

# CONSTITUENT ORDER IN (PRE-)PROTO BANTU NOMINAL COMPOUNDS

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- “complex nominals”
  - [NPrefix<sub>1</sub>-Medial-NPrefix<sub>2</sub>-NStem], where the medial means something like ‘owner of...’, ‘having...’, ‘belonging to...’
    - \*-*nà-nè-cí* [-owner-9-land] ‘owner of the country’
  - corresponds to the **[NG]** order, but no connective relator
  - endophoric compounds
  - Lower level local reconstructions? None is in BLR3.

- nominal “compound stems” where  $N_2$  classifies  $N_1$ 
  - $[N\text{Prefix}_1-N\text{Stem}_1-N\text{Prefix}_2-N\text{Stem}_2]$   
\* *-kù mí-tù-píà* [-girl-13-fire] ‘fire-fly’
  - $[N\text{Prefix}_1-N\text{Stem}_1-(N\text{Prefix}_2)-N\text{Stem}_2]$  – DIM with  $N\text{Stem}_1$   
\* *-(j)ánà* ‘child’  
\* *-ánà-(m̃)-búđĩ* [-child-9-goat] ‘young of goat’
  - corresponds to the **[NG]** order, but no connective relator
  - endophoric compounds
  - Lower level local reconstructions? None is in BLR3.

- nominal “compound stems” where  $N_2$  qualifies  $N_1$ 
  - [NPrefix<sub>1</sub>-NStem<sub>1</sub>-NStem<sub>2</sub>]
  - Common [NStem<sub>2</sub>]: \**kádi* ‘woman’, -*dúmè* ‘man’, \*-*ánà* ‘child’, \*-*kúdú* ‘grown up’.  
  
\*-*búđi-ánà* [-goat-child] ‘young goat’
  - [NAdj] order
  - endophoric compounds
  - Lower level local reconstructions? None is in BLR3.

- nominal “compound stems” with a VStem as  $N_1$ 
  - [NPrefix<sub>1</sub>-VStem-NPrefix<sub>2</sub>-NStem]
  - Usually, VO but sometimes VS
    - \* *-búmbà-kà-jùmbá* [-mould-12-house] ‘mason wasp’
    - \* *-pítà-à-kímà* [pass-9-monkey] ‘tree sp.’
  - Can be analyzed as [NG] with VStem\NMLZ classified by N, but no connective relator
  - Exophoric or endophoric compounds depending on the meaning of the NMLZ
  - Lower level local reconstructions? None is in BLR3.

- Endophoric nominal compounds with NStems as heads
- Exophoric/endophoric nominal compounds with VStems\NMLZ as heads
- Head-initial: [Head Modifier]
  - Typically, as [NG] with classifying modification relation
  - Sometimes, as [NAdj] with qualifying modification relation
- In [NG], no connective relator → The entrenchment of a connective relator in the Genitive construction postdates PB?
- The absence of NPrefix on N<sub>2</sub> used as Adj may be due to frequency effects (Meeussen 1967:96), but may also be a remnant of the pre-PB situation
- None is in BLR3 → Lower level local reconstructions?

Like in BGR's PB...

- Nominal compounding is not particularly productive in modern Bantu
- Head-initial constituent order within NP: [Head Modifier]
  - [Noun–Genitive]
  - [Noun–Adjective ~ Relative ~ Numeral ~ Demonstrative]
  - [Adposition–Noun]

Unlike in BGR's PB...

- The use of a connective relator in the Genitive construction is well entrenched (Van de Velde 2013)

- A number of nominal compounds with **Genitive-Noun** structure can be identified in PB (BLR3)
- Various aspects of these compounds suggest that this construction was not productive in PB anymore and the specific compounds discussed are **remnants from a pre-PB stage** (some much higher node within Benue-Congo)
- The **Genitive-Noun construction** itself must be a **retention** from Proto Benue-Congo and ultimately Proto Niger-Congo.



PB \**gùn.dà* 'forest, garden, luxuriant vegetation' (N 3/4, (5/6), (9/10)) < \*\**gǔn* 'tree' + *n-dá* 'house, hut'

- Compare Mbula (Jarawan Bantu) *ndà: ngùn* 'forest', lit. 'room/hut/container of tree' (compare *ndà: kà:fé* 'sheath of a sword')
- PB tone: sometimes HL reflexes Bakweri A *m-ǒndà* 'farm', Bomboma C *ngóndò* 'forest'
- The root \*\**gǔn* < pre-PB \*\**gǔn* well represented in BC and beyond
- BLR3 PB \**kúnì* (VAR \**kûi*) 'firewood'
  - Orungu *ò-góní / ì-kóní* (3~14 / 10b)
  - The final *-ì* in may be related to the PB \**jíkò* 'fireplace' and \**jíkì* 'smoke'

PB \**gùn.dà* 'forest, garden, luxuriant vegetation' (N 3/4, (5/6), (9/10)) < \*\**gŭn* 'tree' + *nè-dá* 'house, hut'

- Plateau (Blench 2012): Hasha *ĩ-kōn* 'tree', *nìrì.kōn* 'root', and several other languages ("This root is widespread in Niger-Congo, often meaning 'firewood'")
- Jukunoid (Shimizu 1980): PJ \**kun* 'tree', \**kùŋ* 'farm', PCJ \**kwán* 'forest' (from **the same compound?**)
- Proto-Ukaan (Abiodun 2000): \**àhṹnĩ* 'tree'
- Proto Mande: \**gò(ó)ŋ* 'tree, bush, stick'

PB \**gùn.dà* 'forest, garden, luxuriant vegetation' (N 3/4, (5/6), (9/10)) < \*\**gũn* 'tree' + *n-dá* 'house, hut'

- The word \**n-dá* 'house, hut' related to PB:
  - PB \**dá* 'village' (N 14/6)
  - PB \**dágò* ~ VAR \**dákò* ~ VAR \**dábò* 'house' (compare also PB \**júbò* ~ VAR \**júgò* 'house' and \**jù* ~ VAR *jó* 'house')
- Mbula (Jarawan) *ndà:* 'room/hut/container'
- Bena-Yungur *dã:-rá* 'verandah'
- ? Bandaic (*â-*)*ndà* 'house'
- The second element is probably **not** PB \**n-dà* 'abdomen, intestines; pregnancy; inside' (N 9)

PB \**j̀̀mbá* 'house' (N 9/10) < \*\**j̀̀* 'house' + *m̀-bá* 'space around, outside of something' = 'space around the house' > 'house and its yard' > 'house'

- The first stem: BLR3 gives \**j̀̀* (9/10) ~ VAR *jó* (9/10, (9/6)) 'house' plus...
  - PB \**júbò* ~ VAR \**júgò* 'house' (compare PB \**dágò* ~ VAR \**dákò* ~ VAR \**dábò* 'house')
  - PB \**dá* 'village' (N 14/6)
- The second stem: PB \**bá* 'enclosure, house, yard' (9/10)
- ? Babanki (Grassfields) *kàbáŋ* 'outside'
- Samba Leko postposition *bā* 'on, at'

PB \**gàndá* 'house; village; chief's enclosure' (N 9/10) < \*\**gàŋ(-à)* 'chief (sp.)' + *n-dá* 'house, hut'

- The first stem is from the earlier verb 'protect, guard':
  - Possibly reflected in PB \**gàngà* 'medicine-man' (N 1/2, 9/10)
- Cross languages: Obolo-Adoni *òkáàŋ* 'owner' (and *òkáàŋ àmà* 'chief, king = owner of the village') from *kááŋ* 'have, get'
- Tiba (Gaa) (Northern Bantoid) *gàŋ* 'chief'
- Adamawa pool of BC: Karang *gàŋ* 'tyrant', Samba Leko *gà(à).d* 'chief', Tupuri *wàŋ* 'chief', Bena *gwâ:-rà* 'settlement', Dza *káŋ* 'protect'
- ? Gbaya (Yaayuwée) *wàn* 'chief, owner'
- Proto Mande: \**gàáŋ* 'protect, guard'



PB \**gàndá* ‘house; village; chief’s enclosure’ (N 9/10) < \*\**gàṇ(-à)* ‘chief (sp.)’ + *n-dá* ‘house, hut’

- The first stem is **NOT(!)** related to:
  - Orungu *ò-gá* / *à-gá* ‘a chief’ (1/2)
  - Yoruba *ògá* ‘boss, superior’
  - Mbum *gáṇ-à* ‘chief, ruler; government; (n) rule; sceptre’, *gáṇ* ‘rule, dominate’
- This other stem is \**gáṇ* ‘be high’:
  - Mbum *gáṇ-à* ‘height’, *gáṇ* ‘be high’
  - Karang *gāṇ* ‘be high’, *gāṇ* ‘boss, superior’ vs. *gàṇ* ‘tyrant’

PB \**búndá* 'lumbar region; back; belly' (N 9/11) (Eastern Bantu), zone J also *bòndò* 'flank, abdomen' < \**bún(-ò)* 'waist' + *n-dà* 'inside' = 'the inside of the waist'

- The first stem is PB \**búnù* 'waist; DER: buttock' (N 7/8), VAR \**búnò*.
  - Compare Proto Mande \**bòon* 'waist, loins' (reflexes 'belly', 'womb', 'navel', 'back', 'bottom, unerside')
- The second stem is PB \**dà* 'abdomen, intestines; pregnancy; inside' (N 9)



A number of compounds with **\*\**tí*** related to PB **\**tí*** 'tree, stick'  
 (N 3/4)

- PB **\**títú*** 'forest, thicket' (N 3/4) < **\*\**tí*** 'tree, stick' + **\*\**tú***  
 'accumulation, cluster, heap' = 'accumulation of tree(s)'
  - Compare PB *\*tù.ut* ~ *\*tù.t* ~ *\*tù.p* '(vi) swell', *\*tù.ut*  
 'accumulate', *\*tù.um* 'swell, pile up', *\*tù.t* 'heap up'
- PB **\**tínà*** 'root, base of tree trunk; banana plant' (5/6, 7/8,  
 (9/6), 9/10) < **\*\**tí*** 'tree, stick' + **\*\**nà*** 'limb'
  - **\*\**nà*** is a NMLZ of the verb **\*\**nà*** 'stretch (out)' and also  
 found in the PB compound **\**nà.mà*** 'limb' (N 7/8)



The **2 opening degree** of the vowel in PB \**tí* 'tree, stick' is due to a fusion with a suffix of a 2 or 3 degree, viz.  $**tí-í(\sim é) > *tí$

- Compare 'tree' in the Lower Cross languages (Connell 1991:335)

Anaang	é-tó
Ebughu	ái-tié
Efai	í-tí
Efik	é-tó
Ekit	é-tú
Enwang	í-tí
Etebi	à-dí-tió
Ibibio	é-tó / é-tí
Ibino	í-tió
Ibuoro	é-tó
Iko	í-tió
Ilue	é-tí
ItuMbuso	é-tó
Obolo	ú-tĩ / ú-tiè
Okobo	é-tĩ
Oro	é-tú / n-tí-
Uda	í-tí
Ukwa	é-tó
Usakade	ê-tĩ / n-
PLC	*é-tié

PB \**budu* 'dust' (BLR3: zones A C; no class assigned) < \**bú* 'ground' (BLR3 'soil, ashes; dust' (N 3, 5, 6)) + \**tù* 'powder' (BLR3 'flour', DER 'dust' (N (3), 14)) = 'powder of the ground'

- Proto Central Jukunoid (Shimizu 1980) \*-*but* 'dust'
- Vute *mvútúb* 'dust' (Thwing 1987:76 who relates it PB \**bú*)
- Bena *bùt-ò* (from \**bút-ò*) 'ground, earth, soil; farm'

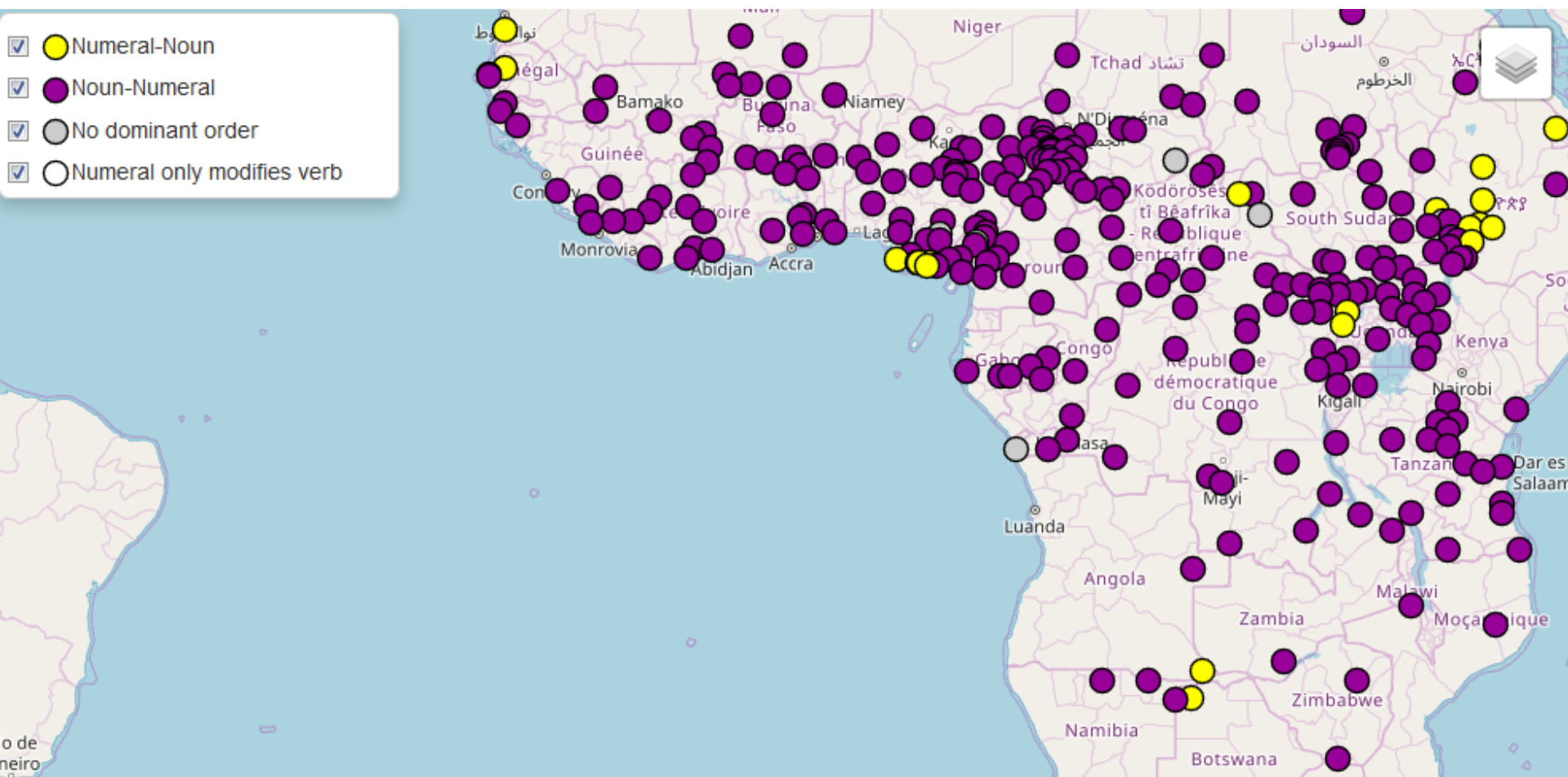
- A number of nominal compounds with **Genitive-Noun** structure can be identified in PB (BLR3)
- In several cases, there seems to be **no class prefix on the head noun**. The compound as a whole takes the class prefix.
  - A clear counterexample, \**jùmbá* ‘house’
- In several cases, the compound appears to **take the class of the head noun**
  - Compounds with *n-dá* ‘house, hut’ (9) as the head
  - The compound with \**dà* ‘inside’ (9) as the head
  - The compound with \*\**nà* ‘limb’ (?7)

- The specific compounds discussed are **remnants from a pre-PB stage** (some higher node within Benue-Congo)
  - their small number
  - unusual constituent order
  - sometimes, somewhat complicated tonal and segmental developments
  - cognates for some of these compounds have been identified (far) beyond Bantu.
- The **Genitive-Noun construction** itself must be a **retention** from Proto Benue-Congo and ultimately Proto Niger-Congo.

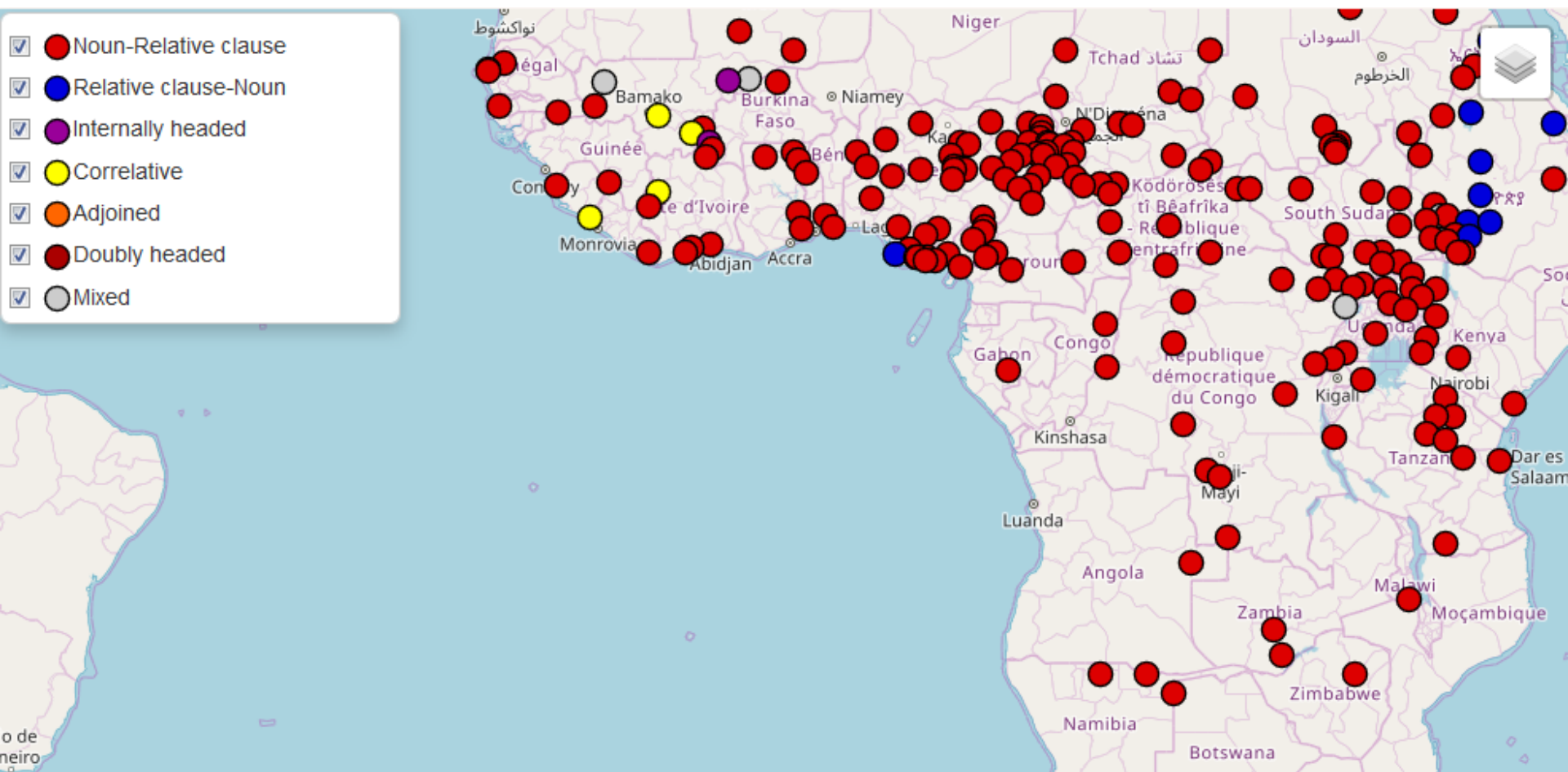


- Benue-Congo (including most of the Adamawa pool) largely **head-initial** nominal constituent order [Noun Modifier]
  - [N Num], [N RelCl], [N Dem], [N Adj] – like the rest of Niger-Congo and most Sub-Saharan Africa
  - [N Gen] (and [Adp N]) – like Chadic, Ubangian pool, Central Sudanic, and Atlantic pool
- The rest of Niger-Congo (including Mande) is largely **mixed** nominal constituent order:
  - Genitive: [**Gen** N]
  - [N Num], [N RelCl], [N Dem], [N Adj]
  - Adpositions: many [N Adp], many mixed with [Adp N]

## Order of Numeral and Noun (Dryer 2013, WALS 89A)

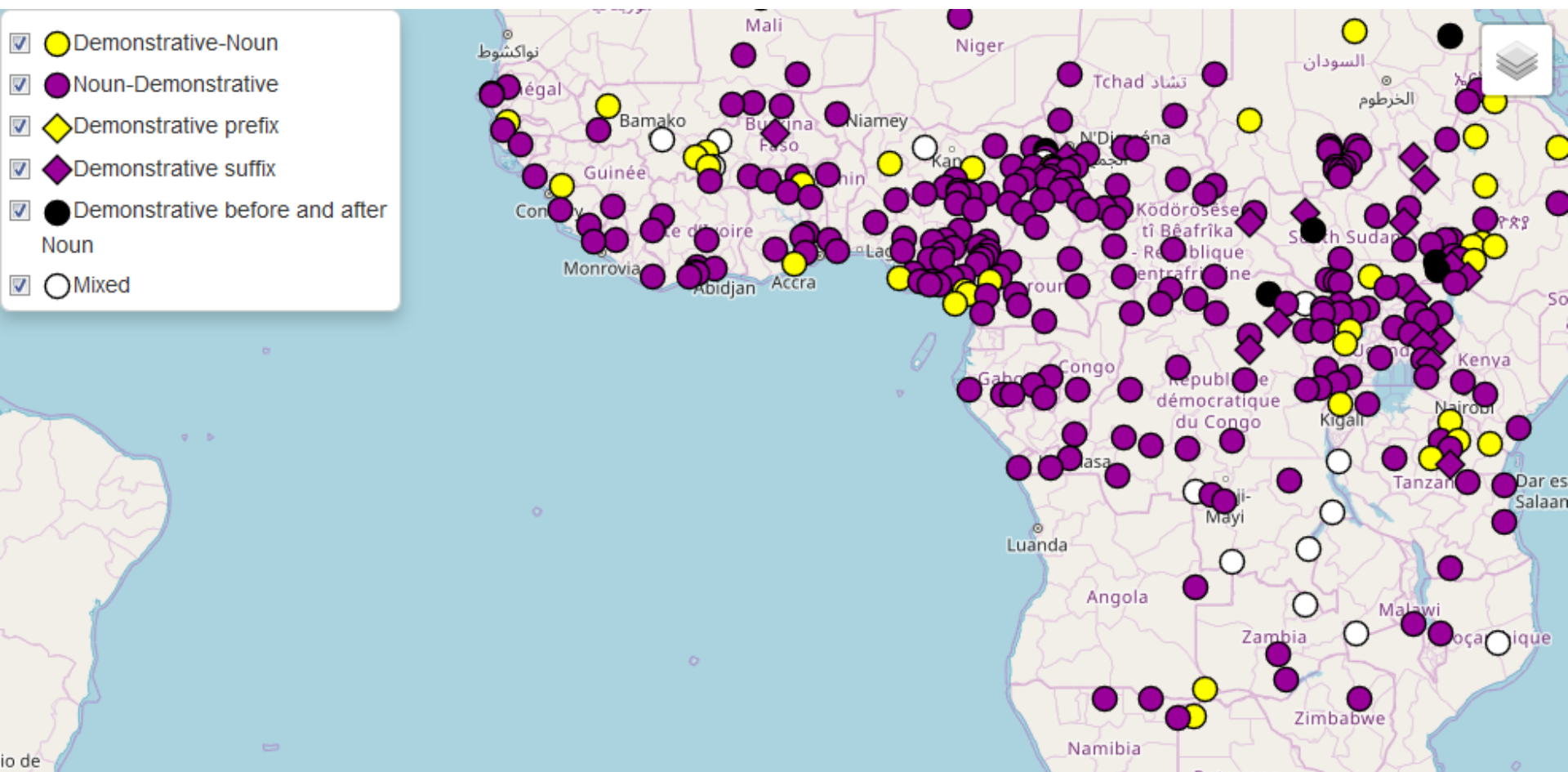


## Order of Relative Clause and Noun (Dryer 2013, WALS 90A)





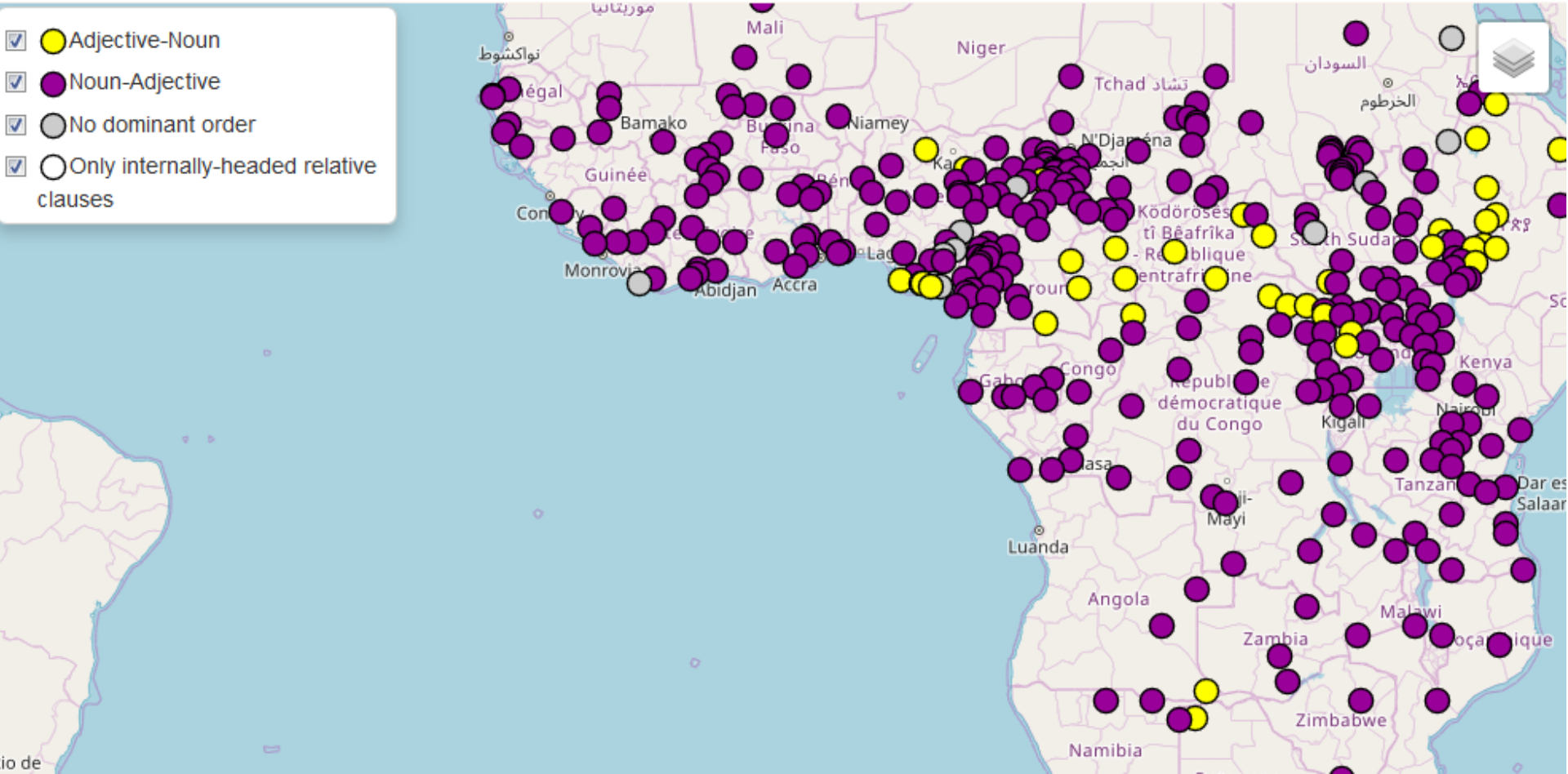
## Order of Demonstrative and Noun (Dryer 2013, WALS 88A)



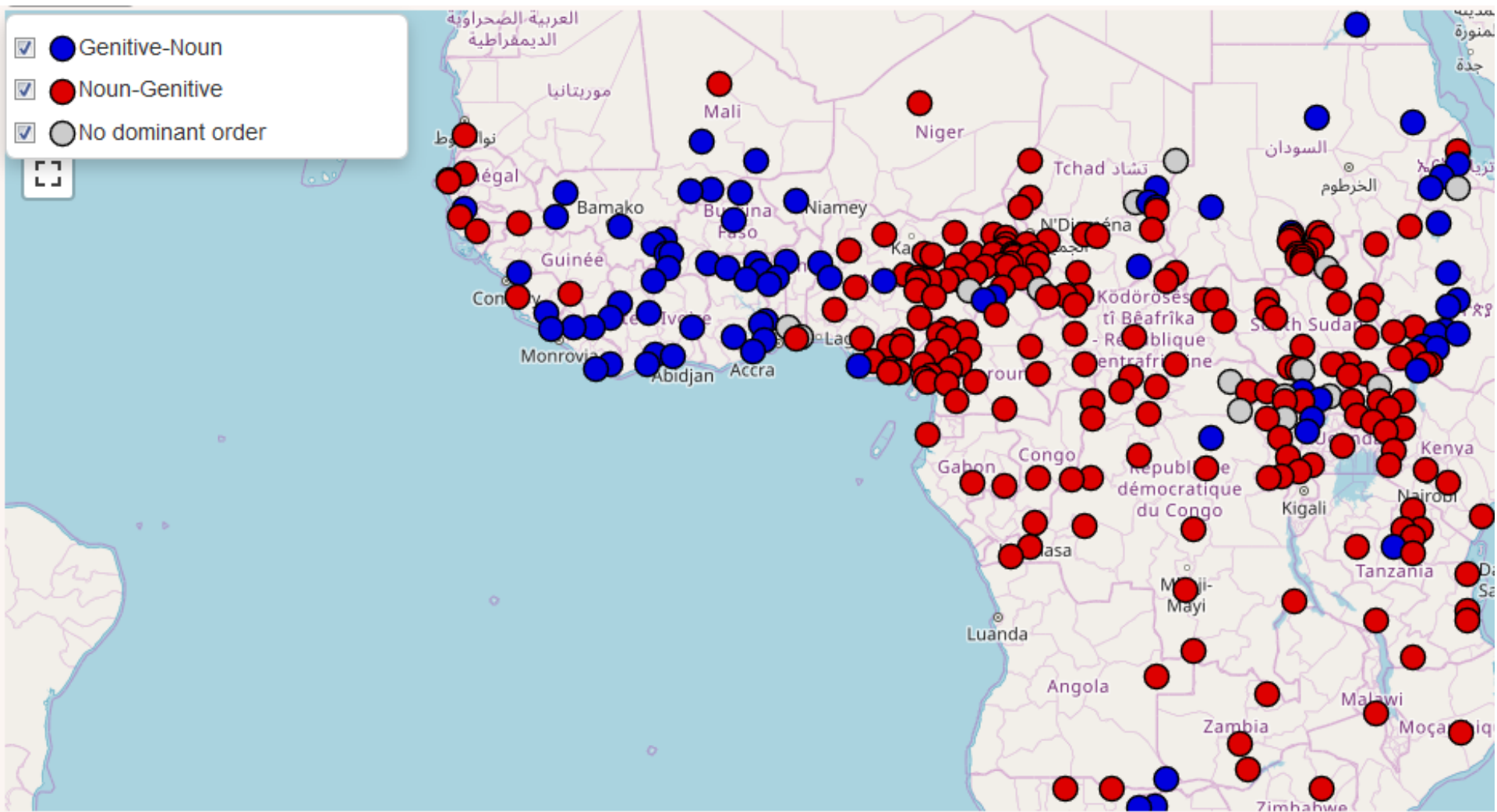


## Order of Adjective and Noun (Dryer 2013, WALS 87A)

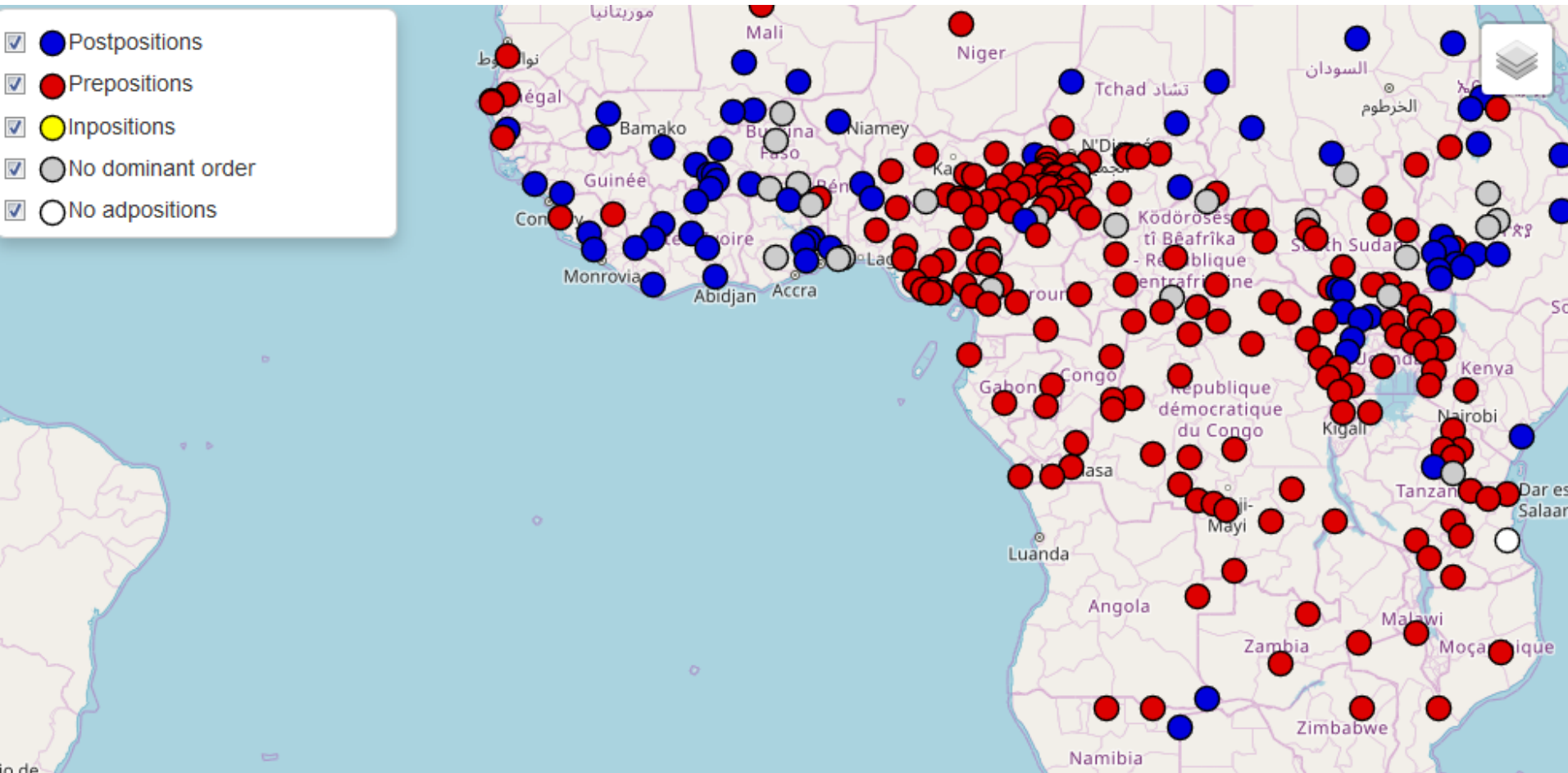
(also see Van de Velde 2011, 2013 on Possessee-like Modifier Construction, aka Dependency Reversal)



## Order of Genitive and Noun (Dryer 2013, WALS 86A)



## Order of Adposition and Noun Phrase (Dryer 2013, WALS 85A)





- Most of Benue-Congo [N Gen] vs. most of the rest of Niger-Congo [Gen N]... What is was the order in the proto language?
- The **Genitive-Noun construction** itself must be a **retention** from Proto Benue-Congo and ultimately Proto Niger-Congo, where the order was largely **mixed**:
  - Genitive: [**Gen N**]
  - [N Num], [N RelCl], [N Dem], [N Adj]
  - Adpositions: [N Adp], with a few [Adp N]