



A linguistic and anthropological documentation of Tima



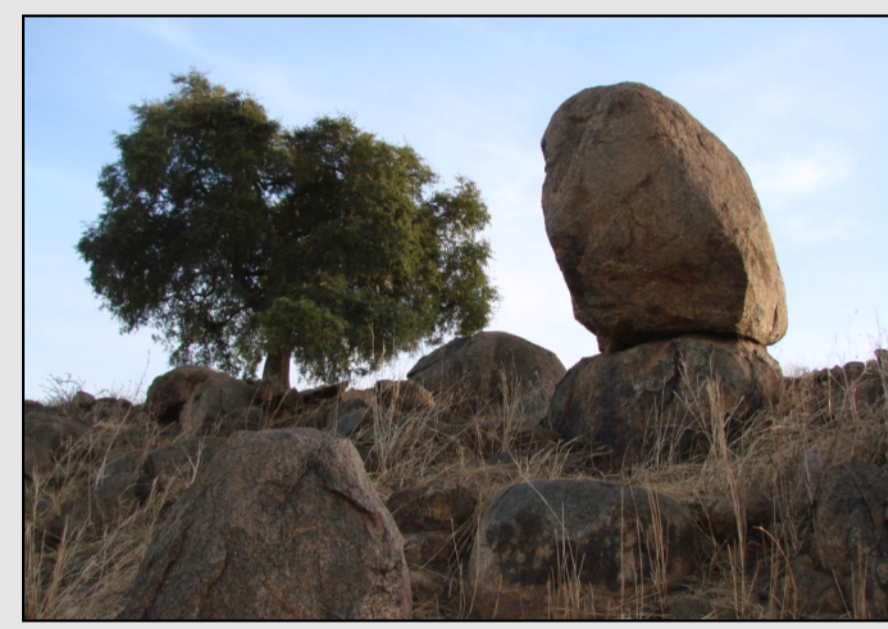
Tima as well as its neighbours Katla and Julud constitute a small language group situated in the west of the Nuba Mountains in the south west of Sudan (after the separation of South-Sudan). Whether these languages are in fact part of the Kordofanian cluster or whether they are an earlier off-shoot of Niger-Congo (Niger-Kordofanian) still has to be found out by comparing data from the respective languages.



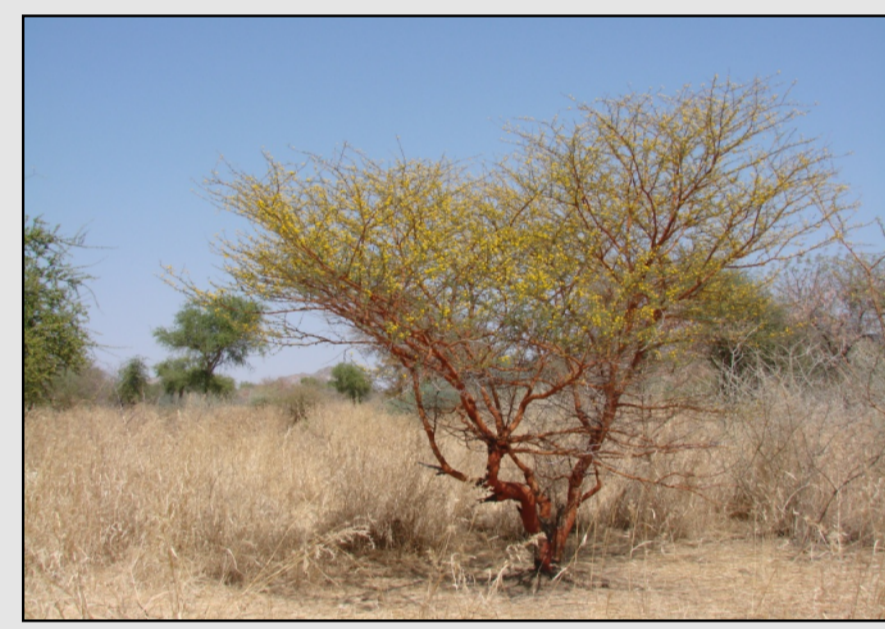
Tima: after the rains



Tima: during the dry season



In the mountain



Hàñ kirdí - red Acacia seyal

Recent estimates suggest roughly 7000 speakers, most of them living in the Tima area (lùmùrik), with a reasonably big community in the outskirts of Khartoum and some small families living elsewhere in the country. Mainly due to the spreading of Arabic as the lingua franca (also being one of the two official languages in Sudan, the other one being English), the Tima language (tàmáá dùmùrik) as well as other languages in the Nuba Mountains are highly endangered.

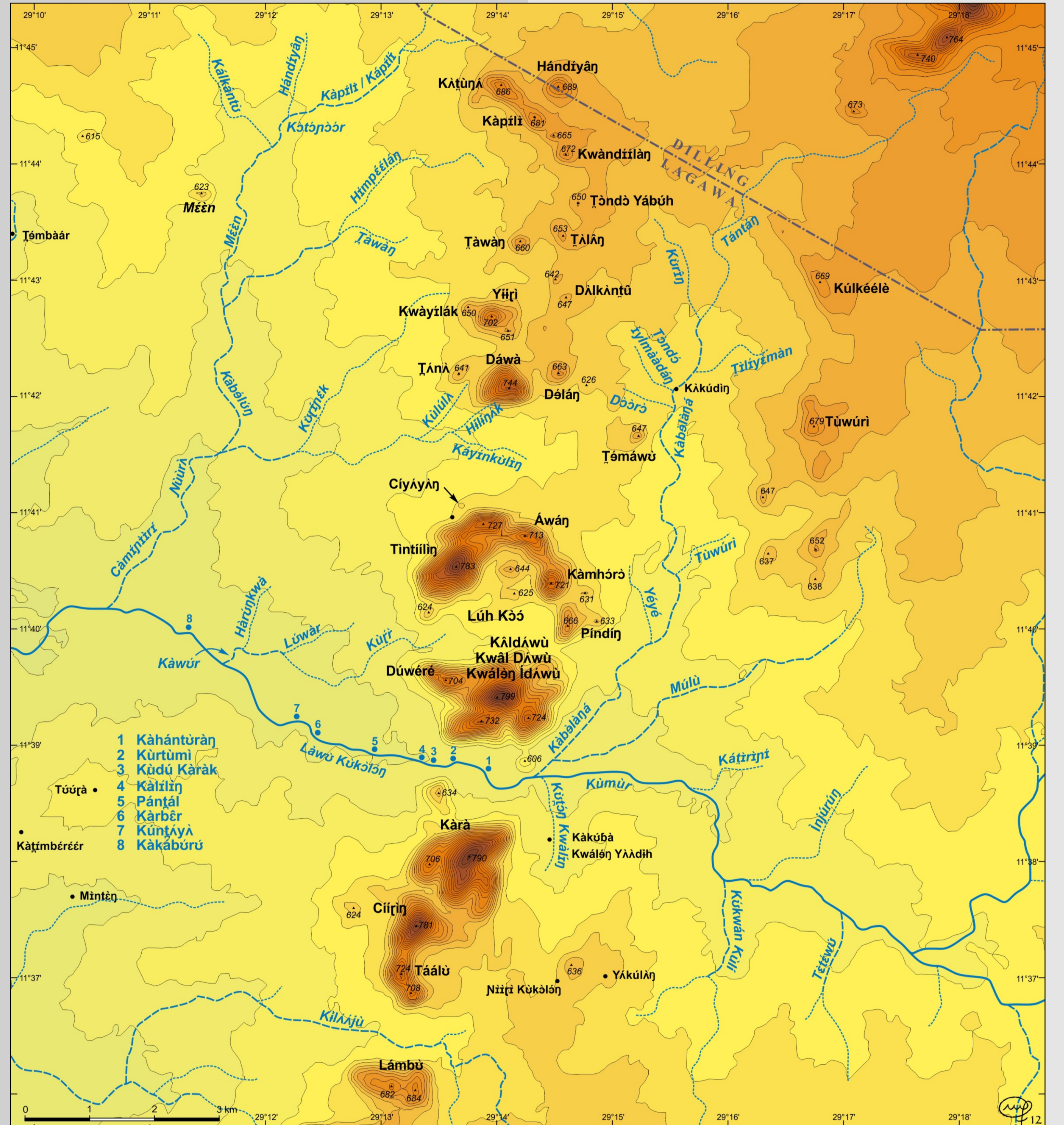
One of the central aims of the documentation project for the Tima language is to provide a practical multimedia dictionary. For this purpose hundreds of photos have been taken to illustrate e.g. words related to



Old woman



End of school



The Tima area with its hills and riverbeds

the material culture, the plants and the places that are important to the Tima people (imùrik). Audiofiles of virtually all entries in the dictionary plus example sentences complete the outcome.

A two years extension made an ethnological overview possible, covering most areas of nowadays daily life and refer-

ring to the past where former practises deviate from present ones. Numerous photos and videos depict the culture in its various aspects, including the form of settlements, agricultural methods, and different festivities, among others.

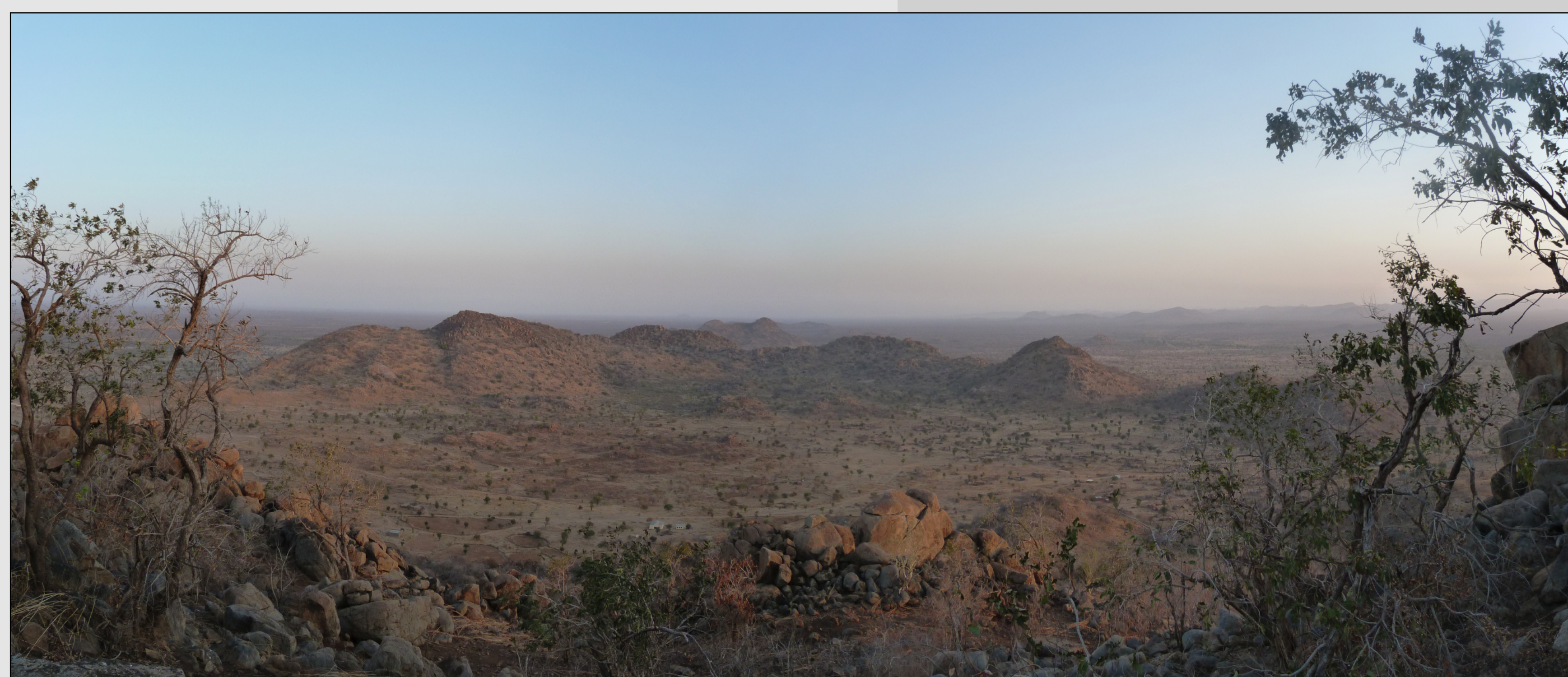
Another request that was couched by the Tima people concerned the produc-



Preparations for the coming growing period



Children on their way back from the well



Lúh Kóó - the centre of the Tima area

tion of primary readers to be able to teach the children how to write and to read their mothertongue. Three readers have been designed in the course of the past five years, two of them are already used in the homeland, while a third one is in print and a fourth one under construction.

CONTACT ADDRESS

Prof. Dr. Gerrit J. Dimmendaal
 Institut für Afrikanistik
 Universität zu Köln
 Meister-Ekkehart-Str. 7
 50923 Köln
 Germany