, Falk (1999) adds that the imposition of foreign religions by missionaries and formal labour during colonialism interrupted the traditional way of reckoning days. Today, the tendency is that some days of the week have special names in Africa. For instance, Johansen (2002: 40)

gives examples of *shiku ya mposho* ‘day of weekly ration – Saturday’, related to payday, and *shiku ya yenga* ‘day of God – Sunday’, associated with religion. A comparative investigation of the names of the seven-day week will help to show how the Bantu societies adopt names from other languages.

On the lexicalisation theory

In the theory of lexicalization, the complex lexeme and/or phrase becomes a single unit with a reduced semantic content hence adding a new lexeme to the recipient language (Brinton & Traugott, 2005; Fernández-Domínguez, 2010). The lexicalization approach is also associated with institutionalization of newly coined words to belong to the norm of the language and become more familiar to the members of a speech community (Brinton & Traugott, 2005).

With regard to the institutionalized words, the literature shows that languages usually coin new expressions to refer to new concepts or artefacts (Brinton & Traugott, 2005; Fernández-Domínguez, 2010). The newly coined words get nativized in the language. In this regard, Brinton and Traugott (2005) state that lexicalization provides language

with fresh referential and predicative content by recruiting new members for the ‘lexical’ inventory.

In the process of lexicalisation, some words of foreign origin get borrowed in order to capture the new concepts or artefacts. Brinton and Traugott (2005) pointed out that the newly borrowed words get institutionalised in the recipient language. One of the mechanisms for institutionalisation is by insertion of the lexical entry into the dictionary of the recipient language.

In the course of presentation of data, names of the days of the week are extracted from dictionaries of the Tanzanian languages. Since many languages in Tanzania are not documented (Muzale & Rugemalira, 2008), speakers of the languages are also consulted in order to elicit the names of the days of the week.

Methodology

Focal languages whose results are reported in this article appear in Table 1.³ Primary data were gathered from dictionaries and lexicons. Though only a couple of the Bantu languages of Tanzania are documented (Muzale & Rugemalira, 2008), each of Guthrie’s Bantu zones in

Table 1 Selected languages and their references

Languages	Countries	Sources
Daiso	Kenya, Tanzania	Rugemalira et al. 2019
Digo	Kenya, Tanzania	Nicolle et al. (2004) ⁴
Giha	Tanzania	field notes ⁵
Gogo	Tanzania	Rugemalira (2009), field notes
Ikizu	Tanzania	Sewangi (2008)
Jita	Tanzania	Mdee (2008)
Kahe-Chagga	Tanzania	Kahigi (2008)
Kaguru	Tanzania	Petzell (2008), field notes
Hehe	Tanzania	field notes
Kinyakyusa	Malawi, Tanzania	Felberg (1996), field notes
Kiswahili	Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania	TUKI (2004), field notes
Kiwoso	Tanzania	field notes
Makonde	Mozambique, Tanzania	Rugemalira (2013)
Ndali	Malawi, Tanzania	Botne (2008), field notes
Ngoni	Tanzania	Mapunda (2016)
Nguu	Tanzania	field notes
Nilamba	Tanzania	field notes
Ruhaya	Tanzania	Muzale (2018)
Runyambo	Tanzania	Rugemalira (2002), field notes
Ruuri	Tanzania	Massamba (2005), field notes
Rwa-Meru	Tanzania	field notes
Sisumbwa	Tanzania	field notes
Sukuma	Tanzania	field notes
Yao	Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania	Taji (2017)
Zigua	Kenya, Tanzania	field notes
Zinza	Tanzania	Rubanza (2008), field notes

3 All languages in this table are spoken in Tanzania, though some are cross-border languages.

4 The sources of data are provided in this table but not in the text, except when further explanation is provided from a specific source.

5 The term field notes have reference to the elicitation of information from selected native speakers of languages dealt with in this paper. I am grateful to the following native speakers for their willingness to enumerate names of days of the seven-day week: Leah Mpobela (Runyambo), Charisma Mlay (Kiwoso), Josephat Rugemalira (Runyambo), Kulikoyela Kahigi (Sisumbwa), Kapingu Mpologo (Sukuma), Noel Mwegoha (Kaguru and Nguu), Simon Msovela (Hehe and Bena), Simon Sabuni (Nyamwezi and Sukuma), Samsoni Sarakikya (Rwa-Meru), Stella Kiula (Nilamba), Faustine Masatu Nyasira (Kikwaya), Amani Chipalo (Cigogo), Loveluck P. Muro (Mashami), Saul Bichwa (Giha), Shariff Hussein Ahmad (Zigua), and Cosmas Constantine (Hangaza).

Tanzania have been represented by at least two languages as follows: Giha (JD66) and Hangaza (JD65), Kahe (E64) and Digo (E73), Sukuma (F21) and Nilamba (F31), Kiswahili (G42) and Hehe (G62), Ikizu (JE402) and Zinza (JE23), Kinyakyusa (M31) and Ndali (M301), and Yao (P21) and Makonde (P23). The exception is the Ngoni of Tanzania (N12) which is the only language that I could manage to get elicited data (see Maho, 2009).

A good number of Bantu languages in Tanzania have not been described (Muzale & Rugemalira, 2008). Therefore, primary data for those languages were gathered through elicitation from native speakers. The selected native speakers provided the detailed information on the names of the week and the etymologies of the names in individual languages.

Some names were gathered from published works that deal with names of the week, namely from Kingwana (Congolese Swahili dialect) (Kihore, 1997), Kaguru (Beidelman, 1963; Falk, 1999) and Chagga (Dundas, 1926). However, much of the secondary data required re-analysis and re-interpretation based on the publications by Petzell (2008), Rugemalira (2008) and Kahigi (2008).

Expressions for the days of the week

Names for the traditional week

The conceptualisation of the notion *week* in African languages may help us have a better understanding of three issues here. One, some African languages construed the time frame in a week based on celestial bodies such as sky, moon and stars, as had been the case of Luo and Nuer. Two, a number of African societies construed the notion week based on deity events, market days, and festivity, as is the case of Igbo and Yoruba. Three, some African languages borrowed names of the days of the week. To account for the manifestation of any of these strategies of naming days in a week, I shall begin the discussion with the traditional term *week* that occurs in the lexicon of Bantu languages. I make five observations using data in (6) through (8).

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| (6) Digo | <i>chigorya</i> 'a traditional four-day week';
<i>jumwa</i> [<Kiswahili: <i>juma</i>] 'a week';
<i>wiki</i> [<English: <i>week</i>] 'a week' |
| Kiswahili | <i>juma</i> [<Arabic: <i>jouma</i>];
<i>wiki</i> [<English: <i>week</i>] 'seven-day week' |
| Daiso | <i>juma</i> [<Arabic: <i>jouma</i>];
<i>wiki</i> [<English: <i>week</i>] 'seven-day week' |
| Nguu | <i>juma</i> [<Kiswahili: <i>juma</i>] 'seven-day week' |
| Sukuma | <i>wiki</i> [<English: <i>week</i>] 'seven-day week' |
| Zigua | <i>juma</i> [<Arabic: <i>jouma</i>];
<i>wiki</i> [<English: <i>week</i>] 'seven-day week' |
| Yao | <i>chijuma</i> [<Kiswahili: <i>juma</i>] 'a week' |
| (7) Kinyakyusa | <i>unduungu</i> 'a week' |
| Ndali | <i>umulungu</i> (Tanzania), <i>usapaata</i> (Malawi) 'a week' |
| Ruhaya | <i>ilimansi</i> 'a week' |
| (8) Nilamba | <i>ntondo mpungati</i> 'a seven days period' |
| Ruuri | <i>obwooyo</i> 'a week' |
| Zinza | <i>obwoyo</i> 'a week' |

The first observation concerns the traditional name of the four-day week in Digo. This is a small corner of evidence that points to the presence of the traditional period of a week in Bantu languages. However, at this juncture, I could not decipher any other evidence in the Tanzanian Bantu languages.

The traditional name of the week is not unique for Digo because research has shown that African communities had a four-day week or a six-day week (Bartle, 1978; Zurubavel, 1985). But Nicolle et al. (2004) state that *chigorya* (*vichigorya* in plural) has two senses, namely a period of seven days and the traditional Digo week of four days. Though the name *chigorya* has two senses, when used for the four-day week, then the days were reckoned using the series of three days which culminate into the market day among the Digo people, as illustrated in (9).

- (9) *kualuka* 'first day of the traditional four-day week'
kurimaphiri 'second day of the traditional four-day week'
kufusa 'third day and last working day'
chipalata 'market day (final day of the traditional week)'

The observation above has implications on the presence of the festivity in eastern Africa, which usually occurred during special days, as had been reported in western Africa (Jeffreys, 1956; Oduyoye, 1971). Societies in eastern Africa might have lexicalised the names of the week based on the market days but this tradition appears to have been eroded by the penetration of the Arabic names of days in the week as discussed below.

The second observation concerns the penetration of the new names of the week. Within the lexicalisation approach, most of the Tanzanian Bantu languages have borrowed the words *juma(a)* 'week' from the Arabic word *jouma* 'seven day period'. The evidence is open for Digo, Kiswahili, Nguu and Yao, as illustrated in (6) above. Daiso, Digo, Kiswahili, Yao and Zigua had had prolonged contacts with the Arabic people along the coastline of Eastern Africa (Abdallah, 1919; Kihore, 1997; Nurse & Spear, 1985). There had been the penetration of the Arabic words into Tanzanian Bantu.

An alternative lexical entry is *wiki* (week), which is a direct loanword from English. In Tanzania, English is used as an official language since the British colonial administration. Therefore, the penetration of the name *week* is obviously indicated by Digo, Kiswahili and Sukuma, as well as other languages (see Johansen, 2002; Lusekelo, 2014).

Kiswahili is also a vehicle of the penetration of foreign words into Tanzanian languages. Since Kiswahili is the national and official language and medium of instruction in schools, the formal schooling helps to transfer many words of Arabic and English origin into languages spoken in Tanzania (Lusekelo, 2013). This means that the words *juma* (week) and *wiki* (week) might have been transferred into Tanzanian Bantu through Kiswahili.

The third observation concerns the lexicalisation of the names of a week based on deity. In Bantu languages, the name *Mulungu* has reference to supernatural power or God. The data in (7) indicate that Kinyakyusa and Ndali lexicalised the name of the week from *mulungu* 'God'. This is a small angle of data that reveals the presence of deity as a source of name of a week. While the lexicalisation of the names of

the week relied much on the deity in West Africa (Jeffreys, 1956; Oduyoye, 1971), perhaps this tradition was eroded in eastern Africa. Most of the names of the week had been borrowed from Arabic, English and Kiswahili (see Dietler & Herbich, 1993; Kihore, 1997).

A detailed investigation of the name for supernatural power of God was conducted in order to evaluate the truthfulness of the contention that deity is a source of the name of a week in Tanzanian Bantu. Data in (10) below reveal that the name *Mulungu* (spirit) and *nnungu* (God) are attested in a few languages, namely Gogo, Makonde and Yao. This substantiates that speakers of some Tanzanian Bantu lexicalised the name *Mulungu* to refer to a special deity in the society in question. To set apart the name of deity from that of a week, the Arabic word *juma* or English name *wiki* had been borrowed in Gogo, Makonde and Yao.

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|------|------------|---|
| (10) | Gogo | <i>mulungu</i> 'spirit' |
| | Makonde | <i>nnungu</i> [<Kiswahili: <i>Mungu</i>] 'God' |
| | Yao | <i>nnungu</i> [<Kiswahili: <i>Mungu</i>] 'God' |
| (11) | Ikizu | <i>ryoba</i> 'God' |
| | Jita | <i>nyamuhanga</i> 'creator, deity' |
| | Kinyakyusa | <i>ukyala</i> 'paramount sorcerer' |
| | Ndali | <i>uchaala</i> 'God' |
| | Ngoni | <i>chapanga</i> 'supernatural power' |
| | Ruhaya | <i>mutonzi</i> 'God', <i>nyamuhanga</i> 'deity' |
| | Runyambo | <i>omutunzi</i> 'deity' |
| | Ruuri | <i>nyamuhanga</i> 'creator, deity' |
| | Zinza | <i>nyamuhanga</i> 'creator', <i>mungu</i> [<Kiswahili: <i>Mungu</i>] 'God' |

Numerous names of God are attested in Tanzanian Bantu, as illustrated in (11). However, these names do not bear any reference to the name of the traditional week. This is an indication that none of these Tanzanian societies adopted the deity name as a point of reference for the traditional name of a week.

Lexical borrowing had been used to introduce the name of the deity which had been nativized to mean a week. This is the case of *ilimansi* 'a week', which is borrowed from the French word *Dimanche* 'Sunday'. According to Muzale (2018: 205), *ilimansi* means a week as well as Sunday in Ruhaya. The word might have been introduced by the French White Fathers who established Catholicism in the region.

The fourth observation concerns the use of celestial bodies to conceptualise the natural phenomenon related to seasons or time frames (Dietler & Herbich, 1993; Dundas, 1926; Evans-Pritchard, 1939). The data in (11) above substantiates that some Bantu languages around Mount Kilimanjaro (e.g., Kahe, Kiwoso, Mashami and Rwa-Meru) use the native name *Iruva* 'sun' to refer to a deity. Lema (1973) pointed out that in most of the Chagga, God was traditionally referred to as *Ruwa* or *Iruva*. Traditionally the Chagga recognised this supernatural power (deity). In Rwa-Meru, the name *iruva* 'sun' has reference to God. Lusekelo and Muro (2018) identified the word *eli* as being associated with God in the Christian religion in Mount Kilimanjaro area. The name appears in the Lake Victoria area as *ryoba* 'sun, God' in Ikizu Bantu. Nonetheless, the names from the celestial bodies have not been adopted to refer to the name of the week. This

evidence shows that such communities did not lexicalise the notion of week based on name of deity.

The fifth and last observation concerns the name *ntondo* 'a week' in Nilamba. It is related to the word *day* in the language. The other name similar to *ntondo* are *Mutonzi* 'God' and *Katonda* 'God' in Ruhaya and *omutunzi* 'deity' in Runyambo. Muzale (2018) shows that the supernatural being (deity) bears many names, which are related to numerous roles played by the deity. In this regard, the etymology of the names *Mutonzi* 'God' and *Katonda* 'God' is the verb *tonda* 'create' (Muzale, 2018: 733). Therefore, the name of the week derives from the capacity of creation by the deity.

The similar lexicalisation process involves the name *obwoyo* 'a week' in the Lake Victoria area. Its etymology is in the word *boga*, which means creation. The nominalisation of the word derives the name *obwoyo* 'a week'.

Names of individual days of the seven-day week

Now that the etymologies of the names of the week is known across Tanzanian Bantu, the next step is to investigate the way days in a week are called. In order to obtain the sequence of the days, I shall begin with the names for *Monday*. The data in (12) through (16) attract interesting observations outlined below.

- | | | | |
|------|------------|------------------------|---|
| (12) | Bena | <i>chakulemba</i> | 'hoe-fixing day – Monday' |
| | Hehe | <i>chakulembela</i> | 'the (work) beginning day – Monday' |
| (13) | Rwa-Meru | <i>nkonu wa mbele</i> | 'day ahead, the following day – Monday' |
| | Giha | <i>kwambere</i> | 'day ahead, the next day – Monday' |
| (14) | Mashami | <i>nkonu wa Iyimwi</i> | 'first day – Monday' |
| | Ruhaya | <i>rwokubanza</i> | 'first day – Monday' |
| | Nilamba | <i>Iwa kamwo</i> | 'first day – Monday' |
| | Runyambo | <i>orwa okubanza</i> | 'first day – Monday' |
| | Sisumbwa | <i>Iwe kamwi</i> | 'first day – Monday' |
| | Zinza | <i>halwakamo</i> | 'first day – Monday' |
| (15) | Digo | <i>jumatatu</i> | 'third week – Monday' |
| | Kiswahili | <i>jumatatu</i> | 'third week – Monday' |
| | Yao | <i>jumatatu</i> | 'third week – Monday' |
| | Zigua | <i>jumatatu</i> | 'third week – Monday' |
| | Nguu | <i>zua dya katatu</i> | 'third week – Monday' |
| | Ngoni | <i>jumatatu</i> | [<Kiswahili: <i>Jumatatu</i> 'third week – Monday'] |
| | Gogo | <i>jumatatu</i> | [<Kiswahili: <i>Jumatatu</i> 'third week – Monday'] |
| (16) | Kinyakyusa | <i>pamande</i> | '[<English: <i>Monday</i> '] |
| | Ndali | <i>pamaande</i> | '[<English: <i>Monday</i> '] |

The first observation arises from Bena and Hehe which lexicalised the name *chakulemba* 'Monday', as illustrated in (12). Kihore (1997) pointed out that the day appears to follow the resting day. In fact, the interpretation of the name *chakulemba* would be 'hoe preparation day' or 'the

beginning of the working sequence of days'. This means that the speakers of Bena and Hehe conceptualise the days of the week based on working day(s) against resting day(s). Since the resting day could either be worship day or day of festivity, then the Bena and Hehe construed Monday as the first day after the resting or festivity.

Another set of speakers of Tanzanian Bantu conceptualise Monday as the following day, as illustrated in (13) for Giha and Rwa-Meru. Similarly, speakers of other Tanzanian Bantu conceptualised Monday as the first day, as illustrated in (14) for Mashami, Ruhaya, Sisumbwa etc. In the literature, this is the numeral system of naming days of the week (Bartle 1978; Zurubavel, 1985; Falk, 1999). The numeral system indicates that the speakers counted the days after one important day, which is likely to be the resting day. Monday is treated as the first day after the resting day or day of festival.

The second observation concerns the name *jumatatu* 'third day – Monday' as manifesting in some Tanzanian Bantu in (15). This is a typical compound word in Kiswahili (Lusekelo, 2019). It is formed by the combination of the Arabic loanword *juma* [juma] 'a week' and the common Bantu numeral *tatu* 'three'. This means that the counting of the days in a week is not the same across Tanzanian Bantu languages. Coastal languages such as Digo, Kiswahili, and Zigua begins counting day one of the week on Saturday. This is called *jumamosi* 'the first week (Saturday)'. The name of Monday is *jumatatu* (the third week) due to borrowing of counting system (Kihore, 1997). The borrowing into Digo, Kiswahili, Yao and Zigua is common due to the prolonged contact with Arabic and the predominance of the Islamic civilisation (Abdallah, 1919; Nurse & Spear, 1985; Thorold, 1995). In Nguu, the compounding involves the name *zua* 'day, sun' and the numeral *katatu* 'three'. In the interior of Tanzania, the compounded name had been borrowed as a single word from Kiswahili into Gogo and Ngoni (Lusekelo, 2013, 2024; Mapunda & Rosendal, 2015).

The last observation concerns Kinyakyusa and Ndali speakers who use the label *pamaande* to refer to *Monday*. This is a direct loanword of *Monday* from English. Both Lusekelo (2014) and Swilla (2000) pointed out that these languages borrowed from English rather than Swahili.

In many Tanzanian Bantu languages, the names for Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are predominantly numerical. As shown in (17) through (20), the numerical names include *biril/bili* 'two (Tuesday)', *tatu/raru* 'three (Wednesday)', *kana/kane* 'four (Thursday)' and *taano/haano* 'five (Friday)'. The numerical names of days of the week are common in Bantu languages (Falk, 1999; Johansen, 2002; Kihore, 1997).

(17)	Kinyakyusa	<i>pakibili</i>	'second day – Tuesday'
	Mashami	<i>nkonu wa kabii</i>	'second day – Tuesday'
	Nilamba	<i>lwa kabiri</i>	'second day – Tuesday'
	Runyambo	<i>orwakabiri</i>	'second day – Tuesday'
	Ruhaya	<i>rwakabiri</i>	'second day – Tuesday'

	Sisumbwa	<i>lwe kabili</i>	'second day – Tuesday'
	Sukuma	<i>lokabili</i>	'second day – Tuesday'
(18)	Kinyakyusa	<i>pakitatu</i>	'the third day – Wednesday'
	Runyambo	<i>orwakasatu</i>	'the third day – Wednesday'
	Rwa-Meru	<i>nkonu wa kararu</i>	'the third day – Wednesday'
	Nilamba	<i>lwa katatu</i>	'the third day – Wednesday'
	Sisumbwa	<i>lwe kasatu</i>	'the third day – Wednesday'
	Sukuma	<i>lokadatu</i>	'the third day – Wednesday'
(19)	Kinyakyusa	<i>pakina</i>	'fourth day – Thursday'
	Nyamwezi	<i>lwakane</i>	'fourth day – Thursday'
	Giha	<i>kwakane</i>	'fourth day – Thursday'
	Ruhaya	<i>rwakana</i>	'fourth day – Thursday'
	Runyambo	<i>orwakana</i>	'fourth day – Thursday'
	Sisumbwa	<i>lwe kane</i>	'second day – Thursday'
	Zinza	<i>kalwakana</i>	'fourth day – Thursday'
(20)	Bena	<i>kuhani</i>	'fifth day – Friday'
	Kinyakyusa	<i>pakihaano</i>	'fifth day – Friday'
	Nyamwezi	<i>lwakatano</i>	'fifth day – Friday'
	Ruhaya	<i>rwakataanu</i>	'fifth day – Friday'
	Runyambo	<i>orwakataano</i>	'fifth day – Friday'
	Sisumbwa	<i>lwe kataano</i>	'fifth day – Friday'

The series of the numeral names of days in a week are different in Zigua, Kiswahili, Kiwoso, Hehe, and Digo due to the influence of the Islamic culture. As mentioned above, the counting in these languages begins with day one on Saturday, followed by day two on Sunday, then day three on Monday, as illustrated in (21) through (24).

In some Tanzanian Bantu languages, the section of the compounded names for Tuesday and Wednesday are loanwords from Arabic, as illustrated in (21) and (22). The name *jumanne* 'Tuesday' is a compound word made of the word *juma* (a week) and *nne* (four). Similarly, the name *jumatano* 'Wednesday' is another compound word made of the word *juma* (a week) and *tano* (five). The name *jumatano* refers to the fifth day, it means Wednesday. These compounded names occur in coastal languages such as Digo, Kiswahili, Yao and Zigua. The inland languages of Gogo, Hehe, Kiwoso and Ngoni borrowed the Kiswahili compounds as single words.

Names for Thursday are associated with borrowing of the Arabic term *Al-Khamis*, which derives from the words *khamis* (masculine) and *khamisa* (feminine). It means an important day in religion in Arabic (Falk, 1999). Since Friday is a day of

Assembly of God, Thursday becomes an important day for preparing for the day of prayers (Falk, 1999; Kihore, 1997). The name penetrated into coastal languages such as Digo, Kiswahili and Zigua. In the inland Tanzania, Tanzanian Bantu borrowed the word *alamisi* (Thursday) from Kiswahili (Falk, 1999; Kihore, 1997; Lusekelo, 2013; Mapunda & Rosendal, 2015).

Another borrowed Arabic word of *Al-Jumu'ah* (Friday) has reference to congregation prayer, as illustrated in (24). Kihore (1997) pointed out that the word penetrated to Kiswahili. Other societies which came into contact with Arabic and adopted Islam, namely Digo, Yao and Zigua borrowed the Arabic name of Friday (Nurse & Spear, 1985; Thorold, 1995; Johansen, 2002). In the interior of Tanzania, speakers of Ngoni, Gogo and Hehe borrowed the Kiswahili name of Friday (Lusekelo, 2013, 2014; Mapunda & Rosendal, 2015). The Kiswahili name *Ijumaa* (Friday) penetrated into the interior Bantu without any religious connotation (Kihore, 1997; Mapunda & Rosendal, 2015).

Two interesting points concern the names for Friday provided in example (25). On the one hand, among the Rwa-Meru inhabiting the Mount Kilimanjaro area, the name of the day is coined from the case hearing events. This means the Rwa-Meru people set aside the day for handling matters of grievance in the society. On the other hand, among the Sukuma of the Lake Victoria area, Friday is conceptualised as the returning point in the counting of the days in a week. Both points have strong connection with the conceptualisation of the next days in the week.

(21)	Kiswahili	<i>jumanne</i>	fourth day – Tuesday'
	Digo	<i>jumanne</i>	fourth day – Tuesday'
	Gogo	<i>jumaine</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumanne</i>] 'fourth day – Tuesday'
	Hehe	<i>pajumanne</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumanne</i>] 'fourth day – Tuesday'
	Kiwoso	<i>jumanne</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumanne</i>] 'fourth day – Tuesday'
	Ngoni	<i>jumanne</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumanne</i>] 'fourth day – Tuesday'
	Zigua	<i>jumanne</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumanne</i>] 'fourth day – Tuesday'
(22)	Kiswahili	<i>jumatano</i>	'fifth day – Wednesday'
	Digo	<i>jumatano</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Jumatano</i>] 'fifth day – Wednesday'
	Gogo	<i>jumatano</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Jumatano</i>] 'fifth day – Wednesday'
	Hehe	<i>pajumatano</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Jumatano</i>] 'fifth day – Wednesday'
	Kiwoso	<i>jumatano</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Jumatano</i>] 'fifth day – Wednesday'
	Ngoni	<i>jumatano</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Jumatano</i>] 'fifth day – Wednesday'
	Zigua	<i>jumatano</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Jumatano</i>] 'fifth day – Wednesday'
(23)	Kiswahili	<i>alhamisi</i>	[<Arabic: <i>al-khamis</i>] 'important religion day – Thursday'
	Digo	<i>alamisi</i>	[<[<Arabic: <i>al-khamis</i>] 'Thursday'

	Zigua	<i>alamisi</i>	[<Arabic: <i>al-khamis</i>] 'Thursday'
	Gogo	<i>halahamisi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Alhamisi</i>] 'Thursday'
	Hehe	<i>paalihamisi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Alhamisi</i>] 'Thursday'
	Kiwoso	<i>alamisi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Alhamisi</i>] 'Thursday'
	Ngoni	<i>alihamisi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Alhamisi</i>] 'Thursday'
	Sukuma	<i>halamisi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Alhamisi</i>] 'Thursday'
(24)	Kiswahili	<i>ijumaa</i>	[<Arabic: <i>Al-Jumu'ah</i>] 'assembly day – Friday'
	Digo	<i>ijumaa</i>	[<Arabic: <i>Al-Jumu'ah</i>] 'assembly day – Friday'
	Zigua	<i>ijumaa</i>	[<Arabic: <i>Al-Jumu'ah</i>] 'assembly day – Friday'
	Yao	<i>ijumaa</i>	[<Arabic: <i>Al-Jumu'ah</i>] 'assembly day – Friday'
	Gogo	<i>ijumaa</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Ijumaa</i>] 'Friday'
	Hehe	<i>pajuma</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Ijumaa</i>] 'Friday'
	Ngoni	<i>ijumaa</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>Ijumaa</i>] 'Friday'
(25)	Rwa-Meru	<i>nkonu wa shauri</i>	'the case-hearing day – Friday'
	Sukuma	<i>lonyuma</i>	'the back day – Friday'

Many fascinating points arise from the names for Saturday. In (26), two points emerge. On the one hand, Bena and Hehe construe the name of the day as the last day in the week. This means that the week among the Bena and Hehe people comprised six days, which had been common in African societies (Bartle, 1978; Zurubavel, 1985). On the other hand, speakers of Kinyakyusa and Ndali construe the day as the cleaning day in preparation of the holy or resting day (Kihore, 1997). This means that the speakers construed an end of the week during the holy day.

The examples in (27) indicate the numerical system of naming the Saturday. In Tanzanian Bantu, the numerals *kaa(n)ga* 'six' and *tandatu* 'six' are employed to lexicalised for the name of Saturday. Therefore, the sequence of days refer to Saturday as a day before the seventh day.

The Arabic word of *jouma* 'a week' is compounded with the Bantu numeral *mosi* 'first' to derive the name *jumamosi* 'Saturday'. This could be borrowed by speakers of Bantu languages located along the Indian ocean, namely Digo, Kiswahili, Yao and Zigua. In these languages, 'Saturday' is the first day in the week (Kihore, 1997). But the languages spoken inland borrowed the Kiswahili compound word *jumamosi* 'Saturday' as a single word.

(26)	Bena	<i>chakuviluka</i>	'turning point – Saturday'
	Hehe	<i>chakuviluka</i>	'turning point – Saturday'

	Kinyakyusa	<i>pamupyagilo</i>	'sweeping or cleaning day – Saturday'		Giha	<i>kuchumweru</i>	'a good day; a white day – Sunday'
	Ndali	<i>pamupyaagilo</i>	'sweeping or cleaning day – Saturday'		Rwa-Meru	<i>nkonu wa iruva</i>	'the day of God – Sunday'.
(27)	Ruhaya	<i>mukaaga</i>	'sixth day – Saturday'	(31)	Swahili	<i>jumapili</i>	'second day – Sunday'
	Runyambo	<i>orwamukaaga</i>	'sixth day – Saturday'		Zigua	<i>jumapili</i>	'second day – Sunday'
	Zinza	<i>halwamukanga</i>	'sixth day – Saturday'		Yao	<i>jumapili</i>	'second day – Sunday'
	Giha	<i>kwagatandatu</i>	'sixth day – Saturday'		Digo	<i>jumapili</i>	'second day – Sunday'
	Sisumbwa	<i>mukaanga</i>	'sixth day – Saturday'		Gogo	<i>jumapili</i>	[<Swahili: <i>jumapili</i>] 'second day – Sunday'
(28)	Swahili	<i>jumamosi</i>	'first week'		Hehe	<i>pajumapili</i>	[<Swahili: <i>jumapili</i>] 'second day – Sunday'
	Yao	<i>jumamosi</i>	'first day'		Mashami	<i>kimapili</i>	[<Swahili: <i>jumapili</i>] 'second day – Sunday'
	Zigua	<i>jumamosi</i>	'first day'				
	Digo	<i>jumamosi</i>	'first day'				
	Rwa-Meru	<i>kimaamosi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumamosi</i> 'Saturday']	(32)	Ndali	<i>pasabaato</i>	[<Hebrew: <i>ha-shabbat</i> 'Sabbath'] – Sunday
	Ngoni	<i>jumamoosi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumamosi</i> 'first day']		Ngoni	<i>dominika</i>	[<Roman Catholic: <i>Dominica day</i>] – Sunday
	Gogo	<i>jumamosi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumamosi</i> 'first day']		Ruhaya	<i>ilimansi</i>	'end of the week – Sunday'
	Mashami	<i>kimamusi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumamosi</i> 'first day']		Ruhaya	<i>dominika</i>	[French: <i>Dominiche</i> 'Sunday']
	Hehe	<i>pajumamosi</i>	[<Kiswahili: <i>jumamosi</i> 'first day']		Runyambo	<i>dominika</i>	[French: <i>Dominiche</i> 'Sunday']
					Runyambo	<i>eirimansi</i>	[French: <i>Dominiche</i> 'Sunday']

Now we come to the names for Sunday. The data in (29) shows the traditional names of the week. The names mark the final day in the series of days in a week. In (30), the speakers conceptualised the name from the supernatural power, therefore, Sunday had been a day for the prayers.

Lexical borrowing occurred as the Arabic word *jouma* 'a week' is combined with the numeral *pili* 'two' to derive the name *jumapili* 'Sunday' for the coastal languages, as shown in (31). In these languages, the day is the second one in the week. The speakers of Gogo, Hehe and Mashami borrowed the Kiswahili compound name *jumapili* 'Sunday' for the day without any semantic connotation related to the numeral.

The borrowing occurred for the names *pasabaato* 'Sunday' among the Ndali people and *dominika* 'Sunday' and *ilimansi* 'Sunday' in many other languages (32). This happened in communities surrounded by the French White Fathers who established the Roman Catholic Church around Lake Victoria in Tanzania. In other parts of Tanzania, the name *dominika* 'Sunday' is nativized (Lema, 1973; Lusekelo, 2014; Mapunda & Rosendal, 2015).

(29)	Bena	<i>nywakabaha</i>	'resting day – Sunday'
	Runyambo	<i>rubinika</i>	'obsolete name for end of the week – Sunday'
	Kwaya	<i>ekyoßwoyo</i>	'end of the week; day for prayers – Sunday'
	Zinza	<i>habwoyo</i>	'end of the week; day for prayers – Sunday'
	Nyamwezi	<i>lwanyuma</i>	'end of the week – Sunday'
(30)	Bena	<i>mlungu</i>	'end of week; day of <i>lungu</i> (God) – Sunday'
	Kinyakyusa	<i>panduungu</i>	'end of a week – Sunday'

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion about names of the days of the week provided four points worth noting. The first point concerns the availability of the traditional four-day and six-day weeks among the Tanzanian Bantu languages. Although the Arabic and European names unfold in the system, speakers of Tanzanian Bantu languages still retained the name of a day for beginning to work, the name for worship or festivity, and the name of the day for resting. The evidence in the lexical entries in this paper could help to continue research on the retained historical information in conceptualisation of the world.

The second point concerns the existing literature. In Eastern Africa, the anthropological research carried among the speakers of Chagga, Kaguru, Luo, and Nuer established the sequence of time frames as opposed to actual names of the days of the week. In this article, I outlined the actual names of the days in a seven-day week. The names are lexicalised numerically for the present-day week days and coined from the eventful occasions for the present-day weekends.

The third point surrounds the outcome of prolonged language contact. The names of the week split the Tanzanian Bantu languages into three groups. One, the speakers of the coastal languages (e.g., Daiso, Digo, Kiswahili, Makonde, Yao, and Zigua) borrowed terms related to Arabic and Islamic civilisation. This happened because these communities had had earlier and prolonged contacts with the Arabs. Two, most languages in the interior (e.g., Ruhaya, Runyambo, Ruuri, Sisumbwa, and Zinza) borrowed names of special days, mainly Sunday, from the Roman Catholic Church. Three, a number of languages in the interior of Tanzania (e.g., Bena, Giha, Hehe, Kiwoso,

Mashami, and Ngoni) borrowed words for the special days, mainly Friday and Sunday, without any religious connotations.

The last point concerns the number of days in the week across Tanzanian Bantu languages. A small corner of evidence shows the presence of four-day week as in Digo and the six-day week as in Bena, Hehe, Kinyakyusa and Ndali. But there is ample evidence to substantiate that the seven-day week eroded the traditional weeks. In fact, based on the theory of language change, it is plausible to argue that some Bantu languages retained sections of the traditional series of the days of the week even though additive borrowing occurred. In many Tanzanian Bantu languages, substitutive borrowing occurred and the Arabic-cum-Kiswahili terms replaced a large part of the native system of numerical names of the days of the week. Therefore, since both additive and substitutive borrowing occurred, the number of days in the traditional week were disrupted.

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