



**MORE  
SWAHILI  
PROVERBS  
FROM  
EAST AFRICA**

*L. Kalugila*

*A. Y. Lodhi*

**METHALI  
ZAIDI  
ZA KISWAHILI  
TOKA  
AFRIKA  
MASHARIKI**

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ZAIDI ZA  
KISWAHILI  
TOKA AFRIKA  
MASHARIKI

by  
Leonidas Kalugila

na  
Leonidas Kalugila

PREFACE AND SUPPLEMENTS

by  
Abdulaziz Y. Lodhi ✓

DIBAJI NA NYONGEZA

na  
Abdulaziz Y. Lodhi

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## SHUKRANI

Kwa mkusanyo huu wa pili wa methali toka Afrika Mashariki, nawashukuru tena wazazi wangu, mke wangu na marafiki wengi walionisaidia katika kazi ya kukusanya methali hizi na kuzisahihisha. Namshukuru sana pia Bi Jean M. Gray, B.A., T.K., aliyefanya kazi kubwa ya kusahihisha tafsiri ya Kiingereza. Namshukuru sana ndugu Abdulaziz Y. Lodhi, Mwalimu Mwandamizi wa Kiswahili katika Chuo Kikuu cha Uppsala, Sweden, aliyetoa methali nyingi kwa mkusanyo huu; ni kama tumeandika kitabu hiki pamoja. Amefanya kazi kubwa ya kusahihisha methali hizi katika Kiswahili na tafsiri yake ya Kiingereza. Namshukuru sana kwa kukubali kuandika Dibaji ya kitabu hiki na kutoa Nyongeza juu ya "Utunqo Wa Mithali Za Kiswahili" na "Lugha Na Utamaduni Wa Kiswahili". Nina matumaini kuwa maelezo yake yatatia moyo wanaosoma na kufanya utafiti wa Kiswahili ambacho sasa ni moja-wapo ya lugha kubwa za dunia.

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## DIBAJI

Kusanyo hili la pili la mithali kutoka Afrika Mashariki lililofanywa na Mchungaji Dr. L. Kalugila lina namna mbili za mithali: mithali zenye asili katika Kiswahili na mithali nyinginezo kutoka katika lugha mbalimbali kama Kihaya, Kiganda, Kichagga na Kigikuyu. Baadhi ya mithali zina asili ya Kiarabu au lugha za kihindi na zimeingizwa katika Kiswahili na kutumiwa na wengi wakitumia Kiswahili.

Wakati mwingine mithali za Kiswahili huonyesha maana za kinyume k.m. Mvumilivu hula mbivu na Mvumilivu hula mbovu. Mtu aweza kusikia pia mtungo wa namna ya tatu wa mchanganyiko, Mvumilivu hula mbivu au mbovu.

Mithali za Kiswahili, na pia katika lugha nyingi za kiasia, hutumiwa mara kwa mara kwa namna tafauti na zile zilizoingizwa katika makusanyo ya mithali kwa kutegemea habari inayosemwa juu yake, k.m. Tumeshakula ng'ombe mzima, tushindwe na mkia?, Tumeshamla ng'ombe mzima tusishindwe na mkia!, Umeshakula ng'ombe mzima, mbona unashindwa na mkia? Mithali hutafautiana kwa namna fulani lakini zaonyesha uhusiano wa matumizi yake katika Kiswahili, k.m. Huwezi kumwashia jirani taa na hali kwako kuna giza, na Usiache kwako umezimika ukaenda kuwasha kwa jirani.

Kuonyesha wingi wa utumizi wa mithali na misemo ya kimithali katika fasihi ya Kiswahili, tunaweza kutaja riwaya ya Shaaban Robert UTUBORA MKULIMA (Nelson, Daressalaam, 1968. k.91). Ni riwaya fupi kuhusu Utubora, karani mwenye elimu na mshahara mzuri anayerudi Unguja baada ya kupigana Vita Vikuu vya Pili huko Burma. Anamkuta Sheha, mchumba wake wa awali, ameolewa na mtu mwingine tajiri. Utubora anahamia Mrima (Tanzania Bara) kwenye mji wa zamani wa mamake alikozaliwa na anakuwa mkulima wa makataa. Hapo anasalitika na Radhia, binti wa Liwali wa mji wa Busutamu, Mrima. Radhia naye anavunja uchumba wake na Makuu ambaye ni rafiki tajiri wa zamani wa Utubora. Sheha, ambaye pia ni binamu wa Radhia, anamwacha mumewe na kwenda Busutamu.

Baada ya wingi wa heri na shari, kisa hiki kinaishia vema. Utubora na Radhia wanaoana na kurithi mali yote ya Bimkubwa, yule bibi kizee mtawa wa pale aliyefanana na Miss Havisham wa riwaya maarufu ya Charles Dickens iitwayo GREAT EXPECTATIONS wa mwaka wa 1861.

Katika riwaya hii ya kurasa 91, Maalim Shaaban anatumia si chini ya mithali 20 halisi zilizoandikwa mahali pengine, mithali 9 zingine, na kiasi cha misemo 20 ya kimithali yenye hekima. Kwenye ukurasa wa 50 kwa mfano anasema, Mapenzi si shurua - waweza kuwa nayo zaidi ya mara moja. ....Kila mtu husalitika katika mapenzi zaidi ya mara moja. Na baadaye, kinyume cha beti za kiingereza za Lord Byron katika shairi lake la "First Love" (=Mapenzi ya awali), beti zenye majonzi ya makumbuko, Maalim Shaaban asema, Na mapenzi ya mwisho ndiyo yaliyo bora! Maneno kama haya yadondolewa sana na watu, na yanageuka kuwa mithali halisi.

Sehemu Ya Pili ya kazi hii ni ya vitendawili ambavyo, kama mithali, pia vinahizinia falsafa na hekima ya vizazi vilivyo-pita. Fasihi ya ushairi wa kiswahili imejaa vitendawili ambavyo havijashughulikiwa barābara katika kazi yoyote. Jaribu la Mchungaji L. Kalugila ni hatua moja zaidi mbele kuelekea huko.

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Katika shairi la "Mithali ni mafunzo ya malenga", beti za 9, 10 na 11 zinahusika na utenzi mrefu (wa beti 378 wa Bi Leyla Nassor Seif wa Zanzibar) "Nia njema tabibu, nia mbaya huharibu" katika Jarida la KISWAHILI, Toleo 47/2, 1977, Daressalaam. Katika kusisitiza kwamba nia mbaya huharibu, na kueleza jinsi watu wasiwe na imani na mama wa kambo, mtungaji anasahau kwamba Harubu anamwoa Hawa (ambaye ni kinyume kabisa cha Aziza, mke wake wa kwanza mwenye uzuri wa kipeo) ili tu kujipatia

mtoto, au watoto. Nia yake Harubu haikuwa njema hata kidogo, na kwamba mwishowe Hawa ataharibu mambo na kujiletea maafa wote waliohusika, hayo yalitarajiwa. Na katika ubeti wa 12, Ahmed ni Ahmed Salim Faris, na Habibu ni Habib Ahmed Salim, wote wa Mambasa. Ubeti huu unahusika na tungo zao zilizo-chapishwa katika jarida la LUGHA, Toleo 1, 1977, Uppsala.

Katika tafsiri ya Kiingereza kutoka Kiswahili, viwakilishi vya he, him, himself vinasimamia pia she, her, herself. Mahali ambapo ni lazima, viwakilishi vya kike vimetumiwa kuonyesha kuwa mithali inayohusika inasemea wanawake tu.

Abdulaziz Yusuf Lodhi  
Mhadhiri wa Kiswahili  
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Chuo Kikuu cha Uppsala  
Juni 1978, Julai 1980.

## PREFACE

This second collection of proverbs from East Africa by Pastor Leonidas Kalugila consists of both original Swahili proverbs and renditions to Swahili of proverbs from diverse East African languages such as Haya, Ganda, Chagga and Gikuyu. Some are also originally Arabic or Indic rendered to Swahili and used by many Swahili-speakers.

Swahili proverbs are at times contradictory as in The patient one eats the ripe fruit and The patient one eats the rotten fruit. A proverb in Swahili, and indeed in many African languages, is frequently used in forms other than the idiomatic one given in proverb collections depending on the context, e.g. We have eaten the whole cow, shall we be defeated by the tail?, We have eaten the whole cow, we should not be defeated by its tail!, You have eaten the whole cow, how come you are defeated by its tail? There are also some different but very similar proverbs which show the commonness and frequency of occurrence of proverbs in Swahili e.g. You cannot bring light to your neighbour when it is dark at your own place, and, You should not leave the fire at your own home extinguished and go to make fire at your neighbour's home.

To show the frequency of occurrence of proverbs and proverb-like expressions in Swahili literature, we can look at Shaaban Robert's UTUBORA MKULIMA (Nelson, Daressalaam, 1968, 91pp). It is a short novel about Utubora, an educated and well-paid clerk, who returning home to Zanzibar after fighting as a volunteer in Burma during the 2nd World War, finds his fiancée Sheha married to a rich man. He moves to the Mainland (of Tanzania) and becomes a farm-labourer in the old village of his late mother. There he falls in love with Radhia, the only daughter of the village Headman. Radhia in turn breaks her engagement with Makuu, an old rich friend of Utubora. Sheha, who is also a cousin of Radhia, leaves her husband and moves to this village of Busutamu (=Sweet Kisses). After many ups and downs, the story ends happily with Utubora and Radhia getting



married and inheriting all the wealth of Bimkubwa (=the old lady), an old recluse of Miss Havisham in Charles Dickens' GREAT EXPECTATIONS (1861).

In this short novel of 91 pages, Maalim Shaaban uses not less than 20 authentic and documented proverbs, 9 other proverbs, and about 20 proverb-like wise expressions. On page 50 for example, he says, "Love is not (like) measles - you can get it more than once." And later, contrary to Lord Byron's nostalgic verses on "First Love", Shaaban says, "And the last love indeed is the best of all!" Such words are frequently quoted by many people and they are becoming defacto proverbs.

Part Two of this work consists of riddles which, like proverbs, also store the philosophy and wisdom of the past generations. Swahili poetic literature is full of riddles which have not yet been properly treated in any work. Pastor Kalugila's attempt is one more step forward in this direction.

In Part Three I have given a short introduction to the poetics of proverbs and some notes on the Swahili language and culture. The reader is here referred to the many publications of Professor Jan Knappert (a great authority on Swahili literature), and the late Professor Wilfred W. Whiteley and Sheikh John W.T. Allen, some of whose works are mentioned in the Notes and Bibliography.

In the poem "Proverbs are the teachings of the bards", stanzas 9, 10 and 11 refer to the 378 quatrains long narrative poem of Leyla Nassor Seif of Zanzibar (in KISWAHILI Vol. 47/2, 1977, Daressalaam). In trying to justify that an evil purpose is destructive and rejuvenate the common distrust of step-mothers, she forgets that Harubu, the man in the story, marries the evil woman Hawa (= Eve), who was in complete contrast to Aziza, his first wife of a paragon who was childless, only to become a father. Harubu's purpose was not good at all, and that Hawa should bring calamity in the end was not unforeseen. Ahmedi and Habibu in stanza 12 are my friends Ahmed S. Faris and Habib A. Salim respectively, both of Mombasa. The reference is to their poems published in LUGHA Vol. 1, 1977, Uppsala.

In the English translation of the Swahili, the pronouns he, him, and himself stand also for she, her and herself respectively. Where necessary, the later terms are used to specify that the proverb in question concerns women only.

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June 1978, July 1980.

## MITHALI NI MAFUNZO YA MALENGA

- 1 Mithali zina kiini, zina ilimu busara,  
Na mambo yenye kipini huziamsha fikara,  
Nadharia akilini kuathiri mazingara.  
Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 2 Ni mafunzo yafunzwayo kwa usemi na mkarara,  
Na kwa mengi mengineyo, kwa mafumbo ya duwara,  
Hekima itakiwayo, na kutamkwa kwa hadhara.  
Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 3 Ni hadithi na hekaya, visa vilivyotokea,  
Nayo matokeo haya, na yasiye kupotea,  
Mapokezi na hedaya kwa wahenga tupokea.  
Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 4 Mazingara huathiri mawazo ya binadamu;  
Yalo wazi na ya siri, fikra zilizo muhimu;  
Mabaya, tena mazuri, wandani mnifahamu.  
Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 5 Mithali maua sawa, pia sawa sumu kali;  
Maneno mema yakawa pilipili si asali;  
Pengine kama vipawa kuvilipia aghali.  
Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 6 Hutumika kwa kutesa walio wanyonge wale;  
Labuda na kusomesa maovu yote yale;  
Yafaayo ya kisasa, yasiyofaa ya kale.  
Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 7 Mithali zina mafumbo, maoni yao malenga;  
Si chakula cha vitumbo, michezo yao wahenga;  
Falsafa, adili, nyimbo, zenye kupigiwa chenga.  
Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!

- 8 Walosoma 'ngetumia kufundisha wasosoma;  
 Majeuri 'ngevunjia wengine yao heshima;  
 Watawala huambia watu sharia shikama.  
 Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 9 Ati, wa kambo si baba; mama wa kambo si mama!  
 Kweli, kwa haba na haba hujaza kibaba vema!  
 Chambilecho Bi Habiba, cholembicho kwa Karima!  
 Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 10 "Nia njema tabibu", tungo 'metunga Bi Leyla;  
 "Nia mbaya huharibu", kwa kudura yake Mola!  
 Harubu alighilibu, kwa Hawa ghaibu kala!  
 Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 11 Kwendaje kuoa Hawa, kinyume chake Aziza ?  
 Si mzuri alikuwa, ubaya hakubakiza!  
 Harubu mpweke kawa, kisabuni kujikaza.  
 Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 12 "Mvumilivu hula mbivu", nena Ahmedi swahibu;  
 "Na hwenda n'kala mbovu", katuambia Habibu,  
 "Kwani niwe mvumilivu ? Hebu nipani sababu ?"  
 Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 13 Mithali izo maana, hiyo kweli tunajuwa;  
 Na vinyume hufanana, hiyo lazima tambuwa,  
 Kukariri na kukana, kufumba na kufumbuwa.  
 Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 14 Mithali sawa silaha kwa vita vya kimaneno;  
 Fasaha, onya, karaha, pahali pa kongamano;  
 Tibu ama kujeruha, pendo au matengano.  
 Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 15 Lakini mithali zetu hutumiwa mathalani.  
 Kiswahili lugha yetu, manenoye petu Pwani,  
 Yana maanati kwetu, vijimaana jamani.  
 Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!

- 16 Si vyunda wala koleo, mwundo undia mwundaji;  
"Mke mtwii mumeo", 'ambiwa msikizaji;  
"Na mume mtwii mkeo", ametunga mtungaji.  
Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!
- 17 Hekima ya mapokeo, na sote tunataraji,  
"Lango kubwa li komeo dogo", hivyo tufaraji;  
Ilmu koko sasa leo, 'takuwa kwetu kharaji!  
Maana yake mithali, ni mafunzo ya malenga!

Abdulaziz Yusuf Lodhi  
Agosti, 1979.

## PROVERBS ARE THE TEACHINGS OF THE BARDS

- 1 Proverbs have an origin, they teach good knowledge.  
And matters to adhere to; they stimulate thoughts,  
And ideas in the mind to influence the environment.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 2 They teach what is passed on by sayings and refrains,  
And much much more in riddles and circumlocution,  
And the wisdom that is needed, and pronounced in public.  
For proverbs mean "the teachings of the bards".
- 3 Proverbs are stories and legends, things of the past;  
And these happenings, lest they be lost for ever -  
These traditions and gifts received from our fore-fathers.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 4 The surroundings determine the human thoughts,  
Both known ideas and inner thoughts of importance,  
Both bad and good, know my friends.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 5 Proverbs are like flowers, or like deadly poison.  
Wise words may turn pepper hot, not honey,  
Or sound like gifts which are so invaluable.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 6 They may be used to oppress those who are weak,  
Or to teach whatever that is bad,  
Both the good and bad of today and yesterday.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 7 Proverbs have riddles, opinions of the bards.  
They are not food for hungry stomachs, games from the past -  
Philosophy, morals and songs which people dribble with.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!

- 8 The learned may use it to educate the ignorant;  
The arrogant would insult others and show disrespect;  
And rulers tell their peoples to follow the laws.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 9 How come, "A step-father is not a father,"  
nor "a step-mother not a real mother?"  
It's true, "Little and little fills the measure",  
But Miss Habiba's reality is not that of Miss Karima.  
(= One man's food is another man's poison.)  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 10 "A good purpose is like a doctor" the poetess Leyla says,  
"And evil purpose corrupts" by the Power of God !  
Harubu wanted to get the better of it, instead he  
suffered a great loss.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 11 Why did he ever marry Hawa, the opposite of Aziza ?  
She was not good at all, she spared no evil.  
Harubu was left alone to struggle with his life.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 12 "Be patient, you'll eat the ripe fruit," said my friend Ahmed.  
"May be, I'll eat it rotten," our friend Habib told us.  
"Why should I be patient? My friends, tell me !"  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 13 A proverb has many meanings, this we know.  
Their contradictions may appear to be similarities,  
this you should know.  
They repeat and refute, they mystify and unfold parables.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!
- 14 Proverbs are like weapons in verbal battles.  
They show elegance or offence at gatherings.  
They may heal or wound, cause accord or discord.  
For proverbs are the teachings of the bards!







SEHEMU YA KWANZA

PART ONE

METHALI

PROVERBS

Leonidas Kalugila



## CHEMBELECHO WASWAHILI - SWAHILI PEOPLE SAY

## A

1. Aambiwaye akasikia takuwa mhekima.  
One who receives instructions will be wise.
2. Aangukaye kwao fuvu huwa safi (Kihaya: Agwa owabo akaanga kera).  
One who falls at his home or where there are his relatives, his skull shines.
3. Adabu ni dhahabu.  
Politeness is gold.
4. Adabu ni johari ya moyo.  
Politeness is a jewel of the heart.
5. Adabu ni ngao.  
Politeness is a shield.
6. Afadhali achimbaye jiwe kuliko azuruaye (m.y. afadhali anayefanya kazi yo yote kuliko mvivu).  
Better the one who digs a stone than the one who loaves. (i.e. a worker is better than a lazy person).
7. Afadhali asaidiaye kuliko afunguaye mdomo kucheka.  
The one who helps is better than the one who laughs.
8. Afadhali kuanza kuwa maskini kidogo kuliko kuwa tajiri mara.  
Instead of being rich at once it is better to be poor first.
9. Afadhali kuchukiwa na kiongozi kuliko kuchukiwa na watu.  
It is better to be hated by the leader/ruler than by the crowd (or neighbours).
10. Afadhali kufa macho kuliko moyo.  
Better to be blind than to die.
11. Afadhali kujaza maji kuliko kuunguza.  
It is better to add too much water to food than to char it (to overcook).
12. Afadhali kumpokea mzee mzigo kuliko kumtwika mzigo.  
It is better to help an elder person with his burden than to load him.
13. Afadhali kuoia akutukanaye (Kihaya: lukano) kuliko kukaa bila mke.  
It is better to marry the one who abuses you than remain unmarried.

14. Afadhali kuvivunja (m.y. vyombo) kuliko kuviiba.

It is better to break them (utensils) than steal them.

15. Afadhali taabu za mwanzoni, za baadaye huumiza (m.y. ni afadhli taabu kumjia mtu katika maisha yake ya mwanzoni kuliko kumjia katika maisha ya baadaye wakati asipokuwa na nguvu za kuzishinda).

Early troubles are better than later ones (i.e. It is better misery or misfortunes to come in a person's early life than coming in a person's later life when he has no more strength to overcome them).

16. Ajuaye maumivu ni mwenye maumivu.

The patient knows the pains.

17. Akataaye kitu ati wamempa kidogo huvimba kichwa (m.y. hukaa na hasira).

The one who refuses something because he thinks that he has been given little, gets a big head (i.e. remains with anger).

18. Akohoaye akitema huwa anajipisha (m.y. mtu akikohoa huku akitema kikohozi huwa anapunguza usumbufu kohoni - ajaribuye kitu baadaye hufaulu).

The one who coughs and spits relives himself (the one who tries after sometime succeeds).

19. Akohoaye hafi njaa (m.y. mtu aliye na njaa akikohoa karibu na mlango watu wakila, watu hao humfungulia na hupata chakula).

One who coughs never dies of hunger (i.e. a hungry person when he coughs, being near the door of the house when people inside are eating, will be welcomed and fed).

20. Akuchukiaye hakutoi mahali ulipo, ila naogopa mauti (Kihaya: katamuzi).

The one who hates you never removes you from your own property except death is what I am afraid of (here death in Haya: katamuzi).

21. Akupatiaye chakula ndiye akupendaye (Kihaya: Ayakumanya akalega niwe wawe).

The one who chases you gives you advice.

22. Akupatiaye chakula ndiye akupendaye (Kihaya: Ayakumanya akalega niwe wawe).

The one who gives you food is the one who loves you (Haya: ayakumanya akalega niwe wawe).

23. Akupendaye hukuhukumu kuwa unashindwa (m.y. akupendaye huwa tayari kukusaidia ukiwa shidani).

The one who loves you judges you that you are failing the judgement (i.e. your friend is ready to help you whenever you are in difficulties).

24. Alaye chakula cho chote taabu humpata baada ya muda mrefu.  
The one who does not bother what kind of food one eats, he gets difficulties after a long time (i.e. does not get hungry because he eats whatever he gets).
25. Aliyeandaa pombe hachekei pombe iliyotengenezwa vibaya (Kihaya: kenku).  
One who has prepared beer does not laugh at the beer which tastes bad (Haya: kenku).
26. Aliyepoteza hatafuti mahali pamoja.  
One who has lost something never searches only one place.
27. Aliyesema "Ndivyo nilivyo zoea kuwazaa", aliuawa na mimba ya tisa (m.y. mtu lazima kuangalia afanyapo kitu asitegemee mazoea).  
The one who said "That is how I am used to bear them", was killed by the ninth pregnancy (i.e. a person has to be careful when doing something, one should not trust his way he is used to).
28. Aliyezaliwa kabla yako huona jua kabla yako.  
The one who is born before you sees the sun before you.
29. Amalizaye kula husema ati nyumbani wanamwita (m.y. mtu amalizapo kula hujisikia kurudi nyumbani na mwenyeji wake huwa hana la kumshikilia tena. Hii mithali hutumiwa mara nyingi na watu wamalizapo kula wakitaka kwenda nyumbani mara baada ya kula).  
The one who finishes eating says "I am being called at home" (i.e. when someone finishes eating one feels free to go home and the host does not urge him to stay longer - this proverb is used by people wanting to go home right after eating).
30. Ambacho si chako hukila unasubiri.  
What is not yours you eat it or use it with patience or expectation.
31. Ambaye bado hajakausha (karanga) haachi kukaanga.  
The one who has not dried (groundnuts) does not stop frying.
32. Ambayo bado haijachinjwa haitwi nyama.  
What has not been slaughtered is not called meat.
33. Ameanguka (mnyama k.m. ng'ombe) wakachinja (m.y. hawachinji isipoanguka au kabla ya kuanguka).  
It (i.e. an animal e.g. a cow) has fallen so they have slaughtered it (i.e. they never slaughter if it has not fallen or before it falls).

34. Amechagua kimoja kama Balingila (jina la mtu) (i.e. amependelea kimoja kuliko kukaa anahangaika).

He has chosen one thing as Balingila (pers. name) (i.e. He has chosen one thing instead of being constantly anxious over so many things).

35. Amesalitika na punda, huri hamjali.

He is infatuated by a donkey, he does not care for an angel.

36. Anaita zinaitika (m.y. fulani ni tajiri).

Someone is calling and is (money) responding (i.e. someone is rich).

37. Anajikaza kisabuni (m.y. anajikaza awezavyo ingawa ana shida au ni mgonjwa).

Someone has courage as soap (i.e. someone is trying his best although he has problems).

38. Anapiga kelele kama ngozi (Kihaya: nahala nka muguta) (i.e. anasema sana kwa hasira).

Someone is making noise like a hide (Haya: nahala nka muguta) (i.e. he is shouting with anger).

39. Anasema ya kuni na maji (m.y. anasema maneno mengi au analalamika kwa nguvu zote juu ya kitu fulani).

Someone speaks of firewood and water (i.e. someone is shouting or he is complaining about something with all his strength).

40. Angojeaye sungura hukaa amefungua macho (m.y. anayetaka kitu fulani hachoki kukingojea au hakati tamaa kufanya kazi ili akipate. Inasemekana kuwa sungura wa msituni hutoka kwa haraka na kama mwindaji hayuko tayari atatoka shimoni bila mwindaji kuwa na habari).

One who waits for a rabbit does not close his eyes (i.e. one who wants to get something does not grow tired of waiting for it, or is not discouraged when working for it. It is said that a wild rabbit comes out of the hole quickly and if the hunter is not vigilant it can escape him unnoticed).

41. Aolewaye ni yule akaaye kwa mumewe.

One who remains with her husband is the one who continues in marriage.

42. Apendaye atakachoona husema "waliokufa wamenishinda au wamenizidi".

One who longs for what he will see says "those who died are luckier than I."

43. Apendaye (aombaye) chakula hakataliwi.

One who asks for food is never refused.

## 44. Apendaye kula huchanja kuni.

One who wants to eat fetches firewood.

## 45. Apendaye kuota jua yafaa afanye hivyo (m.y. mtoto akiambiwa kufanya kitu fulani akakataa anataka adhabu au onyo kali na basi alipate, (mithali hii hutumiwa wakati wa kumwadhibu mtoto akataaye kutumwa).

One who wants to bask in the sunshine had better do so (i.e. if a child is told to do something and refuses to do it that child is asking for punishment or a harsh warning, it is better it gets it, -this proverb is used when punishing a child who refuses to do what it is told).

## 46. Apendaye kuulizauliza habari huuliza hata yawezayo kumfanya asisinzie (m.y. katika kuulizauliza habari mtu hupata habari nzito za kumfanya asiweze kuwa na amani rohoni).

One who asks for much information asks even what will keep him awake (i.e. in asking for information one learns upsetting facts).

## 47. Apendaye urembo (hasa kusukwa nywele) hapigi kelele.

One who likes ornamentation (e.g. to be plaited etc.) does not cry.

## 48. Apigaye mtoto hupiga wote (m.y. atoaye zawadi kwa mtoto mmoja hutoa zawadi kwa watoto wote waliopo hapo. Mithali hii hutumiwa na mtu aonapo fulani anatoa zawadi kwa fulani ni kama anatoa ombi kwamba na yeye apewe asisahauliwe).

One who beats one child beats all children (i.e. one who gives a present to one child gives also to others, - this proverb is used especially when someone is seen giving a present, - it is as a request that the speaker should also be given a present.

## 49. Asemaye "bado sijaona hili", huwa bado si mtu mzima.

One who says, "I have never seen such a thing", is not yet an adult.

## 50. Asemaye "hebu nipishe" hakosi aendako.

One who says "please let me pass" has somewhere to go.

## 51. Asemaye "hebu tufanane", hakutafutii dawa ya mtoto (m.y. mtu asiyepeleka upate kitu fulani kwa kuwa hanacho, hakusaaidii kukipata).

One who says, let us be equal (or be in the same category) does not fetch medicine for your child (i.e. the one who does not like you to get something because he does not possess it, does not help you to get it).

## 52. Asemaye "nashindwa hukumu" hulipa (faini) kidogo.

One who says "it is my fault" only pays a small fine.



53. Asemaye "ni mbali", hana amfahamuye huko.

One who says "somewhere is far away" has no relationship with any one there.

54. Asemaye "nimeishajionea", huchezea kando.

One who says "I have already seen the consequence myself", is the one who plays aside.

55. Asemaye "pole", huwa ameishakukanyaga.

One who says "I am sorry", has already trodden on you.

56. Asemaye "sitarudia", huwa anatoka kifungoni.

One who says "I shall not repeat", is the one who comes out of prison.

57. Asili yetu ina nguvu katika mioyo yetu.

Our human nature is strong in our hearts.

58. Asiyefanya kazi hali.

One who does not work does not eat (i.e. a lazy person should not be given food).

59. Asiyekupenda hukuunguzia janini (mithali hii inatumiwa kuonyesha kuwa mtu aweza kukuumiza bila wewe kujua kwa kuwa hakupendi).

One who does not love you burns you in the banana leaf (if someone takes a banana leaf and holds it above the flame, the flame follows the end of the leaf, and if there is someone he/she can be burnt. This proverb is used to indicate that someone can hurt you without your knowledge because he does not love you).

60. Asiyekwenda kuangalia mara kwa mara, hukuta utupu.

One who does not visit regularly, finds nothing.

61. Asiye na maarifa hali vya babake.

One who is not clever does not eat of his father's.

62. Asiye na mtoto atabeba jiwe (Mithali hii hutumiwa sana wakati watu wakienda kucheza mpira au kwenye sherehe ya kufani, kukaza kuwa kuna mambo makuu mtu asikose).

One who has no child will bear a stone (This proverb is usually used when people are going to the football game or to attend a certain feast, in order to emphasize that it will be a great occasion one should not miss).

63. Asiyauliza alikula nyama za watu (wafu).

One who did not ask (what kind of food), ate the flesh of the dead.

64. Asiyeziingiza (mbuzi au kuku n.k.) mapema hulia kama zenyewe.

One who has not pursued them (e.g. goats, sheep, chicken etc) early he cries as they do before sunset.

65. Atakayelikata (shina la kiazzi) ndiye atakayeliunga.

The one who will cut it (a sweet potato's stem) is the one who will join it.

66. Aulizaye bei hushtushwa na bei.

One who bargains is shocked by the price.

67. Aulizaye njia hapotei.

One who asks the way can not get lost.

68. Auzaye huonyesha (i.e. anayetaka kitu chake kijulikane au kinunuliwe hukitangaza).

One who sells does not hide (i.e. the one who wants his goods to be known by others or to be bought he makes it known to the public).

## B

1. Babe si babe kwa mchumbawe.

No man is a hero to his woman.

2. Badala ya kitu kufa afadhali kiendeleo jinsi kilivyo.

Rather than let something to perish let it remain as it is.

3. Badala ya kufa leo afadhali kufa siku nyingine.

It is better to die some other day than dying today.

4. Bado ni 'mabaga' (Mithali hii hutumiwa na mtu akiwa anafanya kazi fulani aambiwapo 'pole', anayefanya kazi husema 'mabaga' kuonyesha kuwa bado kazi haijamalizika).

It is still 'mabaga' (Haya) (This proverb is used by the one who is working when told 'well done', the one working says 'mabaga' to signify that the work is not yet finished).

5. Bahati ni kama dada mdogo (m.y. baada ya mwanamume kuishi na mkewe huona makosa yake na husema "kama ningalifahamu ningalimwoa dadake mdogo").

Fortune is like the younger sister (i.e. after a husband has lived with his wife, he finds faults in her and says "if I had known I would have married her younger sister").

6. Bahati ya mwenzako isikulaze mlango wazi.

Your friend's or your neighbour's luck should never make you leave the door open (at night).

7. Bahati ya mtu ni tabia yake.

A person's luck is his character or behavior.

8. Bidii huzaa matunda.

Working hard is fruitful; hard work bears fruits.

9. Bora ndege mmoja mkononi kuliko kumi porini.  
A bird in hand is worth ten in the field.
10. 'Bugubugu' si moto (m.y. kitoacho ulimi wa moto si lazima kuwa ni moto uchomao)  
'Bugubugu' is not fire (i.e. whatever flares up is not necessarily a fire).

## C

1. Chako ni chako hata kama ni kidogo.  
What is your own is your own even if it is small.
2. Chako ni chako hata kikiwa ni kibaya.  
What is your own is your own even if it is bad.
3. Chakula cha kuombaomba hakishibishi au hakimalizi njaa.  
Food that is begged never satisfies.
4. Cha kwako hakikunukii ukaghadhibika au ukakirihi.  
What is your own, when it smells it does not disgust you.
5. Cha mbaya wako hulishwa na mwema wako.  
What is of your bad relative or friend is fed by your beloved.
6. Chui akujiapo fimbo ya jirani haiwezi kumfukuza.  
When the leopard comes to you, the club at your neighbour's house won't drive him off.
7. Chungu ulimoishapikia hukiiti kipande (Kihaya: kiguyo).  
A pot in which you have already cooked, you never call it a piece of pot (Haya: kiguyo).

## D

1. Damu hutoa harufu (m.y. watu wa ukoo mmoja hawakosi kutambuana).  
Blood smells (i.e. people of the same clan never fail to know one another).
2. Dawa haitolewi bure.  
Medicine is never given freely.
3. Domo kaya samli kwa mwenye ng'ombe.  
The miser eats ghee at the cattle-owner.
4. Dunia haimlipi kitu mjinga.  
The world never pays the fool (for his follies).

## E

1. Elimu haina mwisho (m.y. hakuna aliye mzee mno asijifunze).  
Education has no end (i.e. there is no one too old to learn).

## F

1. Fedha yavunja nguu na milima ikalala.  
Money breaks the foot and mountains lie down.
2. Fisi akila muwele, mzima hufunga mlango.  
If a hyena eats the sick, the healthy closes the door.
3. Furaha haijiasilishi (i.e. mtu akifurahi huwa ana sababu ya kufanya hivyo).  
One does not become happy for nothing (i.e. one becomes happy because of something he has seen or heard or done).
4. Furaha ni kitu wabarikiwacho watu waitafutao.  
Happiness is a blessing which people who seek it are blessed with.

## G

1. Giza nene usiku ukaribiapo alfajiri.  
The nearer the dawn, the darker the night.

## H

1. Habari zikiishaenezwa hazina mwenyi.  
News which has already spread has no author.
2. Hakuna amfundishaye mtoto jinsi atakavyonyonya.  
No one teaches a child how to suck.
3. Hakuna hebu nikuulize (m.y. katika maandalio ya sherehe kila kitu kimepangwa vizuri).  
There is no "let us go out so that I may ask you" (i.e. everything at the feast is well arranged).
4. Hakuna jambo lisilo na mwisho.  
There is nothing which has no end.
5. Hakuna roho kongwe.  
There is no soul that is worn-out (quite old).

6. Hata alimaye pazuri hupumzika na kurudi nyumbani.  
Even one who farms good soil rests and goes home.
7. Hata mtoto uliyejizalia hukupigia ngoma ukacheza (m.y. hata mtoto wako aweza kukupa mashauri au kukufanyia kitu ukapendezwa).  
Even your child can play a drum and you dance (i.e. even your child can give you advice or can do something that pleases you).
8. Hata vifaranga hujua kupigania maisha (m.y. vifaranga hujua kujificha adui akiya. Hata wanyonge hujua kujikinga na hatari).  
Even chicken know how to fight for their lives (i.e. chicken know how to hide themselves when there is danger. Even weak people know how to defend themselves or escape from danger).
9. 'Hautapambazuka' aliua mkewe.  
'It will not dawn', killed his wife.
10. Hawapendeani vicheko (m.y. baadhi ya watu hawapendi wengine wawe na furaha).  
They do not wish one another laughter (i.e. some people do not like others to have happiness).
11. Hazikosi kusimuliwa (m.y. habari huenea upesi).  
Words never fail to spread (i.e. words spoken spread quickly).
12. Heri huenda mara kwa mara kwa wajasiri, nadra sana kwenda kwa welegevu.  
Happiness often goes to the daring, it is quite unusual to go to the lazy ones.
13. Heshima humfanya mtu apate (m.y. aheshimuye wengine hupendwa na watu).  
Respect provides (i.e. the one who respects others is loved by people).
14. Hiari ya moyo dawa.  
The willingness of the heart is medicine.
15. Huanguka na kuinuka (m.y. maisha ya mwanadamu hayanyoki leo ana furaha kesho ana shida).  
They fall and rise (i.e. man's life is not stable; today he has happiness tomorrow he has difficulties).
16. Hujavuka Ngono huku wasema utalala Mwisa (Mtu akiwa anatoka Bukoba anakwenda Karagwe kwanza huvuka mto Ngono baadaye huvuka mto Mwisa).  
You have not crossed Ngono but you say you will sleep near Mwisa! (When a person goes from Bukoba to Karagwe he first crosses the river Ngono then the river Mwisa).

17. Huendapo waishipo vyura (Kihaya: Bunyira), huishi kama vyura waishivyo (m.y. uendapo mahali fulani nawe kwa namna fulani huishi kama wao waishivyo).  
When you go to where frogs stay you live as frogs do (i.e. when you go somewhere you also to some extent live as people of that place live).
  18. (Meno)hujitokeza (m.y. pakiwepo kitu cha kumfanya mtu acheke, hakuna sababu ya kumwambia mtu 'cheka').  
(Teeth) appear themselves (i.e. when there is something to laugh at, there is no reason to tell someone 'laugh').
  19. Hukumu haijui nyumba maskini (m.y. mtu ye yote aweza kuhukumiwa hata maskini).  
Justice does not know a poor house (i.e. anyone can be judged, even the poor).
  20. Hukutuma umefika mwenyewe (m.y. umenituma nami nitafikisha habari kana kwamba ni wewe mwenyewe umefika).  
You have not sent the message you have reached yourself (i.e. you have sent me the message, I shall deliver them as though you have gone yourself).
  21. (Makubwa) humpata aliyeoa au olewa (m.y. maisha ya huzuni au ya furaha hujajua hasa aliyeishaoa au aliyeishaolewa).  
A married man or woman has much to face.
  22. Hupenda roho (m.y. watu huvutwa na roho ya mtu).  
They like the spirit of a person (i.e. people are attracted by the spirit of a person).
  23. Hupenda urembo lakini sangari inapanda mikahawa (Mithali hii hutumiwa kumwonya mtu mvivu).  
You like beauty but the grass (Swahili: sangari) is climbing the coffee trees (this proverb is used to warn a lazy person).
  24. (Ugonjwa) hupika chake (m.y. mgonjwa ambaye hapendi kula watu husema 'ugonjwa wake utaelekeza chakula atakachopikiwa').  
(Illness) will cook its own food (i.e. of a patient who has problems with food people say, his illness will direct which kind of food will be cooked for him).
  25. Huwezi kumwashia jirani taa, na hali kwako kuna giza.  
You can't bring light to your neighbour when it is dark at your own home.
- |
1. Inanunuliwa kwa ng'ombe (Kihaya: kaasha) na pembe (Kihaya: bihogo) (m.y. kitu fulani ni ghali sana).  
It's price is a cow (Kihaya: kasha) and a horn (Kihaya: bihogo), i.e. a certain thing is too expensive.

2. Isiyozoea kutoka nje itokapo nje hairudi mapema.

That which is not used to going out when it goes out does not come home early.

3. Iwapo nia kuna njia.

Where there is a will, there is a way.

4. Ingawa mti mzee huanguka mtoni, majani yake hufikia ukingo mwingine.

Although the old tree falls into the river, its branches reach the opposite bank.

## J

1. Jani litakalokupaka mavi hujisaidia ukiwa umelikanyaga (m.y. angalia kitakachokusumbua).

The grass that will smear on you, you help yourself while you are treading on it (i.e. take care of something that will disturb you).

2. Jani moja likitoka kwenye nyumba, nyumba hiyo haivuji (mvua).

When one sod falls from the roof, the house does not leak (referring to houses thatched with grass).

3. Je, jua umelifunga na kamba? (m.y. huharakishi ukidhani jua limesimama likikungoja).

Do you think that you have tied the sun with a rope? (i.e. you do not hurry up thinking that the sun is standing still waiting for you).

4. Jikaze kike (Mithali hii hutumiwa sana hasa mwanamke mja mzito akiwa anajifungua ili asiogope bali ajikaze kujifungua mtoto kama wanawake wengine wajikazavyo wakazaa).

Have courage as women (This proverb is used mostly to tell a pregnant woman when she is pregnant so that she may not be afraid but have courage to give birth like other women who are courageous in bearing children).

5. Jikaze kiume (m.y. uwe na ujasiri kama wanaume wafanikiwao wafanyavyo).

Have courage as a man (i.e. be courageous as other successful men do).

6. Jina zuri huokoa.

A good name (i.e. a name of reputation) saves.

7. Jinsi mvua ionekanavyo kabla ya kunyesha sivyo inyeshavyo.

It does not rain as it seems to be before raining.

8. Jinsi yatandikavyo ndivyo hulalavyo.

As they prepare the bed for you so you will sleep.

9. Jitazame (m.y. angalia mwenendo wako, au jirudi).

Check yourself (i.e. discipline yourself or consider the past and see where you stand).

10. Jivuli la mvumo humfunika aliye mbali.

The long shadow of the borassus palm shelters him that is far off.

11. Jogoo aliyeshiba ndiye huwika.

A cock that is satisfied with food is the one which crows.

## K

1. Kakimbia mkuki kaangukia mshale (m.y. amezingiriwa na taabu pande zote).

Someone escaped being shot by the spear but has fallen by the arrow (i.e. someone is surrounded by difficulties on every side).

2. Kama mwanamke hakutulua ni huzuni kubwa nyumbani.

If the wife is worried the house is melancholic.

3. Karamu mbili zilimfanya kunguru kuwa na miguu inayokwenda ikigaagaa.

Two feasts made a crow to have legs that roam about.

4. Karanga huchemka halafu hupoa (m.y. mwenye hasira baadaye hutulia).

Groundnuts pop up when they are being cooked but later cool down (i.e. an angry person later cools down).

5. Karanga moja ilishika panya (m.y. karanga moja ikiwekwa kwenye mtego huweza kumfanya panya ashikwe na mtego. Mithali hii inafundisha kuwa mtu aweza kutiwa hatarini na kitu kidogo, kwa hiyo lazima kujihadhari).

One groundnut caught a rat (i.e. one groundnut put in a trap causes a rat to be trapped. This proverb teaches that a person can be endangered by a simple thing, therefore one has to be careful).

6. Kelele nyingi hazimtoi nyoka shimoni.

A lot of noise never drives a snake out of the hole.

7. Kibaya hakijizai, huzaliwa.

That which is bad never bears itself, but is born.

8. Kibaya hukiona mara moja (m.y. mtu hapendi kuona kibaya mara ya pili au mara nyingi).

A misfortune you see once (i.e. a person does not like to see misfortune more than once).

9. Kibaya hukizaa hukinunui.

You bear a bad thing, you never buy it.



10. Kidogo kuliko kunyima (m.y. afadhali nitoe zawadi kidogo kuliko kumnyima mtu).

A little is better than nothing (i.e. it is better that I give someone something little than refuse him).

11. Kijiti kimoja chaweza kuvunjika lakini si vingi pamoja (m.y. mtu mmoja aweza kushindwa kufanya kitu fulani si wengi wakijiunga pamoja. Mithali hii hutumiwa kuwashauri watu wajiunge pamoja kufanya kazi pamoja na kuwa na maendeleo).

One stick can be broken but not a bundle of them (i.e. one person can fail to do something, but not people who are united. This proverb is used to tell people to work together and make progress).

12. Kikatacho katika Buhembe hakikati pia katika Nshambya (Buhembe na Nshambya ni vijiji fulani katika mkoa wa Ziwa Magharibi)? (Mithali hii hutumiwa kumwambia mtu apendaye atendewe k.m. atembelewe lakini yeye asitembelee wengine).

What cuts in Buhembe does it not also cut in Nshambya (Buhembe and Nshambya are villages in the West Lake Region)? (This proverb is used to tell someone who wants others to favour him e.g. to visit him but he does not pay them visits).

13. Kikulemeacho huweka chini.

What you fail to carry, you put it down.

14. Kila kitu tukikiona kuwa kigumu maendeleo yatakuwa machache na utu wetu utakuwa duni.

If we think of everything to be difficult, development will be little and our humanity will be inferior.

15. Kilalacho nje ni chui.

What sleeps outside is a leopard.

16. Kila mmoja ana shimo lake (m.y. kila mmoja atazikwa katika kaburi lake).

Everyone will have his own hole (i.e. everyone will be buried in his own grave).

17. Kila mmoja nyumba yake (m.y. kila mmoja ana siri zake au kila mtu hutoshelezwa na nyumba yake au chumba chake).

Everyone has his own house or home (i.e. everyone has his secrets or a person is satisfied with one's own house or room).

18. Kila mtoto uchungu wake.

Every child has its own pains (i.e. The pains suffered by a mother vary from delivery to delivery).

19. Kila siku ina mambo yake (Kihaya: Bukya na gandi).

Every day has its own happenings (Haya: Bukya na Gandhi).

20. Kiletacho njaa huleta na namna ya kupata chakula.

What brings hunger shows the way to get food.

21. Kiliacho ndani ya ngoma akijuaye ni yule aliyeitengeneza ngoma.

What is heard in the drum is known by the one who made it (usually drum makers put something inside the drum and if someone shakes it, that thing can be heard).

22. Kilichoishatokea ni maziwa (m.y. msichana maziwa yake yakiishatokea hawezi kuyazuia yasionekane. Mithali hii hutumiwa kukaza kuwa siri ikiwa imeishatobolewa hakuna njia ya kuizuia tena).

What has already appeared are breasts (i.e. when the breasts of a girl appear there is no way of hiding them. This proverb is used to stress that if a secret has already been revealed it is impossible to prevent it from spreading, in other words it is no longer a secret).

23. Kilichomlea kuku hakimuui.

That which brought up a hen does not kill it.

24. Kilimiladha kitupu hakifai.

Empty nice uvula is useless (i.e. only sweet words do not help one).

25. Kilio kinatoka kifuani (m.y. anatenda hivyo kwa kuwa ana nguvu au ameshiba).

The cry is from the chest (i.e. he is doing so because he is strong or he is not hungry).

26. Kipenda roho hula nyama mbichi.

One who loves the spirit (loves someone) eats uncooked food.

27. Kipya takuwa hekaya.

Something new will be old.

28. Kisichojizaa hukoma kuwepo.

What has not born itself ceases to be.

29. Kisichokwewa ni mti wa miiba (Kihaya: omutangalala) (m.y. mtu jangiri ni shida kupatana au kushirikiana naye).

What one cannot climb is a thorny tree. (i.e. a bad person is difficult to associate with).

30. Kisima uhotamo hukichafui.

The well where you draw water you never make dirty.

31. Kitakachokufa hakisikii yowe ya mwindaji.

That which will die never listens to the shout of the hunter.

32. Kitoacho ni upendo.  
What gives is love.
33. Kitu kibaya hakizoelewi.  
One never gets used to something bad.
34. Kitu kilichojaa hufurika.  
The full pot overflows.
35. Kitu usichokula hakikuhangaishi.  
What you do not eat never worries you.
36. Kiumbe hakamiliki kuumbwa mpaka kufa.  
A creature is not completely created until death.
37. Kizaacho hufa.  
That which produces or bears, also dies.
38. Kofi la mahaba haliumizi.  
A slap of love does not hurt.
39. Kovu halikwanguliwi.  
A scar is never scraped.
40. Kuacha mbacha kwa msala upitao.  
To leave an old mat for a mat that is passing.
41. Kuaguka 'kibandagala' (m.y. kufika kwa mtu bila taarifa).  
To fall 'kibandagala' (i.e. to visit someone without giving notice).
42. Kuanza kusema kwa mtoto akujua mamaye.  
The way the baby begins to speak is known by its mother.
43. Kuchako humfanya mwana alingane na mamaye (Kihaya: obukya nibwiila bukaiganisa omwana na nyina).  
Day by day makes a daughter like her mother.
44. Kufa maradufu kama makaa (m.y. kupambana na shida mara mbili au hata zaidi).  
To die twice as charcoal (i.e. to face problems twice or regularly).
45. Kujeruhiwa kwa simba, muwinda kawa muwindwa.  
When the lion has been injured, the hunter becomes the hunted.
46. Kujihadhari si hofu.  
Caution is not a sign of fear.

47. Kukataa kujisaidia hakuzui njaa kuuma.

To refuse to defecate does not prevent one from getting hungry.

48. Kukopesha ni kukabidhi, kunyima ni kuzika.

To lend is to trust, to refuse to lend is to bury.

49. Kumkopesha rafiki ni kumfanya adui.

Lending a friend money is to turn him into an enemy.

50. Kuku wa mwingine humtupii jiwe.

You never throw a stone at your neighbour's hen.

51. Kula na kilio (m.y. mwenye choyo hula huku akilia kuwa ana vichache).

To eat crying (i.e. a greedy person is never satisfied).

52. Kula vingi humfanya mtu atoe hewa mbaya (Kihaya: empii).

Gluttony causes bad breath (Haya: empii).

cp. Too much of anything is harmful.

53. Kuna akupendaye akiwa amekuona na kuna akupendaye bila kukuona.

There is one who loves you after seeing you, and there is one who loves you unseen.

54. Kunguruma 'mmm!' kuliharibu kuposa.

To growl 'mmm!' spoiled the engagement.

55. Kuni zikusanywapo sipo zifungiwapo.

Where (firewood) is gathered is not where it is tied together.

56. Kupandisha na kuteremsha au kukuza na kuviza ni kazi ambayo Mungu hakuikamilisha (m.y. Mungu huendelea kufanya kazi yake akionyesha utukufu wake na uwezo wake siku zote).

To exalt and to humble is the work which God has not completed (i.e. God continues doing his work revealing his glory and his power for ever).

57. Kupanga ni kuchagua (imetungwa na Mwalimu J.K. Nyerere).

To plan is to choose (by Mwalimu J.K. Nyerere).

58. Kurudi mara ya pili kulimfanya mwizi ashikwe (m.y. kurudia kufanya kosa mara nyingi kwaweza kumhatarisha mtu).

Returning a second time led a thief to capture (i.e. to repeat a fault can endanger a person).

59. Kusema, "kama ningelifahamu" huja baadaye.

To say "had I known" comes later.

60. Kusema 'kuja mwangalie' hakuchelewi (m.y. hatari huja upesi).  
To say 'Oh come and see' does not delay (i.e. misfortune comes suddenly).
61. Kusema 'lisitokee' huwa bado halijatokea (m.y. ambacho bado hakijatokea, hakijatokea na mtu aweza kukizuia kisitokee lakini ambacho kimeishatokea kimeishakuwepo).  
To say 'let it never happen', means it has not yet happened (i.e. what has not taken place has not taken place, one can prevent it from happening but if it has taken place, it has taken place).
62. Kusema ni kuzuri na kunyamaza ni kuzuri.  
Speech is good and silence is good.
63. Kushona (kibuyu) hakuzuii kuvuja.  
To saw (a calabash) is not to prevent water from leaking.
64. Kutokuwa na subira ni fursa ya kijana.  
Impatience is the privilege of the young.
65. Kutupa jiwe majini (m.y. kusahau mtu kabisa. Mithali hii hutumiwa na mtu akimwambia mwingine kuwa hamkumbuki tena)  
To throw a stone in the lake or sea (i.e. to forget someone completely. This proverb is used by a person telling someone that he has no remembrance of him).
66. Kuuliza 'mmeanzaje' hurudisha watu kwenye magomvi.  
To ask 'how did you start', makes people to repeat the fight.
67. Kuzimu kuna mambo.  
In the world of the spirits are mighty matters.
68. Kwenda mkumboni (m.y. kufuata wengine bila sababu).  
To follow the crowd (i.e. to follow the majority without having any reason to do so).

## M

- Maarifa ni moto hutafutwa toka kwa jirani.  
Knowledge is fire, one gets from one's neighbour.
- Mabaya hayalingani, wafu hawalingani kunuka.  
Bad things are not the same, dead bodies smell differently.
- Macho hutazama hayali.  
Eyes look, they do not eat.
- Macho hutazama hayasafiri.  
Eyes see, they do not travel.

5. Macho yanayotoa machozi yameingiliwa na mchanga au majivu (Mithali hii hutumiwa kueleza yaliyompata mtu aliyekuwa na k.m. shamba dogo na alipokula madeni wakauza shamba hilo au aliyekuwa na nguo moja nzuri ikaibiwa).

Eyes that are giving out tears, sand or ashes have fallen in them (This proverb is used when talking about someone who had e.g. a little field and when he has failed to pay his debts his field has been sold or who had one nice cloth which has been stolen).

6. Madeni huhamisha.

Debts cause a person to move away from his dwelling place.

7. Magugu yanakosa upaliliaji.

The weeds have no one to hoe them up.

8. Mahali pa mbali ni kuzimuni kwa wafu.

Somewhere far away is in the place of the dead.

9. Majani ya mgomba hukatwa (m.y. urithi hugawanywa kufuata watoto walivyo).

Dry banana leaves are cut (i.e. inheritance is divided to children according to how children are).

10. Maji ambayo hukujitekea hayatulizi kiu.

The water which you have not drawn yourself does not quench the thirst.

11. Maji hayachangamanyiki na mafuta.

Water never mixes with oil.

12. Maji ya mbali hutumia kidogo upikapo (m.y. kitu ambacho ni shida kukipata hutumia kwa uangalifu).

The water which you fetch from far, you use little when cooking (i.e. something that is difficult to get you use it carefully).

13. Maji ya moto hayachomi nyumba.

Hot water never burns house.

14. Malalamiko ndiyo desturi ya wagonjwa.

Complaints are the custom of the sick.

15. Mama-mkwe hafungui mdomo (m.y. mama-mkwe hasemi ovyoovyo mbele ya mkwe wake au hantukani).

Mother-in-law never opens her mouth (i.e. the mother-in-law takes care when speaking to her son-in-law or does not abuse her son-in-law).

16. Mama ni mama wengine pepo za porini.

A mother is mother, all other claimants are winds in the bush.

17. Maneno mazuri humfanya chui alale karibu na mlango.  
Sweet words cause a leopard to sleep near the door.
18. Maneno mazuri humtoa ndovu shambani.  
Sweet words drive an elephant from the field.
19. Mapenzi huua.  
Love kills.
20. Mapenzi sawa maua.  
Love is like flowers.
21. Mapenzi si shurua; yaweza kuja mara ya pili.  
Love is not measles; it can come more than once.
22. Mapenzi yetu hufungua milango ya nadhari zetu bila kujua.  
Our love opens the doors of our insight without our knowledge.
23. Maskani mema kwa mtu ni mahali po pote panapomweka vema.  
Home is where you are content.
24. Maskini hatangazi kuwa kuna senene (m.y. maskini akiona senene asubuhi na kuwatangazia watu, watu hawaamini kwa sababu wanamdharau).  
A poor person does not tell others that there are grasshoppers (i.e. a poor person when he sees grasshoppers in the morning and tells others, people do not believe him because they disregard him).
25. Maua hutokea kwanza kabla ya matunda.  
Flowers bloom before fruits.
26. Mauti hajali (m.y. mauti huua mimba, mtoto mchanga, kijana au mtu mzima).  
Death never cares (i.e. death kills people of different ages).
27. Mawazo yaliko ndiko uendako keshoye.  
Where your thoughts are is where you go the following day.
28. Mazoweya yana dharau.  
Familiarity brings contempt.
29. Mazungumzo ya simba ni makucha.  
The conversation of a lion are claws.
30. Mbata moja ikioza huoza gunia zima.  
If one copra rots, they all rot.
31. Mbwa apigaye makelele sana hajui kuwinda.  
A dog that barks too much does not know how to hunt.

32. Mbweha alimaye mashimo mawili hufia katikati.  
The jackal that digs two holes lies between them.
33. Mchagua chakula hulala njaa.  
The one who chooses food sleeps with hunger.
34. Mdogo akijisaidia mkubwa husafisha.  
When the young one helps himself the elder one does the cleaning.
35. Mdomo unichome nakula, usinichome na kusema.  
Mouth, burn me while I am eating, not when I am speaking.
36. Mdomo usemao uongo dawa yake ni kunyamaza.  
The mouth which lies is cured by keeping silence.
37. Mdomo wa nguruwe huzaliwa nao.  
The pig is born with its snout.
38. Mdomo wa soni humfanya mwenyi akae na njaa.  
The mouth which is shameful causes its owner to go hungry.
39. Mdomo utakaosema uongo haukosi kuonekana.  
The mouth which lies never hides.
40. Mema yetu yana haraka ya kuhama, lakini mabaya yetu huzohalika nasi.  
Our good deeds are in a hurry to move away, but our bad deeds delay with us.
41. Mende akichezea maziwa hutokomea humo.  
When a cockroach plays near the milk it falls into it.
42. Meno ni undugu (m.y. mwenye kucheka au kushirikiana na wengine huwa na uhusiano mwema na watu).  
Teeth are brotherhood (i.e. the one who laughs or communicates with others continues having good relationship with people).
43. Mfalme au mtawala afapo ndipo siri hutobolewa.  
When the king or the leader dies, the secret is revealed.
44. Mfalme au mtawala akitaka (kula) pafu watu huliita ini.  
When a king or ruler wants (to eat) a lung, people call it a liver.
45. Mfalme au mtawala akiondoka chura hupanda nyumba.  
When a king or ruler leaves, frogs climb the house.



46. Mfu ni mtamu (m.y. mtu akifa watu wengi hukusanyika hata wale ambao hawakujali kumtazama kabla hajafa).

A dead person is loved (i.e. when a person dies many people come to lament for him, even those who did not bother to visit him when he was still alive).

47. Mgawaji hajipatii kidogo (m.y. mtu anayegawa kitu fulani apaswa kupata cha kumtosha akijipatia kidogo mno huwa kuna sababu).

The server does not take a small share (i.e. the one who gives out something has to get enough if he gives himself little there is a reason for doing so).

48. Mgeni hufungua macho (m.y. mgeni ni mdadisi).

A visitor watches attentively (i.e. a visitor is too inquisitive).

49. Mguu ni ujamaa (m.y. kutembeleana hudumisha ujamaa au urafiki).

A leg is brotherhood (i.e. to visit one another strengthens friendship or brotherhood).

50. Mguu wa kuku hauumizi kifaranga chake.  
cf. Kuku havunji yayile (Farsi, Swahili Saying, 1).

A leg of a hen never kills its chicken.  
cf. A hen does not break her own eggs (Farsi, Swahili Sayings 1).

51. Mhitaji afanyapo kazi halegei (Kiganda: Omunaku obwakola tagayala).

One in need works diligently.

52. Mhitaji hanisi.

One in need goes to any length to fulfil the need.

53. Mhunzi alijenga karibu na barabara ili apate mashauri (m.y. mtaka mashauri hajifichi).

A smith settled near the road in order to get advice (i.e. the one who wants to get advice does not hide himself).

54. Miguu hupumzika mdomo haupumziki.

Legs rest but not the mouth.

55. Mimi niliyetoka msituni nasema ni (mavi) ya chui nawe wasema ni ya mtu! (m.y. mimi niliye na hakika kuhusu kitu fulani nasema ndivyo kilivyo lakini wewe usiye na uhakika juu yake wasema sivyo kilivyo!).

I who come from the forest say it (dung) is from an animal but you say it is of a person! (i.e. I who is certain about something say that is how it is but you who is not certain say it is not so!)

56. Mioyo hailingani.

Hearts are not equal.

57. Mke ni fingo la nyumba hadhari kumchezea.  
The wife is a charm of the house, never disregard her.
58. Mkono mmoja hauvunji chawa.  
One hand cannot kill a louse.
59. Mla chake hasumbuliwi.  
One who has eaten his own is never disturbed.
60. Mlango mkubwa komeo lake ni dogo.  
A big door, has a small bolt.
61. Mlevi hachinji mbwa.  
A drunkard never slaughters a dog.
62. Moyo mwema hupenda ukarimu, masilahi na ushirika siku zote.  
The good heart loves generosity, reconciliation and cooperation.
63. Moyo wa kupenda hauna nadhari.  
The heart that loves has no foresight/insight.  
cf. Love is blind.
64. Mpika majungu hujipikia mwenyewe.  
The one who cooks, cooks for himself (here to cook means to do something bad for others).
65. Mpishi ana hisa yake.  
The cook has his share (of food/praise/blame).
66. Mpwa wa kike huihua jamaa (Kihaya: Omwiwa aiula eka) (m.y. ni vizuri mpwa wa kike kuolewa na mjombaye au ye yote wa ukoo wa mamaye kusudi aendelee uzao huko).  
A niece raises up a home(i.e. it is good for a niece to be married by a cousin/relative from her mother's clan, in this way she can bear children to that clan).
67. Mshika mbili moja humponyoka.  
One who holds two things will drop one.
68. Msikia vibaya, watu wanwambiapo "mume wako ameuawa na chui", yeye ajibu "nilisema kuwa ataiua".  
One who does not hear properly when people say "your husband has been killed by a leopard" replies, "I said that he would kill it".
69. Mtoto ni shina la vibuyu (Kihaya: olwongu) usipolinyosha litajipindapinda.  
A child is (like) a stem of calabashes (Haya: olwongu), if it is not guided it will bend.

70. Mtoto afahamuko ni huko husema mvua inanyesha.  
Where the child knows is where it says that it is raining.
71. Mtoto asiye na nidhamu huwafanya wazazi wake watukanwe.  
A child which has no discipline submits its parents to abuse.
72. Mtoto mmoja hazaliwi.  
One child never stops being born (i.e. a single child worries the parents extremely).
73. Mtoto si wa mtu mmoja.  
A child does belong to one person.
74. Mtu hakomi kujifunza mpaka kufa.  
A person does not cease learning until death.
75. Mtumbwi huharibika karibu na kufika.  
The boat is destroyed when it approaches the shore.
76. Mtu ni afya.  
Being a live person is to be healthy.
77. Mtu ni utu.  
One is judged by ones deeds.
78. Mungu alichokukirimia usikidharau.  
Never despise what God has provided you with.
79. Mungu si Athumani (m.y. Mungu si mwanadamu. Athumani ni jina la mtu).  
God is not Athumani (pers. name) (i.e. God is not a human being).
80. Mvivu hujisingizia kutokuwa na nguvu.  
A lazy person pretends to have no strength.
81. Mvua imemsafisha uovu (m.y. mvua imemnyeshea sana).  
The rain has washed his sins (i.e. it has rained heavily on him).
82. Mvumilivu hula mbivu.  
One who perseveres eats the ripe fruit.
83. Mvumilivu hula mbivu au mbovu.  
One who is patient eats the ripe (fruit/food) or the rotten.
84. Mvuvi hakinaishwi na maji.  
A fisherman is never surfeited on water.
85. Mwali unapochukua ubayake hufahamu.  
You know the girl's faults after you have married her.

86. Mwana hakui kwa wazaziwe (m.y. hata mtu mzima ni mtoto kwa wazazi wake).

A child is never old before its parents (i.e. even an adult is a child to his parents).

87. Mwana kuku lala kipanga yu waja.

Chicken lie down, the falcon is coming.

88. Mwanamke mchawi huharibu jamaa.

A witch destroys the family.

89. Mwanamke mvivu hatajirishi mumewe.

A lazy woman does not enrich her husband.

90. Mwanamke tasa hula na mume wake.

A barren woman eats with her husband.

91. Mwanzo ni mgumu.

The beginning is always difficult.

92. Mwayo wa mtu mzima usipokuwa usingizi ni njaa.

The yawn of an adult, if it is not sleep, it is hunger.

93. Mwenda kwao hapotei njia.

One who goes home is never lost.

94. Mwenye bahati huzaliwa nayo.

A man of luck is born with it.

95. Mwenye choyo hashibi.

A greedy person is never satisfied.

96. Mwenye deni lako humwombea awe na afya.

You pray for your debtor to have good health.

97. Mwenye fadhili ndiye akushibishaye (Kihaya: Nyarubamba na ayakubamba enda).

A kind person is the one who feeds you (Haya: Nyarubamba na ayakubamba enda).

98. Mwenye kijinga hakosi njia.

One having a firebrand/torch does not loose the way.

99. Mwenye kiranga hasikitiwi wala akifa hawekewi matanga.

One who is suspected of witchcraft is never pitied even when he dies people never hold funeral services.

100. Mwenye kukana huvua (m.y. asemaye kuwa hana kitu fulani huthibitisha kuwa hanacho).

One who denies that he has nothing even undresses. (i.e. the one who says that he does not have something tries all ways to prove that he hasn't got it).

101. Mwenye kusema "sijakiona" huuliza aliyeishakiona.

One who says "I have never seen it". asks the one who has already seen it.

102. Mwenye kutupa mikono huku na huku huwa ana msaada (Kihaya: Kinaga mikono aba aina ekishagulila) (m.y. aumwaye akilialia huwa ana watu wa kumsaidia).

One who gesticulates is helped.  
(Haya: Kinaga mikono aba aina ekishagulila) (i.e. the patient who does not keep silent but shouts knows that he will get people to help him).

103. Mwenye mtoto hapigi makelele (m.y. mzazi au aliye na mtoto nyumbani akiona uchafu umewekwa karibu na nyumba yake hapaswi kupiga kelele na kugombeza watoto wa majirani kwani huenda ni mtoto wake amefanya hivyo).

One with a child does not shout (i.e. a parent or anyone with a child at home when he sees the dirt near his house is not to abuse the children of the neighbours for it may be it is his child who did that).

104. Mwenye nguo moja hafui.

One who has a single piece of cloth does not wash it.

105. Mwenye njaa hajui utamu wa chakula.

The hungry person does not know the taste of food.

106. Mwenye shibe hashindwi kazi.

One who has eaten and been satisfied never fails to work.

107. Mwiko humdhuru aliyeula.

The taboo harms the one who has broken it.

108. Mwindaji haachi mbwa nyumbani.

A hunter does not leave a dog at home.

109. Mwindaji hakinaishwi na umande.

A hunter is never surfeited on dew.

110. Mwivu hatoshwi na nafasi hata katika jangwa hutaka kupishwa njia.

A jealous person is never satisfied with space, even in the desert he asks people to let him pass.

111. Mzaliwa hashindwi - nyundo haishindi ukuu jiwe.

An elder is never younger than a younger person - a hammer is never older than a stone.

112. Mzazi hakanwi (m.y. heshima kwa wazazi ni muhimu).

A parent is never denied (i.e. respect for one's parents is of great importance).

113. Mzazi hali (m.y. mzazi hufikiria kwanza atakavyotunza mtoto apate chakula cha kumtoshia).

The parent never eats (i.e. the parent first thinks how he will feed the child).

114. Mzazi huzaa mwili hazai moyo/roho.

A parent bears the body, she does not bear the spirit.

115. Mzuri hauawi.

A good person is never killed.

## N

1. Nabembeleza anga nianike nini!

Why should I soothe the heavens (to send sunny weather) if I have nothing to dry!

2. Ndivyo wayajengavyo (Mithali hii hutumiwa kumtia moyo anayejenga ili asikate tamaa ajue yakuwa si rahisi kujenga nyumba).

That is how they build them (houses) (This proverb is used to encourage someone who is building so that he may not be discouraged; he has to know that it is not easy to build a house).

3. Ndiyo wanaume waonayo (Mithali hii hutumiwa kumwambia mwanamume akiwa shidani kuwa ajikaze kama wengine wajikazavyo wakiwa katika hali hiyo).

That is what men face. (This proverb is used in order to tell a man in difficulties, that he must have courage like other men when they are in that situation but succeed in overcoming sorrow or failure).

4. Ndiyo wanawake waonayo (Mithali hii hutumiwa kumwambia mwanamke akiwa shidani kuwa ajikaze kama wanawake wengine wajikazavyo wakiwa katika hali hiyo wakashinda huzuni au wapakata wanachoshughulikia).

That is what women face (This proverb is used in order to tell a woman in difficulties that she has to be courageous like other women in the same situation succeed in overcoming sorrow or achieve what they are struggling toward).

5. Ndoa hufunga mbinguni.

Marriage is pre-determined.

6. Nduguyo au dadako au rafikiyo hukutangulia usije ukanyang'anywa lakini vitu vya thamani huwa unajionea mwenyewe.

Your brother, your sister or your friend leads you that you may not be robbed, but what is dear you see with your own eyes.

## 7. Neno Hukumbushwa na neno.

One word is reminded by another word. (= One thought leads to another).

## 8. Ngoma ikivuma sana hupasuka kiwambo.

A drum which is beaten loudly will split.

## 9. Ngoma za tahadhari zalia nawe wasema "afadhali nife"?

Alarm-drums are beaten and you say "it is better I die"?

## 10. Ng'ombe dume achinjwapo hulia "ninakufa ole wake ngozi yangu".

The bull that is slaughtered sighs "I die, alas for my skin".

## 11. Ng'ombe wa karibu hali majani ya mahali hapo.

A cow which is near never eats the grass.

## 12. Nguvu hupatikana kwa kula (Kiganda: Gava mukulya).

Strength comes from eating (Ganda: Gava mukulya).

## 13. Ni afadhali kutunza mgonjwa kuliko kutunza mwanamke aliyejifungua (m.y. kwa mgonjwa waweza kupata chakula na vinono lakini ukimtunza mzazi vinono vyote huvitumia kumlisha yeye).

It is better to take care of the sick than to take care of one who has given birth (i.e. when you take care of a sick person you also get something to eat e.g. meat etc. but when you take care of a woman who has e.g. given birth it is not likely that you yourself can get e.g. meat etc. because she has to be fed with all the best).

## 14. Niambie rafiki yako nitakwambia tabia yako.

Tell me your friend and I shall tell you your character.

## 15. "Nichukue nini" huharibu ujamaa au undugu (m.y. mtu kwa kuwa hana zawadi kumpelekea rafiki yake akikataa kwenda kumtembelea urafiki au undugu utakoma au utalegea, ni vizuri kwenda kumtembelea rafiki ili kudumisha urafiki ingawa mtu huna cho chote).

(To say) "what shall I take" destroys brotherhood or friendship (i.e. if a person refuses to go to visit his friend or relative because he has no present to take with, their friendship or relationship will cease. It is good to visit a friend or a relative even if one has nothing to give them).

## 16. Nijapokufa ndipo niponapo (m.y. nikiwa katika shida nyingi ndipo nashtukia napata msaada).

When I am about to die is when I survive (i.e. when I am in great difficulties, it is then I start getting help).

17. Ni jenbe dogo likatalo kwekwe (m.y. kitu kidogo chaweza kufanya makubwa - usikidharau).  
It is a small thing that cuts weeds (i.e. a small thing can do great things - never despise it).
18. Nikaapo ndiko hupakuliwa chakula kilichoungua.  
Where I am sitting is where they dish what is burnt.
19. Nikatae mafuta nitajipaka nini! (m.y. nikikataa kizuri nitatumia nini!)  
If I refuse oil or cream with what shall I anoint myself! (i.e. if I refuse something nice what shall I use!)
20. Nikatae nini! (m.y. nikikataa nitatumia nini!)  
What should I refuse! (i.e. if I refuse that, what shall I use).
21. Ni kizuri kabla hujashika mwenyewe.  
It is good before you take it in your hands.
22. Nile vichache niwe na miguu miekundu kama<sup>4</sup> (m.y. afadhali kuwa na vichache niishi kwa amani kuliko kuwa na vingi nikakosa amani).  
/ kware  
It is better to eat little and have my legs red as a partridge (i.e. it is better to have few things and have peace than to have a lot of things and have no peace).
23. Nilikuwa nikitembezatembeza ili watu wanunue, leo nimeuza (m.y. nilikuwa nikihangaika wakati wote sasa nimepata nilichotaka; au nilikuwa na amani sasa taabu zimenizingira).  
I have been hawking for people to buy, today I have sold. (i.e. I had been anxious all the time, now I have got what I wanted; I had been in peace, now problems are around me).
24. Ni mdomoni na puani (m.y. ni karibu sana kama kutoka mdomoni kuingia puani).  
It is in the mouth and in the nose (i.e. it is near as from the mouth to the nose).
25. Nimeona jicho la kiroboto (m.y. nimeona kitu ambacho sijakiona maishani).  
I have seen an eye of a flea (i.e. I have seen something which I have never seen).
26. Nimeona jino la mjusi (m.y. nimeona kitu ambacho sijakiona maishani).  
I have seen a tooth of a lizard (i.e. I have seen something which I have never seen).



27. Ni mtamu na mchungu (m.y. wakati fulani mtu fulani ni mwema na wakati mwingine ni mbaya).  
(He) is nice and nasty (i.e. sometimes somebody is nice and sometimes bad or too angry).
28. Ninafungua nawe waniambia nitoboe?  
I am opening whereas you are telling me to bore a hole?
29. Ninakwambia pokea nawe wanjibu tupa!  
I tell you to take it whereas you are telling me throw it!
30. Nina mdomo nawe una mdomo halafu waniambia 'piga yowe'?  
I have a mouth, you have a mouth, then you tell me 'cry'? (i.e. you are asking me to do the crying for you).
31. Ninatafuta (fedha) zinanikimbia (m.y. sina fedha).  
I am searching for it (money) but it runs from me (i.e. I have no money).
32. Ninatembelea kwenye mti kama kipere (m.y. sina nguvu ingawa ninatembelea au ninafanya kazi).  
I am walking on a tree as a kipere (a creeping potato plant) (i.e. I have no strength although I am walking or I am working).
33. (Roho) ni tamu (Kihaya: omwoyo gunula).  
(The spirit) is precious (Haya: omwoyo gunula).
34. Nitendeayo wengine sitaki wanitendee yayo hayo (Kiganda: Ekyonkola banange sinyagala bakinkole) (Mithali hii hutumiwa kumwambia mtu aliyewatendea wengine mabaya hapo yeye pia atendewapo aanzapo kunungunika kuwa ametendewa vibaya).  
What I do to others I do not like others to do to me (Ganda: Ekyonkola banange sinyagala bakinkole) (This proverb is used to tell someone who has done wrong to others, when he also is done the wrong he has done to others then he grumbles or shouts that he does not like such things to be done to him).
35. Njaa imezidi chui anakula majani (m.y. kuna hitaji kubwa la kitu fulani, sasa watu wanatumia hata kile wasichotumia kwa kawaida).  
There is great hunger, the leopard is eating grass (i.e. there is a great need of a certain thing, that is why people are now using that which they should not have been using).
36. Njaa imezidi mbwa anakula kahawa.  
Famine rages, the dog is eating coffee-beans.
37. Njia moja humfanya panya auawe.  
One way causes a rat to be killed. (i.e. a rat is trapped/ambushed along its usual passage/route.)

### 38. Nyama yenye mafuta huiweki karibu na moto.

A fatty meat you never put near fire.

## P

#### 1. Paa aliyekufa humfundisha paa hai.

The dead gazelle teaches the living gazelle.

#### 2. Palipo na mkoma wa vidole hukunji kidole.

Where there is a lame (of fingers) you never bend your finger.

#### 3. Pengo la jino moja halizuii kinywa kutafuna.

One notch does not prevent the mouth from chewing.

#### 4. Penye shimo mna nyoka.

Where there is a hole there is a snake.

## R

#### 1. Rahisi kupata umaskini kuliko kupata utajiri.

It is easier to become poor than to become rich.

#### 2. Roho huzaliwa (m.y. tabia ya mtoto huanza utotoni).

Good spirit is born (i.e. good character begins in childhood).

## S

#### 1. Sema ukweli uatafune (m.y. ukweli utakuokoa).

Say the truth and eat it (i.e. the truth will save you).

#### 2. Shukrani haitimilizi (m.y. shukrani ni alama tu ya kuonyesha moyo uliojaa shukrani nyingi mtu asivyoweza kueleza)

Gratitude never satisfies (i.e. gratitude is only a sign to show the heart that is full of many thanks that one cannot express).

#### 3. Si cha kuonja ukaacha (m.y. ni kitamu ukionja wataka kuendelea kukila).

It is not something to taste and stop eating it (i.e. it is very sweet, when you taste it, you never like to stop eating it). Merely tasting it will not suffice.

4. (Ametia chumvi ati) si kifutu ni shina la mgomba (m.y. amekuza kitu sana katika maelezo yake).  
(He has added salt that) it is not a snake, it is a banana stem (i.e. he has exaggerated).
5. Siku moja haifanyi nyama kuoza.  
One day does not make meat rot.
6. Siku za mwizi ni arobaini (m.y. mwizi ana siku yake ya kugunduliwa).  
The days of the thief are forty (i.e. a thief will one day be caught).
7. Simba asingekula watu alifundishwa.  
The lion could not eat people, but was taught to do so.
8. Sina cha kutumia kuchekelea (m.y. sina kitu cha kutumia).  
I have nothing to laugh with (i.e. I have nothing to use).
9. Sisi hutibu Mungu huponya.  
We treat, but God heals.
10. Sote tu watu wake (mauti) (m.y. sote tutakufa).  
We all belong to it (death) (i.e. we all shall die).

## T

1. Tabia njema hujaza na mbaya hupunguza.  
Good character fills, but bad character diminishes.
2. Tamaa huua.  
Strong desire kills.
3. Tarishi au mtumwa hauawi.  
A messenger is never killed.
4. Tembo akila miiba hutambua uchungu wake wakati wa kujisaidia.  
When an elephant eats thorns it knows their sharpness at the time of defecating.
5. Tembo huuawa na sisimizi.  
An elephant is killed by a small ant.
6. Tumekula ng'ombe mzima tusishindwe na mkia.  
We have eaten the whole cow, we shouldn't fail to eat the tail.
7. Tunza kama mboni ya jicho (m.y. tunza vizuri sana).  
Keep (it) as the pupil of an eye (i.e. keep it safely).

8. Tusipokutana mvua ikinyesha tutakutana jua likiwaka (m.y. tusipokutana wakati wa furaha - kukiwa sherehe n.k. tutakutana wakati wa shida).

If we do not meet when it is raining (when there are festivals) we shall meet when it is sunny (when there will be difficulties).

## U

1. Ubongo wa wakia chache katika kichwa cha mwanadamu ni kitabu cha kurasa zilizohifadhi fikira zisizo na mwisho.

The brain of few ounces in the human head is a book of pages which have preserved endless thoughts.

2. Uchawi wa mdomo huzidi wa dawa (m.y. maneno ni ya hatari sana kuliko dawa).

The bewitchment of the mouth surpasses that of the medicine (i.e. words are dangerous than medicine).

3. Ufunguo mdogo hufungua kufuli kubwa.

A small key opens a big padlock

4. Uhuru na kazi (mithali hii hutumiwa kukaza kuwa mtu apatapo uhuru si kuwa mvivu bali kufanya kazi kwa bidii kwa kuwa maendeleo yanategemea bidii au juhudi yake).

Freedom and Work. (This proverb emphasizes that when you get freedom, you must not be lazy but have to work hard, because freedom can only be maintained through hard work and development depends on ability and zeal.

5. Ujapo mgeni usilale kabla ya mwenyeji kulala.

When visiting never sleep before the host.

6. Ujinga ni ugonjwa.

Folly is illness.

7. Ukikimbilia kware wawili hutashika mojawapo.

If you chase two partridges you will catch neither,

8. Ukiitacho kikubwa Mungu hukiita kidogo.

What you think big God thinks small.

9. Ukitaka kumpangusa machozi aliaye uwe tayari kushika machozi yake (m.y. ukitaka kumsaidia fulani nawe wachukua mzigo wake).

When you want to wipe away someone's tears you also touch his tears (i.e. when you want to help someone you take his burden).

10. Ukiwa na fedha utajuta, ukiwa huna utajuta pia.

If you have money you will be sorry and if you have none you will be sorry.

11. Ulimi hujishitaki wenyewe (Kihaya: kilimi nyakwelega).  
The tongue accuses itself. (Haya: Kilimi nyakwelega).
12. Ulichozaa hukikani.  
What you have born you never deny.
13. Ulicholima mwenyewe ndicho mbegu.  
What you have planted yourself is seed for the future.
14. Ulicholima mwenyewe kinazidi umegewacho.  
What you have grown yourself is more than a piece you are given.
15. Umaskini hauchekelewi.  
Poverty is never ridiculed.
16. Umaskini humuua asiyejimudu (Kihaya: enzingami).  
Poverty kills the workshy (Haya: enzingami).
17. Umbali hutia/huzidisha hamu.  
Distance lends enchantment.
18. Umeacha kula ukajikuna? (Mithali hii hutumiwa hasa kumwonya mtoto anayeacha kula akaanza kuchezecheza).  
You have stopped eating, you are scratching yourself (This proverb is used to warn a child who plays while eating).
19. Umehangaika kama aozaye binti kifungua mimba au kitinda mimba.  
You are as busy as the one who marries (is arranging for the marriage of) the first or the last daughter.
20. Umekumbuka kujifunika huku kunakucha (m.y. wakati wa kufanya kazi umefika huku unajaribu kujifunika blanketi).  
You have remembered to cover yourself when it is dawning (i.e. the time for working is at hand whereas you are covering yourself with a blanket or you are resting when it is time for work).
21. Umekuwa na jasho kama apikaye kuku.  
You are sweating like one who fries a chicken.
22. Umeondoka bila kuaga kama njaa.  
You have left without notice, like hunger.
23. Umetupa mikono katika 'minyorozi' (i.y. umeacha kufanya kazi kwa ajili ya uvivu).  
You have thrown hands in 'minyorozi' (i.e. you are not working because of laziness).  
Your hands are idle.

24. Umoja ni nguvu utengano ni udhaifu.  
Unity is strength but disunity is weakness.
25. Umpedaye hupenda na tabia zake.  
You love also the character of the loved one.
26. Umwaziaye arusi hukuwazia matanga.  
The one whom you wish wedding wishes you mourning.
27. Unachezacheza wageni wakiwepo (m.y. huna aibu kwa yale uyafanyayo wageni wakiwepo. Mithali hii hutumiwa kuwaonya watoto wasiotulia).  
You are playing while guests are present (i.e. you are not ashamed of what you are doing. This proverb is used to warn children who do not behave properly).
28. Unafanya kazi bure kama akingaye mvua huku imeishaacha kunyesha.  
You are doing nothing, like one who puts a container outside to collect rain-water when it is no longer raining.
29. Unafanya kazi bure kama apigiliaye ngoma majini.  
You are doing nothing like one who beats a drum in the water.
30. Unafanya kazi bure kama apigiaye yowe majini.  
You are doing nothing like one who shouts in the water.
31. Unafanya kazi bure kama atengenezaye pombe nyumanju.  
You are doing nothing, like one who prepares beer (beer from sour bananas) behind the house (thinking that he will not be known).
32. Unaficha kitakachojionyesha (k.m. mimba).  
You are hiding what will be seen (e.g. pregnancy).
33. Unaunda na kijiti na hali kuna nyundo?  
Are you hammering with a stick whereas there is a hammer at hand?
34. Unakata kuwili kama upanga.  
You are cutting with two edges as a sword (or you are a two-edged sword).
35. Unalia machozi ya mamba (m.y. unajifanya kuhurumia).  
You are shedding crocodile tears.
36. Unalia maziwa? (Mithali hii hutumiwa hasa kumwonya mtoto kuwa kulia kwake hakuwezi kumsaidia afadhali kuacha kulia).  
Are you shedding out tears of milk? (This proverb is used to warn a child that its crying cannot help it, it is worthwhile keeping quiet).

37. Unasikia wanaomboleza halafu wauliza "mama kizee jirani hajambo?"

You hear people lamenting and ask "how is our old neighbour?"

38. Uongo ni deni.

A lie is a debt.

39. Upende watu utumie vitu, usitumie watu ukapenda vitu.

Love people and use things; do not love things and use people.

40. Upendo hujenga.

Love builds.

41. Usemapo uongo ndipo usiku hucha upesi (m.y. uahidipo kulipa deni au kitu fulani na huku huna njia ya kulipa deni hilo ndipo tarehe uliyoahidi kuwa utalipa hutimia upesi).

When you lie the dawn comes quickly (i.e. when you have promised to pay a debt or something else at a certain date without having the means of fulfilling the promise, the promised day approaches quickly).

42. Useme "nililala njaa" usiseme "tulilala njaa" (m.y. usiseme kwa ujumla hujui wengine walivyo).

You can say, "I slept hungry last night", but not "we slept hungry last night" (i.e. do not generalize, you do not know how others are).

43. Usiache kwako umezimika ukaenda kuwasha kwa jirani.

You should not leave the fire at your home being extinguished and go to make fire at the neighbour's home.

44. Usiache mbacha kwa msala upitao.

Don't leave your old mat for the new one passing.

45. Usiache ulichoishapata ukakimbilia ulicho bado kupata (m.y. shika ulicho nacho).

Don't leave or loose your possessions to run after what you have not acquired (i.e. hold what you have).

46. Usichokila usimpe mwenzako.

What you do not eat yourself do not give to your friend.

47. Usichokitenda hakikuhangaishi (m.y. wakikunenea uongo ukashikwa huhangaiki, ukweli utaonekana).

What you have not done does not worry you (i.e. if they lie that you have done something wrong, when you are caught you do not worry because truth will out).

48. Usijipende kama ajinyonyaye.

Do not love yourself as someone who sucks oneself.

49. Usijisifu na kujigamba kabla hujaona (m.y. usijisifu kuwa una kitu fulani na kumbe bado hujakiona huenda usikipate).

Do not boast before seeing (i.e. do not boast of what you have not yet got, perhaps you will not get it).

50. Usijitegemee mno, waweza kukauka kama mto Muo (Muo ni mto katika Moshi Tanzania, hauna vijito vya kuingiza maji kwa hiyo wakati wa kiangazi hukauka).

Don't be too much independent, you will dry up like the river Muo (Muo is a river in Moshi-Tanzania, it has no tributaries therefore during dry season it dries up).

51. Usikolima kwa nini kupachungulia?

Why do you look where you do not cultivate.

52. Usiku hautoi siri (m.y. ni hatari kuzungumza siri usiku huenda watu nje wakasikia).

Never give out a secret at night (i.e. it is dangerous to tell a secret at night, someone may be outside listening).

53. Usiku hauweki siri au usiku hutoa siri.

The night gives out secrets.

54. Usiku hautungi shanga.

The night does not put together beans (for wearing).

55. Usiku humchukua mwenye kutaka kuvunjika mguu au mkono n.k.

The night takes one who will hurt himself.

56. Usilale kabla ya mgeni wako.

Do not go to bed before your guest.

57. Usilale kabla ya mwenyeji wako.

Do not go to bed before your host.

58. Usimdharau mfalme au mtawala ukiwa katika nchi yake (m.y. ukiwa katika nchi ngeni lazima kujihadhari).

Do not despise or disregard a king or a ruler when you are in his country.

59. Usingizi mwingi ukaribiapo alfajiri.

The nearer the dawn the deeper the sleep.

60. Usingizi wa mvivu huja asubuhi.

The sleep of a lazy person comes at dawn.

61. Usinionee wivu huletwa na jasho (m.y. kwa kufanya kazi kwa bidii mtu hupata chakula, mali n.k.).

Do not envy me, they are produced by sweat (i.e. by working hard one gets food, wealth, etc.).



62. Usinipotezee njia kama Ngono (m.y. usinibabaishe hata nikaweza kukosa ninalotaka kufanya. Ngono ni mto katika Mkoa wa Ziwa Magharibi, mto huo umejipindapinda sana).  
Do not mislead me as Ngono ( i.e. do not confuse me or do not make me lose my way or my target. Ngono is a very meandering river in the West Lake Region of Tanzania).
63. Usipande mbarika ukachukia ndege.  
Do not plant castor-oil trees and then dislike birds.
64. Usipokuwa na fimbo ndipo huona nyoka akipita.  
When you have no stick is when you see a snake passing.
65. Usipokuwa na fimbo ndipo huona pana akipita.  
When you have no stick is when you see a rat passing.
66. Usipopambazuka hufungua jinsi ulivyo (m.y. ukiona jambo limeshindikamana hukichukua jinsi lilivyo).  
If it does not dawn you open as it is (i.e. if you see something that is too difficult you leave it as it is).
67. Usitandike kitanda kabla bibi arusi hajafika.  
Do not prepare the bed before the bride comes.
68. Usitengeneze mbeleko kabla mwana hajazaliwa.  
Do not make a child's carrying-cloth before it is born.
69. Utajiri ni nguvu.  
Richness is strength.
70. Utakachobeba hakikupaki umande (m.y. afadhali kuchukua uwezacho kubeba).  
What you will bear does not smear you with dew (i.e. take what you are able to carry).
71. Utakaozaa matunda huanza kuota maua.  
That which will bear fruits gives out flowers first.
72. Utakausha mafuta (Mithali hii hutumiwa kumwonya mtu asiendelee kufanya yasiyopendeza kuwa baadaye aweza kufanya mabaya sana akiendelea hivyo).  
You will fry the fat (This proverb is used to warn someone not to continue doing what is displeasing for if he continues he will do abomination).
73. Utanichoka hasidi.  
You will be tired of being jealous of me.
74. Utazaa ajabu (Mithali hii hutumiwa kumwonya mtu ni kama hiyo iliyotangulia No. U. 72).  
You will bear wonders (see explanation of No. U. 72).

## 75. Uzi hupitia mahali sindano ipitiamo.

The thread follows the needle.

## V

1. Viazi vitamu huendelea kukua mtu akitumia mhundu (m.y. vitu vikichukuliwa kwa pupa vitakwisha upesi, yafaa kuchukua kiasi kwa kiasi).

Potatoes increase if one takes a few at a time (i.e. things which are taken with over-eagerness will be finished quickly, it is better to take a few at a time).

2. Vijioteshavyo hufisha mbegu.

Plants which grow by themselves produce no seeds.

3. Vikiwepo afadhali kuvila (mithali hii hutumiwa kumwambia mtu mgeni mwenye soni anapokula ili kumshawishi aendelee kula)

When it is available it is better to eat it (food). (This proverb is used to tell a visitor who is shy while eating, so that he may continue eating). Eat the food while it is there.

4. Vikose masikitiko vipatikane taabu. (m.y. mtu asiyejipimia akiwa na njaa huwa na mahangaiko, lakini apatapo chakula hula kwa tamaa mpaka avimbiwe).

Something when it is not available there is misery and when it is available there is misery (i.e. a person who does not care when he has hunger he is very sorry and when he gets food he eats until he is distended). It hurts when you have it, it hurts when you don't.

5. Vimepatikana wakati nisipoweza kuvila.

The food is abundant but I have no more strength to eat.

6. Vimewashinda wale waliolala huko ati yeye ataviweza.

They have failed those who slept there whereas he says that he will do them.

7. Visivyo na pongezi havistawi (m.y. pongezi humtia mtu bidii).

What is not blessed does not succeed.

8. Vitamu viwili kwa wakati mmoja hupasua mashavu.

Two sweets at the same time split the cheek.

9. Vitu mtu aonavyo sivyo visimuliwavyo (m.y. vitu mtu aonavyo haviwezi kusimuliwa vyote, baadhi vyasemwa juu yake na vingine vyasahaulika au vyaachwa makusudi).

What are seen are not what are told about (i.e. things that one sees cannot be explained all of them, some are said about, some are forgotten or are left intentionally).

## 10. Vizuri viko mbali.

Good things are far off.

## W

1. Waendao kwa mtawala mapema na waendao wamechelewa humkuta mbwa aliye kufa (m.y. kuna hatari ya kuzuruazurua karibu na jumba la mfalme au mtawala).

The first-comers and the late-comers to the king or ruler find a dead dog (i.e. there is danger in wandering about the residence of the king or ruler).

2. Wafanya kisebusebu na kiroho kipapapo (m.y. unajifanya).

You are pretending you are not excited while your heart is pounding.

3. Wakaao mvua inyeshapo hawafi (m.y. kule mvua inyeshako watu hawapatwi na njaa; hulima, hupanda na kuvuna).

Those who live where it rains never die (i.e. where it rains people never get famine; they cultivate, plant and harvest).

4. Wachomao mkuki nguruwe hukaa upande mmoja (Haya: Abachumita empunu bema lubaju lumu).

Those who spear a wild pig stand on the same side (Haya: Abachumita empunu bema lubaju lumu).

5. Wakwako hupenda acheze afurahishe.

When a relative or a friend dances you wish him to dance well and please people.

6. Wamemshukuru kupika vizuri amelamba mwiko (m.y. walipomshukuru naye akazidi kujisifu mno).

They praised him for good cooking then he licked the spoon (i.e. they praised him and instead of being humble he was too proud).

7. Wamemsukuma aliyechuchumaa.

They have pushed the one who was squatting (i.e. the one who was about to jump).

8. Wamemwoza aliyekuwa karibu kujioza.

They have married the one who was about to marry herself. (i.e. they managed to do something in the eleventh hour).

9. Wameukatia ulikoinamia.

They cut it where it bent.

10. Wapendanao huwa safi (m.y. wapendanao hujiona wakiwa safi)

Those who love one another are pure (i.e. those who love one another never see their faults).  
cf. Love is blind.

11. Watu hawazidi nyumbani bali mioyo ndiyo huzidi.

Persons are never too many to fill the house but souls are the ones which can be too many to fill the house.

12. Watu hawazungumzi na mali (m.y. mtu hastahili kujivunia mali).

People never talk to riches (i.e. a person ought not to be proud of his wealth).

13. Wasema huli kuku na huku wala mayai?

You say that you do not eat chicken how come you eat eggs?

14. Watu huuliza kama mtoto analia (m.y. kulia kwa mtoto huonyesha afya yake -hasa wakati anapozaliwa).

People ask whether the child is crying (i.e. the cry of a child indicates its health - especially when it is being born).

15. Watu huuliza mtu aliyetoka palipofanyika jambo.

People ask the one who comes from the scene of an event.

16. Waweza kukata kijiti kimoja, si fungu la vijiti (m.y. waweza kumshinda mtu mmoja lakini si umma. Mithali hii hutumiwa na watu waliojiunga pamoja wakimwambia fulani anayetaka kuharibu umoja wao au kuharibu maendeleo yao kusudi aache kufanya hivyo).

You can break one stick but not a bundle (i.e. you can defeat one person but not a group. This proverb is used by people who have joined together to tell someone who wants to spoil their unity or to spoil their development so that he may stop doing so).

17. Wazichanjao kuni sio waotao moto.

Those who fetch fire-wood are not those who bask fire.

18. Weka panya asipoweza kufika (m.y. weka vizuri sana mwarifu au mwizi asipofika).

Keep (it) where a rat cannot reach it (i.e. keep it safely where a robber cannot reach).

19. Wimbo mbaya hauimbwi mtoto (m.y. wimbo mbaya ukiimbwa mbele ya mtoto, mtoto huyo ataiga mambo mabaya).

A bad song is never sung to a child (i.e. if a bad song is sung to a child, that child will learn bad habits).

## Y

1. Ya Mungu ni mengi.

God's deeds are above human understanding.

2. 'Yasinunuliwe ni yale' kama mbwa anauza mafuta (asemavyo).  
'Let it not be bought so that I may eat it', as a dog  
selling oil (says).
3. (Macho) yatazamayo ndizi nzuri hayatazami magugu?  
Why do the eyes that look at a good banana do not see  
the weeds?

## Z

1. Zawadi si ndogo.  
A present is never small.  
cp. It is small in the eye, but not in the mouth.
2. (Ng'ombe) zilizomo zizini hazipigwi radi (m.y. watu wakiwa  
chini ya uongozi bora hawawezi kupatwa na hatari).  
(The cattle) that are in the shelter are never struck by  
the lightning (i.e. people under good leadership or  
protection cannot be harmed).
3. (Nyumba) zilizopakana huunguzana.  
(Houses) which are close together, burn together.
4. Zisizo (k.m. ng'ombe, mbuzi n.k.) na mchungaji hujisambaza.  
ovyo.  
(Cattle or goats) which have no herdsman scatter.
5. Zisizo (k.m. ng'ombe, au mbuzi) na mchungaji hula bidhaa  
vya wengine.  
(Cattle or goats) which have no herdsman graze in others'  
fields.
6. Ziwa husaidia (m.y. waliozaliwa pamoja husaidiana).  
The breast helps (i.e. those of the same parents help  
one another).

SEHEMU YA PILI:

PART TWO:

VITENDAWILI

RIDDLES

Leonidas Kalugila

## MAELEZO KUHUSU VITENDAWILI:

Kwa kawaida vitendawili husemwa kwa kupokezana kati ya watu wawili au kati ya watu zaidi ya mmoja wakiwa katika vikundi viwili. Mtu wa kwanza au mtega kitendawili husema, 'kitendawili', mtu wa pili au msikilizaji (au wasikilizaji) hujibu 'tega'. Msikilizaji au wasikilizaji akishindwa, mtega husema 'nipe kichwa', hapo msikilizaji hujibu 'kichwa', halafu mtega huendelea.

Baada ya mtega kupata kama vichwa vinne au vitano husema 'nipe kijiji', halafu msikilizaji (au wasikilizaji) hutaja kijiji fulani. Ikiwa mtega hapendi kijiji hicho, hukikataa mpaka msikilizaji ametaja kijiji apendacho yeye mtega.

Kuna namna mbalimbali za kujibu mtega kitendawili ikiwa msikilizaji ameshindwa, tazama pia Farsi, S.S., Swahili Sayings, Kitabu cha Pili, ukr. 1).

## ABOUT RIDDLES:

Usually riddles are exchanged between two persons or between more than one person in two groups. The first person or the narrator sets a riddle by saying, "Kitendawili" - "The riddle", then the second person or the listener (or the listening group) replies 'tega' - 'set it'. In case the listener (or the listeners) fails, the narrator says, 'give me a head', the listener replies 'head', then the narrator continues.

After the narrator has got about four or five heads, he says 'give me a village', then the listener mentions a certain village. If the narrator does not like the village he refuses it until the listener mentions a village that the narrator likes best.

There are different ways of giving answers to the narrator in case the listener fails (see also Farsi, S.S., Swahili Saying, vol. 2, p. 1).

Kitendawili: Tega  
A riddle: Set it

1. Achilia nipokee.  
(WATOTO WA MAMA MMOJA)  
Be weaned that I may suck it.  
(CHILDREN OF THE SAME MOTHER)
2. Ahaaa!  
(NYUMBA ISIIYOKUWEMO MAMA YAKO)  
Ahaaa!  
(A HOUSE WHERE YOUR MOTHER IS NOT IN)
3. Aliyekuweko bila kuzaliwa.  
(ADAMU)  
He who has been there without being born.  
(ADAM)
4. Ametoka kwa mumewe hatarudi kamwe.  
(JANI LA MTI WA MRUMBA)  
She has gone away from her husband and she will not return.  
(A LEAF OF A BARK-TREE)
5. Anajipiga kisha analia.  
(JOGOO)  
He beats himself and then cries.  
(A COCK)
6. 'Batabata' ya 'Batabata'.  
(USHUUZI WA BI KIZEE)  
'Batabata' of 'batabata'.  
(WIND PASSED BY AN OLD WOMAN)
7. Bibi anakunguta matandiko.  
(RADI)  
The grandmother is beating the beddings.  
(THUNDER)
8. Blanketi la babu lina chawa.  
(NYOTA)  
My grandfather's blanket has lice.  
(STARS)



9. Chajibandika na kujibandua.  
 (a. NYASI ZIWEKWAZO CHINI YA MAJANI YA MGOMBA AMBAPO  
 CHAKULA HUWEKWA.  
 b. KIJITI CHA KUFUNGIA MLANGO).

It attaches and disattaches.

- (a. GRASS PLACED UNDER BANANA LEAVES WHERE FOOD IS  
 PLACED.  
 b. A STICK USED FOR LOCKING THE DOOR).

10. Chakata kama kisu kikali.  
 (ULIMI)

It cuts as a sharp knife.  
 (THE TONGUE)

11. Chakutisha hakikuui.  
 (a. GIZA  
 b. MWANGA UPITIAO TUNDUNI MWA PAA).

It frightens you but it cannot eat you.

- (a. DARKNESS  
 b. LIGHT THAT PASSES THROUGH A HOLE IN THE HOUSE).

12. Chanizunguka.  
 (TAABU AU UMASKINI)

It climbs the tree without legs.  
 (A SNAKE)

13. Chapanda mti bila miguu.  
 (NYOKA)

It climbs the tree without legs.  
 (A SNAKE)

14. Dume wa baba anangurumia malishoni.  
 (RADI)

My father's oxen is crying in the grazing yard.  
 (THUNDER)

15. Fimbo yangu nzuri iliotea kwenye miiba.  
 (DADA)

My good staff grew up in the thorns.  
 (ONE'S SISTER)

16. Hazikauki umande.  
 (PUA ZA MBWA)

They do not dry the dew.  
 (DOG'S NOSE)

17. Hiki ni nini?  
 (KIDOLE)

What is this?  
 (FINGER)

18. Huenda nimepanda hurudi nimepanda.  
(INZI JUU YA MKUKI)  
I go while climbing and I return climbing.  
(A FLY ON A SPEAR)
19. Hujisaidia kikirundika pamoja.  
(KUNI MEKONI)  
It helps itself piling up together.  
(FIREWOOD IN THE FIRE PLACE)
20. Hulia chakula mlimani bila kuanguka.  
(a. PANYA JUU YA UKUTA WA NYUMBA.  
b. UKUNGU).  
It eats food on a mountain without falling down.  
(a. A RAT  
b. FOG)
21. Hutembea nikitupa.  
(a. MAKAPI YA MIWA.  
b. MAKAPI YA KAHAWA).  
I walk while throwing.  
(a. SUGAR CANE HUSKS.  
b. COFFEE-BEAN-HUSKS).
22. Ina paa, madirisha na milango.  
(NYUMBA)  
It has a roof, windows and doors.  
(A HOUSE)
23. 'Jejere jeje'.  
(a. MAHALI PA KUCHANJIA KUNI.  
b. MAHALI PA KUPASULIA KUNI).  
'Jejere jeje'.  
(a. A PLACE WHERE ONE GATHERS FIREWOOD.  
b. A PLACE USED FOR CHOPPING FIREWOOD).
24. Jirani husema mnn na hapa nyumbani husema mnn!  
(KULA BILA KITOWEO)  
Neighbours say mnn and here at home we say mnn!  
(EATING WITHOUT BROTH)
25. 'Jugujugu' mkungu.  
(NYUNDO HAINA KAZI MSITUNI)  
'Jugujugu' a bunch of banana holder.  
(A HAMMER HAS NO WORK IN THE FOREST)
26. Kimwiinamishacho mfalme.  
(a. MLANGO WA UWANI.  
b. WEMBE WA KINYOZI).  
What makes a king to bend.  
(a. THE DOOR OF THE COURTYARD.  
b. THE RAZOR OF THE BARBER).

27. Kinachoma kama moto.  
(ULIMI)

It burns like fire.  
(THE TONGUE)

28. Kinajitokeza mbali.  
(a. MTOTO AENDAE KWAO  
b. MOSHI WA MKULIMA  
c. MTUMBWI WA MBALI  
d. NDEGE ALIYE JUU SANA - TAI AU MWEWE).

It is raising up far away.  
(a. A CHILD THAT IS TRAVELING TO ITS HOME  
b. THE FARMER'S SMOKE  
c. A BOAT THAT IS FAR AWAY  
d. A BIRD THAT IS FAR AWAY - AN EAGLE OR A HAWK.)

29. Kinapanda 'chocholi'.  
(MOSHI WA MKULIMA)

It has risen (chocholi) - after being poked.  
(THE FARMER'S, SMOKE)

30. Kipara cha mzee kinatoka moshi.  
(UJI)

The bald head of the old man is giving out smoke.  
(PORRIDGE)

31. 'Kitanga' amefunika watoto wake.  
(a. KUKU  
b. NYUMBA).

'Kitanga' has covered her children.  
(a. A HEN  
b. HOUSE)

33. 'Magamaga'.  
(a. PANZI KWENYE MITI YA MIIBA - Kihaya: MATOJU  
b. MVUA KWENYE MITI YA MIIBA  
c. MAVI YA MBUZI KWENYE MWAMBA)

'Magamaga'  
(a. GRASSHOPPERS ON THE THORNY PLANTS - Haya: MATOJU  
b. RAIN ON THE THORNY PLANTS  
c. GOAT'S DUNG ON THE ROCK).

34. Mama yetu mmoja.  
(CHUNGU)

Our mother is one.  
(A COOKING POT)

35. Mchicha mzuri umengolewa na watu wa nje.  
(DADA)

The good spinach has been cut by other people.  
(ONE'S SISTER)

36. 'Mhimhi!'  
(MAMA KIZEE WAMEMPA KINYAGO CHA NYAMA KIDOGO)  
'Mhimhi!'  
(AN OLD WOMAN HAS BEEN GIVEN A LITTLE PIECE OF MEAT)
37. 'Mmm!'  
(a. USHUZI WA MKWE  
b. USHUZI WA MTU ANAYEEZEKA NYUMBA)  
'Mmm!'  
(a. WIND PASSED BY A SON-IN-LAW  
b. WIND PASSED BY SOMEONE ROOFING THE HOUSE)
38. Muteta anacheza na Mulamba anaumia (Muteta na Mulamba ni majina ya watu).  
(SHOKA NA MTI)  
Muteta is playing, Mulamba is suffering (Muteta and Mulamba are personal names).  
(AN AXE AND A TREE)
39. 'Mwaa!' (BURN !)  
(a. JUA  
b. MWEZI)  
Mwaa!  
(a. SUN  
b. MOON)
40. Mwanamume ameota ndevu na mwanamke ameota ndevu.  
(MIHINDI)  
Both man and woman have grown beards.  
(MAIZE)
41. Mwanamume butege amemfukuza babako.  
(NYUKI)  
A man under evil spell has chased your father.  
(A BEE)
42. Mwanamume butege amemwangusha babako.  
(UTELEZI)  
A man under evil spell has caused your father to fall down.  
(SLIPPERINESS)
43. Mwanamume butege awezaye kukata kwekwe.  
(UYOGA)  
A man under evil spell that cuts weeds.  
(MUSH-ROOM)
44. Mwenyewe hana uti wa mgongo.  
(ULIMI)  
He has no backbone  
(A TONGUE)

45. Natembea usiku na mchana.

(a. MAJI  
b. SIAFU)

I walk night and day.

(a. WATER  
b. ANTS)

46. Ng'ambo peupe.

(MOSHI WA MKULIMA)

Yonder is white.

(THE FARMER'S SMOKE)

47. Ng'ombe wa miguu minane.

(NG'OMBE MWENYE MIMBA)

A cow of eight legs.

(A PREGNANT COW)

48. Nikienda msituni huenda nimeshika pembe ya ng'ombe.

(SHOKA)

When I go to the forest I go holding the cow's horn.

(AN AXE)

49. Nikikwambia kula hula nini?

(ULIMI MDOMONI)

When I tell you eat, what do you eat?

(THE TONGUE IN THE MOUTH)

50. Nikiwa nasafiri nikaona ajabu hurudi.

(PANZI)

When I am traveling and at once see something strange  
I return.

(GRASSHOPPERS)

51. Nilichoma mbuga yangu pakabakia mgongo wa kobe.

(a. NJIA)

b. JIWE)

I burnt my big area but there remained the tortoise's shell.

(a. A WAY)

b. A STONE)

52. Nilijenga nyumba yangu na kuweka mlango juu.

(JANI LA MGOMBA-jani changa linalotokeza juu).

I built my house and put the entrance above.

(A BANANA LEAF- a leaf that is still folded facing upwards)

53. Nilikuwa na pikipiki inaenda kukapotea ufunguo.

(NJIA)

I had a motor-cycle and its lock was lost.

(A WAY)

54. Nilikuwa ndani lakini nilikuwa sili chakula.

(NJAA)

I was inside but I was not eating food.

(HUNGER)

55. Nilikwenda kuchanja kuni nyingi nikashindwa kujitwika.  
(MIZIZI)

I went to fetch a lot of fire-wood but failed to carry them.  
(ROOTS)

56. Nilikwenda nikichoma nikarudi nikichoma.  
(MKUKI)

I went stabbing and came back still stabbing.  
(A SPEAR)

57. Nililima shamba langu na kuweka tuta moja.

- (a. JUA  
b. MWEZI)

I cultivated my field and put only one ridge.  
(a. SUN  
b. MOON)

58. Nililima shamba langu sikujua kilichopita humo.

- (a. NYOKA  
b. SIAFU)

I cultivated my field but did not know what passed through it.  
(a. A SNAKE  
b. ANTS)

59. Nilimposa msichana lakini alikimbia.  
(HASIRA)

I betrothed a girl but she ran away.  
(ANGER)

60. Nilitoka kule nikipanda nilifika huku nikipanda.  
(MAKAPI YA KAHAWA)

I came from there to here planting.  
(COFFEE-BEAN-HUSKS)

61. Nilizaa watoto wengi huwavika ngozi ya aina moja.

- (a. MCHWA  
b. UKUMBI)

I bore many children and clothed them with the same skin.  
(a. TERMITES  
b. PORCHES)

62. Nilizaa watoto wengi nikimpiga mmoja wao wote hulia.  
(VIBUYU WAVUNI)

I bore many children, when I beat one of them they all cry.  
(CALABASHES IN THE NET)

63. Nimekwenda lakini sikufikia mwisho wake.  
(NJIA)

I went but I did not reach its end.  
(A WAY)

64. Nimempiga mfalme akalia.  
(UGOLO)

I beat the king and he cried.  
(SNUFF)

65. Nilitupa jiwe lilirudi likiniambia lujenje.  
(MLEVI)

I threw a stone and it has returned telling me "lujenje".  
(A DRUNKARD)

66. Nina blanketi langu kubwa huwezi kulikunja.  
(MBINGU)

I have my large blanket but you cannot fold it.  
(HEAVENS)

67. Nina nyumba yangu ndogo lakini wapangishaji ni wengi.  
(KIBERITI)

I have my small house but those lodging there are many.  
(MATCHBOX)

68. Ni nini wakiitacho nyumba?  
(PAA)

What do they call a house?  
(A ROOF)

69. Njoo tukafinye mwehu.  
(UGALI)

Let us pinch a vagabond.  
(UGALI- or STIFF-PORRIDGE)

70. Nyanya yako walipomzika hajaoza.  
(MAKAPI YA KARANGA)

Where they buried your grandmother it has not rotted.  
(GROUNDNUTS' HUSKS)

71. Nyanya yako yuko shambani wanamviringisha.  
(MTI WA NYANYA MSHUMAA)

Your grandmother is in the field being turned round.  
(EGG-PLANT)

72. Ohoi!  
(MAHALI UFIKAPO PASIPO MTU WA KWENU AU UMJUAYE)

Ohoi!  
(SOMEWHERE YOU REACH WHERE THERE IS NO ONE YOU KNOW)

73. Parapara ya parapara!  
(MIGUU YA MBUZI KWENYE MWAMBA)

(Parapara of parapara) - climb up and up.  
(GOAT'S LEGS ON THE ROCK)

74. Shika fimbo nishike nyingine twende kuzuia cheupe  
kilichokimbia.  
(KOHOZI JUU YA MAJI)  
Get a stick and I shall get another so that we may go and  
prevent something white which has gone.  
(COUGH ON THE WATER)
75. Shika mkuki nishike mwingine tufukuze mnyama asiye na mkia.  
(a. ULEZI  
b. KIAZI MVIRINGO  
c. KIPERE)  
Get a spear and I shall get another so that we may hunt an  
animal that has no tail.  
(a. CORN  
b. ROUND POTATO  
c. POTATO - called in Swahili KIPERE)
76. Shika panga nishike jingine twende kukata kisichoweza  
kukatika.  
(MAJI)  
Get a knife and I shall get another so that we may go and  
cut which cannot be cut.  
(WATER)
77. Shika mkuki nishike mwingine twende kutafuta kisichoonekana.  
(MZIZI WA JIWE)  
Get a spear and I shall get another so that we may go and  
find what cannot be seen.  
(A STONE'S ROOT)
78. Shindano mbili kwa Fulela (Fulela kama jina la mtu).  
(NYOKA WAWILI SHIMONI)  
Two needles in Fulela's home (Fulela as a personal name).  
(TWO SNAKES IN A HOLE)
79. Sisi sote hapa tumeoza viuno.  
(NGUZO)  
All of us here our buttocks are rotten.  
(POLES)
80. Taratatarata!  
(JANI KWENYE MGOMBA)  
Taratatarata!  
(A DRY LEAF BEING BLOWN ON A BANANA STEM)
81. Tega mfalme wa vitendawili tulale.  
(USINGIZI)  
Set aside the king of the riddles that we may sleep.  
(SLEEP) (This is used as a concluding riddle)



82. Ukienda msituni huanza kuchanja ukuni upi?  
(MBU)

When you go to the forest what kind of firewood do you begin with?  
(MOSQUITO)

83. Umenitayarishia chakula ukajitenga ukakaa bila kula.  
(CHUNGU CHA KUPIKA)

You have prepared food for me but you have sat aside without eating.  
(A COOKING POT)

84. Usinigandamize uende ugandamize ambao huwagandamiza, huwezi kunigandamiza nikagandamizwa.  
(MGUU WA NDOVU KWENYE MWAMBA)

Do not press me, go and press those whom you press, you cannot press me and be pressed.  
(AN ELEPHANT'S LEG ON A ROCK)

85. Usinitazame sitakupa ugali wangu.  
(MWANGA WA JUA AU MWEZI UNAOPITIA KATIKA TUNDU LA NYUMBA)

Do not look at me I shall not give you my stiff-porridge or ugali.  
(LIGHT THROUGH A HOLE IN THE HOUSE)

86. Vimekimbia bila kuingia katika tingatinga.  
(MAJANI)

They have run without entering the reeds.  
(GRASS)

87. Vimetazamana kwa hasira bila kupigana.  
(KINGO ZA MTO)

They have faced each other without fighting.  
(OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE RIVER)

88. Viwili vifananavyo:

- (a. UNGA NA MAJIVU
- b. MWEZI NA MUNDU AU KOTAMA
- c. MWEZI MKUU NA UNGO
- d. JUA NA UNGO
- e. MBEGU ZA MGOMBA MWITU NA MAKAA
- f. MAZIWA NA MATOMVU (ya mti wa mpira)
- g. TUMBAKO NA TUMBAKO MWITU)

Two alike things:

- (a. CORN FLOWER AND ASHES
- b. THE MOON AND A SCYTHE OR A SICKLE
- c. THE FULL MOON AND THE WINNOWING
- d. THE SUN AND THE WINNOWING
- e. THE SEEDS OF THE WILD-BANANA (Haya: ENTEMBE) AND CHARCOAL.
- f. MILK AND SAP/WATER (of a rubber tree)
- g. TOBACCO AND WILD TOBACCO)

89. Walipomchinjia Kitale hapajamalizika sehemu zake.  
(MAHALI WALIPOTENGENEZEZA MTUMBWI)

Where they slaughtered Kitale there has never been  
finished its parts.

(A PLACE WHERE THEY WERE MAKING A BOAT)

90. Waweza kumwona babako toka mbali.  
(KICHUGUU KATIKA TINGATINGA)

Can you see your father from afar.

(AN ANTHILL - of small ants)

91. Waweza kupanda mlima huku umebeba "kakwembe" - chenye  
ukali?  
(SHOKA BEGANI)

Can you climb a mountain while carrying "kakwembe" - some-  
thing sharp?

(AN AXE ON THE SHOULDER)

92. Waweza kupanda mlima ukikunja ngozi?  
(VIFINYO VYA BI-KIZEE)

Can you climb a mountain while wriggling a skin?

(AN OLD WOMAN'S WRINKLES)

93. Waweza kutoka hapa ukasikia lingurumalo katika tingatinga?  
(MIMBA)

Can you hear what is roaring in the reeds while being here?

(PREGNANCY)

94. Zimetoka zikiwa nyeupe visiginoni.  
(TINGATINGA, Haya: OLUFUNJO)

They have been uprooted with their toes being white.

(REEDS - Haya: OLUFUNJO)

## KWA NINI METHALI NA VITENDAWILI?

Kufungua kitabu cha methali na vitendawili katika lugha fulani ni kufungua siri za lugha hiyo ambazo zimetunzwa kwa karne nyingi.

Kujua methali na vitendawili katika lugha fulani ni kujua siri za lugha hiyo.

Kujua methali na vitendawili ni (njia mojawapo ya) kujua hekima ya mwenye hekima.

(Njia mojawapo ya) kujaribu kuwa mwenye hekima ni kujifunza methali na vitendawili.

Wazazi, marafiki, wahubiri, waalimu, waandishi, nk methali ni hazina ya thamani waitoayo kwa watoto/wasikilizaji/ wanafunzi/ wasomaji.

Jifunze methali na vitendawili, kwa njia hiyo utajifunza siri, hazina ya thamani ya mwenye hekima.

Methali hukaa katika mafikara kuliko maelezo yo yote yawezayo kutolewa.

L. Kalugila

## WHY PROVERBS AND RIDDLES?

To open a book of proverbs and riddles in a certain language is to open the secrets of that language which have prevailed for centuries and centuries.

To know proverbs and riddles in a certain language is to know the secrets of that language.

To know proverbs and riddles is (one way of how) to know the wisdom of the wise.

One way of acquiring wisdom is to learn proverbs and riddles.

Parents, friends, lecturers, preachers, writers, etc. proverbs are their precious treasures they impart to their children/ listeners/students/readers.

Learn proverbs and riddles and thereby learn secrets the precious treasures of the wise.

A proverb sticks in the mind beyond any explanation that can be given.

L. Kalugila

SEHEMU YA TATU

PART THREE

NYONGEZA

SUPPLEMENTS

Abdulaziz Y. Lodhi



## 1. UTUNGO WA MITHALI ZA KISWAHILI

"Mithali ni sehemu muhimu ya lugha, na zinaweza kulinganishwa na ushairi tu." (1)

Kwa mujibu wa tarehe/historia, yaelekea kuwa mithali zilitunguliwa tungo za ushairi, na watungaji wa Kiswahili walikuwa na fursa ya kutumia hazina kubwa ya mithali zilizohifadhiwa na wakuzaji wa masimulizi na mapokeo ambao wengi wao walikuwa wana wake. Mithali za hapo mwanzoni bila shaka zilitungwa kwa mitindo ya ushairi ambayo polepole ikatakata na kuweka imara miundo ya arudhi/prozodi zilizokubaliwa kuwa za kawaida. Mithali za Kiswahili za kawaida mno, na zilizo fupi pia, ni zenye mizani 6, 8, 12 au 16. Nyingi zao hutumika katika tungo kama mistari, vipande au mikarara/vipokeo. Kuna mifano mingi ya mashairi yanayoanzia na mithali fulani na pia ni maelezo marefu ya mithali yenyewe. Katika mifano ifuatayo kutoka mashairi mbalimbali kuna ikaa (mwendo wa ulinganifu) ya  $3 + 3$ , yaani mizani 6 pamoja na kituo cha kati na mkazo kwenye mizani ya mwisho ila moja:

Akili ni mali.

Mahaba ni haba.

Mapenzi majonzi. (2)

Kituo katika mithali na fumbo kisababishacho vipande 2, 3 au 4 ni sawa na kituo chenye ikaa/mwendo katika mashairi ya vina yenye mizani kamili zinazolingana. Vina vyenyewe vinaweza kuelezwa kama ifuatavyo:

Haraka haraka, haina baraka. (aaba,  $3+3/3+3$ )

(Kwa) haba na haba, hujaza kibaba. (aaba,  $3+3/3+3$ )

Hana asili wala fasili. (abcb,  $2+3/2+3$ ) au (aa,  $5/5$ )

Nia njema ni tabibu, nia mbaya huharibu. (abcadc,  $2+2+4/2+2+4$ )

Katika huu mfano wa mwisho, tusipohesabu neno nia kuwa na kina chake peke yake, tutapata muundo wa ushairi wa abcb na mgawanyo wa mizani utakuwa  $4+4/4+4$ . Tena tukihesabu n- ya njema na m- ya mbaya tutapata mgawanyo wa  $5+4/5+4$ . Fahamu kwamba ushairi wa Kiswahili aghlabu ni wenye beti, ni ushairi wa vina, na unatumia alama ndogo (ya mkato) ya kisarufi kuonyesha kituo; na silabi za mwisho za -a, -wa na -ya zahesabiwa kuwa sawa, yaani zina kina kimoja; na pia -sha na -sa huweza kuhesabiwa kuwa ni sawa.

Mithali nyingi ndefu zina kituo cha ikaa, lakini si lazima kuwa na kina cha silabi nzima. Kina chake ni cha irabu tu. K.m.

(Ni) heri kufa macho, kuliko kufa moyo.

Muundo wake ni abcdbe,  $3+2+2/3+2+2$  kama tukihasabu vina vya silabi nzima; lakini tukihasabu irabu tu, tutapata muundo wa abccbc.

*Aliyeninyima mbaazi, kanipunguzia mashuzi.*

Muundo wa mithali hii ni abcb na mgawanyo ni wa  $6+3/6+3$ . Lakini mithali hii kwa hakika ina umbo zuri zaidi (lenye vina kamili na muundo huohuo) ambalo halitumiki siku hizi:

*Aloninyimia mbaazi, kanipunguzia mashuzi.*

Halafu kuna mithali nyingi ambazo hazina vina:

*Jogoo la shamba haliwiki mjini. (abcd,  $4+2/4+3$ )*

Mithali hii pia ina umbo jingine la zamani lililo kamili kwa vina na ulinganifu:

*Jogoo la shambani, haliwiki mujini. (abcb,  $4+3/4+3$ )*

Mithali zingine hufuata ule muundo wa kawaida wa tenzi wenye vipande vifupi visivyozidi mizani 11, na vyenye kituo cha kawaida kwenye mizani ya 5 au 6. Tenzi hizo ni za masimulizi na adili. Vina vyake ni aaax, bbbx, cccx n.k., na beti zenyewe hazina mkarara wa mstari mzima. Katika arudhi/prozodi ya Kiingereza, beti hizo huitwa *quatrains*, yaani tarbiya au beti za unne/une. Mkarara wa mstari mzima katika utendi wote mzima si kitu cha kawaida katika ushairi wa Kiingereza, "lakini kuna sambamba yake katika muundo wa asili wa beti za tathlitha/utatu zijulikanazo kama beti za *Kirkconnel*:

*'I wish I were where Helen lies;  
Night and day on me she cries;  
O that I were where Helen lies  
On fair Kirkconnel lea.*

*Curst be the heart that thought the thought,  
And curst the hand that fired the shot,  
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,  
And died to succour me.'*

(Helen of Kirkconnel, beti za 1 na 2) (3)

Ifuatayo ni tafsiri yake:

Natamani niwe mahali Helen alipolazwa,  
 Laili na nahari analiliwa (namlilia),  
 Ole, niwepo pale Helen alipolazwa,  
 Penye ukoka mzuri wa Kirkconnel kaangukia.

Laani moyo ulowaza hilo wazo,  
 Laani mkono ulopiga huo mshindo,  
 Mikonononi mwangu Helen kaniangukia mzito,  
 Kafariki kunisaidia.

Beti zifuatazo zatoka kwenye AL INKISHAFI (4), utendi maarufu unaodondolewa mara nyingi mno, na uliotungwa mnamo mwaka wa 1750. Utendi huo waeleza kinaganaga kwa kuhisha maangamizi ya taifa la Pate pwani ya kaskazini ya Kenya kwa mfano wa yule mshairi mashuhuri wa kiajemi/kiirani, Omar Khayyam. Beti zilizo-chaguliwa hapa zaeleza juu ya zama za utukufu na baadaye magofu ya Pate na Kiwa-ndeo, Kisiwa cha Fakhari yaani Lamu:

37 *Nyumba zao mbake zikinawiri*  
*kwa taa za kowa na za sufuri;*  
*Masiku yakele kama nahari,*  
*haiba na jaha iwazingiye.*

49 *Nyumba zao mbake ziwele tame,*  
*makinda ya popo iyu wengeme.*  
*Husikii hisi wala ukeme;*  
*zitanda matandu walitandiye.*

Mithali zifuatazo ni zenye muundo wa Utendi, na kituo kipo penye mizani ya 5:

*Tunda li tamu, halinishi hamu.*  
*Kipya ki nyemi, kingawa kidonda.*  
*Mfwata nyuki, hakosi asali.*

Mshairi Massamba(5) ana mfano mzuri wa shairi linaloanzia na mithali na halafu linaeleza kwa urefu maana ya mithali yenyewe ambayo pia imetumiwa kama mkarara. Mistari hiyo ya mashairi mafupi huwa ya mizani 12 hata 16:



- 1 *Mbachao siache kamwe, kwa msala upitao;  
Kikuu kuu ni chawe, kuwa na hicho angao;  
Ukifanye ni mwanawe, kila muda upitao;  
Usiache kamwe mbachao, kwa msala upitao.*
- 2 *Upatapo hichi kipya, akiba na haiozi;  
Ni ya maana hedaya. wala usipuuzi;  
Kipya takuwa hekaya, itapopita miezi;  
Siache kamwe mbachao, kwa msala upitao.*

Angalia mithali nyingine "*Akiba haiozi*" katika mstari wa kwanza wa ubeti wa pili. Massamba anabadilisha pia mpango wa maneno ya mithali hiyo katika beti nyingine za shairi hilo: *Kamwe siache mbachao, kwa msala upitao.*

Mithali nyingi zenye sajaa (mwendo wa nyimbo/ngoma) au misemo ifananayo na mithali huweza kufuatana kwa mfululizo uletao maana na ukatunga ubeti au hata wimbo mzima wa kuimbwa. Hivyo, mshairi anathibitisha ujuzi wake mwingi wa ndani wa fasihi kwa "ulinganifu safi na kukaribiana kwa sauti na maana." (6) Hapa pana mithali 4 zilizoungwa barābara na mshairi mmoja wa pwani asiyejulikana kwa jina:

*Kijumba khasara, kina mazoweya;  
Endaye na mbili, hurudi na moya;  
Shuruti kwa pembe, kwenda kuzengeya;  
Cha mlevi wa tembo, huliwa na mgema. (7)*

Nyimbo hizi za mithali zimetungwa kimahiri kwa mnyororo wa "maumbo yenye uhusiano wa mantiki (wenye maana dhahiri), marudio ya mtindo mzuri mno, muundo uliolingana na istara zijulikanazo." (8) Matamko haya yenye ufasaha na ya kupendeza, pamoja na mithali moja au mbili "huzidisha kuona kuwa chochote kinachoelekea kuwa sawa, ni lazima kiwe na ukweli." (9) Hivyo basi, ni muhali kusema kwamba maneno ya hekima ya mshairi fulani ni mithali halisi, au ni uzushi wake mwenyewe. Tunaweza kusema bila hofu kwamba maneno ya Shakespeare "*To be or not to be, that is the question.*" (= Kuwako au kutokuwako, hilo ndilo swali.) ni mithali; na maneno ya Winston Churchill "*Never was so much owed to so few.*" (= Kamwe mengi kama nini yaliwiwa na wachache mno.) karibu yatakuwa mithali. Na maneno maarufu ya Mwalimu Nyerere je - "*It can be done, play your part.*" Siyo mithali hiyo?

Zifuatazo ni baadhi ya mithali zilizotumiwa na kupanuliwa na washairi wakuu wa Kiswahili wa karne hii:

*"Bwana leo walalama, jana ulintendaje?"*(10)

*"Sumu ya ua harara, khususa likikwanyuka."*(11)

*"Mke ni fingo la nyumba, hadhari kumchezea."*(12)

*"Unapokosa shukuru, kupata kuna Rabuka."*(13)

Sheikh Mathias Mnyampala alikuwa bingwa wa sanaa ya ushairi. Alitunga tenzi za kidini kwa wote Wakristo na Waislamu pia, na mashairi yake ya siasa miongo ya 50 na 60 yalikusika mara nyingi na nadharia za kutokutumia nguvu na kufanya fujo, mawazo ya umoja, usawa na haki za binadamu, mambo ambayo Rais Mwalimu Nyerere amefafanua sana katika hutuba na insha zake mwenyewe. Mifano ifuatayo imechukuliwa kutoka mojawapo ya kazi nyingi za Mnyampala. Namba za kurasa zimeandikwa katika vifungo/paradesi.(14)

*"Usifurahi mwanzoni, hadi ufike mwishoni."*(uk. 1)

Hapa ataja kazi za kujenga taifa baada ya kupata Uhuru.

*"Mali pepo ya dunia, yambatane na imani?"*(uk. 7)

*"Tusitukane wakunga, na uzazi ungaliko."*(uk. 18)

Anadokeza kwamba Mwingereza angaliko baada ya Tanganyika kupewa Serikali ya Madaraka.

*"Shirika ni kustawi, vibaya kufarakana."*(uk. 23)

Anapendekeza wazo la Shirikisho la Afrika Mashariki.

*"Yaliyopita si ndwele, tugange yanayokuja."*(uk. 91)

Anataja tena harakati ijayo baada ya kupata Uhuru.

*"Hengi wakitaka wape, ama watajitwalia."*(uk. 120)

Ahusisha dai la wananchi la kupewa Uhuru kutokana na Ukoloni. Linaweza kuhusika pia na dai la Ujamaa lilivyoielezwa katika Azimio La Arusha la 1967.

*"Apendaye kudhulumu, hujidhulumu mwenyewe."*(uk. 129)

Paulo Freire, mtaalam wa Brazil, amesisitiza mara nyingi jambo hilo katika maandishi yake. Mnyampala ana fikra nyingi sawa na zilizoielezwa katika kitabu cha PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED (= Mafunzo kwa Wanyonge) cha Dr. Paulo Freire.

Katika MALENGA WA MVITA Ustaadh Bhalo(15) anatumia mithali nyingi kama vifunguo au/na vipokeo:

*"Huwa yakiwa ya kuwa." (uk. 47)*

*"Kimya kiwapo si chema, na maneno hayafai." (uk. 82)*

*"Imapo siku ya Mungu, hapatakuwa la kuwa." (uk.101)*

*"Mnyonge kupata haki, ni mwenye nguvu kupenda." (uk. 108)*

*"Kitukwacho na Mungu, hakuna wa kukitweza." (uk. 115)*

*"Fisi akila muwele, mzima funga mlango." (uk.129)*

Ustaadh Bhalo, labda ni mshairi peke yake wa Kiswahili aishiye kwa ushairi wake na kujipatia riziki kwa uandishi, ana mifano mingi zaidi katika kitabu chake cha POEMS FROM KENYA (= Tungo za kutoka Kenya) (16).

Mtungaji mwingine kijana wa Mambasa, Abdillatif Abdalla, ambaye sasa yuko BBC huko Landani, katika mkusanyo wake wa SAUTI YA DHIKI(17) uliotungwa kizuizini wakati alipotiwa ndani na Serikali ya Kenya kwa sababu za kisiasa, amepanua hoja ya *"Mtu kuwa na viungo, si kwamba mekamilika."* katika shairi lake la *"Ukamilifu wa mja"*, kurasa za 12 na 13. Mnyampala ana shairi la kufanana - *"Hakuna mkamilifu, kila mtu kapungua"* kurasa za 127-8 katika Diwani yake (18). Abdillatif ana mifano mingine mizuri pia katika kusanyo lake, kama *"Leo n'singekuwako kama taabu ni mauti"*, (uk. 63). Shairi lake *"Mwerevu hajinyowi"* halina mkarara, badala yake anautumia mstari wa nne wa kila ubeti kupanulia zaidi wazo la ubeti mwenyewe.

Kwa kawaida, katika mashairi ya tarbiya/unne, mstari mzima wa nne wa kila ubeti huwa kipokeo chake mfano wa Massamba: *"Usiache mbachao ....."* uliotajwa hapo mbele. Kina hicho cha mstari mzima mara nyingi huwa ni jina la shairi na pia kinataja hoja yake. Ikiwa maudhui ya shairi kama hilo ni ya kifalsafa, basi mstari huo polepole hujipatia sifa ya kuwa mithali. Usemi wa *"Mapenzi ni maua"* (19) wa Massamba waelekea kuwa mithali halisi, na mtu aweza kujifunza na kuutumia usemi huo kama mithali asili baada ya kulisoma shairi lake mara moja tu:

1. *Mapenzi yanazuzua, jambo hilo tufahamu;  
Yananyesha kama mvua, kwisha choko ni vigumu;  
Bibi ukimchukua, usidhani yanadumu;  
Wandani mje fahamu, mapenzi sawa maua.*

2. *Mwali unapochukua, ubayake ufahamu;  
 Mwanzoni yanachanua, mwayaona ya muhimu;  
 Kabla hayajakua, kwa wawili ni matamu;  
 Wandani mje fahamu, mapenzi sawa maua.*

Katika kielezo hiki kifupi si yumkini kutoa zaidi ya kitazamo tu cha miundo ya kiprozodi ya mithali na mithali-nyimbo za Kiswahili, na swali la utumizi wake lazima litekelezwe katika insha nyingine siku za mbele. Lakini yafaa kutanabahi hapa kwamba "Mithali ni upeo wa kueleza fikra za jamii, falsafa ya watu, itikadi na mapokeo ya mila;" (20) ingawa mara nyingine mithali zaelekea kuwa na maana "ndufu, duni na hafifu". Lakini hata hivyo, mithali za Kiswahili kwa kawaida zinapendwa mno na umma, na zimependwa zama zote. Ingawa wanamithali ni wachache duniani, watumiaji wa "mithali, misemo, mafumbo, vitendawili" ni wasio-hesabika. Kwa Mswahili wa kisasa, kama kwa Wafalastini wa zamani za hadithi, mithali, "liche ya maana yake ya finyo, yapambaja yote tunayoyaita kuwa hekaya, majazi, maaguzi ya baraka au hizaya, dhihaka na mzaha, mashairi, insha na labda hata vitendo vya uchawi." (21)

Miundo ya mithali za Kiswahili, na kweli katika aghlabu lugha zote zingine, kwa kawaida ni ya kishairi. Mithali na utumizi wake tunaweza kufahamu vyema kwa "ulinganifu wa ushairi" na kwa kuchukulia kwamba "zina falsafa". Zimetumiwa na jamii zote duniani "kufunza na kuagiza, kutumbuiza na kuhifadhi mapokezi na sharia." (22) Kwani "Mithali ni werevu wa mtu mmoja, na hekima kwa watu wote!" (23)

1. A.Y.Lodhi katika Dibaji yake ya kitabu cha L.Kalugila, Methali za Kiswahili Toka Afrika Masshariki, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, 1977. uk.1.
2. Shaaban S. Farsi, Swahili Sayings from Zanzibar, Vol.1, Proverbs, EALB, Nairobi, 1958.
3. Sayyid Abdulla A. Nasir, Al Inkishafi - The Soul's Awakening, (mfasiri na mhariri ni William Hichens) Sheldon Press, London, 1939; EALB, Nairobi, 1972. Uk.30.
4. tanbihi iliyotangulia, uk.70-71.
5. D.P.Massamba, "Diwani ya Massamba" katika jarida la KISWAHILI Tol. 40/2 Sept. 1970, Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili, Daressalaam. uk.40.
6. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Towards a Theory of Proverb Meaning" katika jarida la PROVERBIUM No. 22, 1973, Society of Finnish Literature, Helsinki. uk.821.
7. Jan Knappert, Four Centuries of Swahili Verse, Heinemann, London, 1979. uk.48. Knappert ametoa mistari mitatu ya kwanza ya ubeti huo; mstari wa nne nimeuongoza mwenyewe jinsi nilivyosimuliwa zamani sana. Mstari huo wa nne ni mkarara wa mstari mzima katika wimbo mrefu kidogo ambao kwa bahati mbaya siukumbuki leo. Katika kutunga insha hiyo, ambayo iliandikwa kwanza mwaka wa 1978 na baadaye kuandikwa upya mnamo Februari 1980, nimetumia sana usemi na maneno yake Profesa Knappert.
8. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, kazi iliyotajwa hapo juu.
9. tanbihi iliyotangulia.
10. Sheikh Amri K. Abedi, Sheria za Kutunga Mashairi na Diwani ya Amri, EALB, Daressalaam, 1954. uk.81.
11. tanbihi iliyotangulia, uk.119.
12. K.H.A.Akilimali Snow-White, Diwani ya Akilimali, EALB, Dar-essalaam, 1963. uk.53.
13. tanbihi iliyotangulia, uk.71.
14. Mathias Mnyampala, Diwani ya Mnyampala, EALB, Daressalaam, 1965.
15. Ahmad Nasir Juma Bhalo, Malenga wa Mvita, OUP, Nairobi, 1974.
16. A.N.J.Bhalo, Poems From Kenya, mhariri na mfasiri ni Lyndon Harries. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison/Milwaukee/ London, 1966.
17. Abdillatif Abdalla, Sauti ya Dhiki, OUP, Nairobi, 1973.
18. Mnyampala, kazi iliyotajwa hapo juu.
19. Massamba, kazi iliyotajwa hapo juu.
20. Lodhi, kazi iliyotajwa hapo juu.
21. J.M.Thompson, The Form and Function of Proverbs in Israel, Mouton, The Hague, 1974. Nimemtegemea sana Thompson kwa usemi na maneno yaliyotumika katika vifungu hivyo vya tanabahi.
22. tanbihi iliyotangulia.
23. B. Stevenson, (mhariri) The Home Book of Quotations, Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1956. uk.1629.

## 2. THE POETICS OF SWAHILI PROVERBS

⊕ most of whom were women.

"Proverbs are a very important feature in a language, and they cannot be compared with anything but poetry." (1)

Historically, proverbs seem to have preceded poetry, and Swahili poets have had access to the abundance of proverbs treasured by the bearers of the oral tradition. ⊕ Early proverbs were most certainly formed in a poetic fashion that gradually became more refined and established generally accepted prosodic forms. The most common Swahili proverbs, and which are rather short, have 6, 8, 12 or 16 syllables (*mizani*), and many of them appear in poems and songs as lines (*mistari*), hemistichs or half-lines (*vipande*), or as refrains (*mikarara*). There are many examples of a poem which starts with a proverb and is in fact an elaboration of it. In the following examples from different poems, we find the 3+3 rhythm i.e. 6 syllables with a medial caesurae (*kituo*) having a penultimate stress:

*Akili ni mali.* - Ability is wealth. Intelligence is an  
*Mahaba ni haba.* - Love is worth little. /asset.  
*Mapenzi majonzi.* - Love brings melancholy. (2)

The caesurae in a proverb causing the 2, 3 or 4 hemistichs is a rhythmic break equivalent to a caesurae in a well-balanced poem, and the various resulting rhymes can be described as follows:

*Haraka haraka, haina baraka.* (aaba, 3+3/3+3)

Hurry, hurry, has no blessings. Haste makes waste.

(Kwa) *haba na haba, hujaza kibaba.* (aaba, 3+3/3+3)

Little by little fills up the measure.

*Hana asili, wala fasihi.* (abcb, 2+3/2+3)

He has neither good family, nor good standing.

*Nia njema ni tabibu, nia mbaya huharibu.* (abcade, 2+2+4/2+2+4)

A good purpose is like a doctor, and evil purpose corrupts.

In this last example, if we do not consider the word *nia* as forming its own separate rhyme, then we get the metric form abcb with the syllabic division 4+4/4+4. Again counting the

syllabic n in *njema* and m in *mbaya* we get the syllabic division 5+4/5+4. Note that in Swahili poetry which is strophic or stanzaic, *ushairi wa vina*, a grammatical comma is always used to mark the caesurae and the end-syllables -a, -wa and -ya are considered to be rhyming. Also the syllables -sha and -sa may be taken to be equal.

Some longer proverbs have a rhythmic caesurae but may not have a syllabic rhyme; instead they have the ultimate vowels rhyming.

(Ni) *heri kufa macho, kuliko kufa moyo.*

It is better for the eye to die than the heart, i.e. it is better to be blind than be dead. The metre here is abcdbe, 3+2+2/3+2+2, or counting only vowels the harmony is abccbc.

*Aliyeninyima mbaazi, kanipunguzia mashuzi.*

He who with-holds pigeon-peas from me, reduces my passing of wind; i.e. one who does not flatter me, does not blame me.

The metre is abcb with the syllabic division 6+3/6+3. But this proverb has in fact a better rhyming and tight formulation having the same metre:

*Aloninyimia mbaazi, kanipunguzia mashuzi.*

Then there are many sayings which do not have any rhyme at all:

*Jogoo la shamba haliwiki mjini. (abcd, 4+2/4+3)*

The country cock does not crow in the town. However, this proverb also has an older rhyming and well-balanced version:

*Jogoo la shambani, haliwiki mujini. (abcb, 4+3/4+3) or (aa, 7/7)*

Some proverbs follow the very common *Utendi* metre, the short measure of up to 11 syllables with a regular caesurae at the 5th or 6th syllable, used in both narrative and didactic poems. The rhyme is aaax, bbbx, cccx etc., and there is no refrain of a whole line. In English prosody, such stanzas are simply called quatrains. The 4th line carrying the line-end rhyme through-out the poem is not common in English poetry, "but it finds a parallel in the classic form of the trebled verse known as the Kirkconnel stanza:

*"I wish I were where Helen lies;  
Night and day on me she cries;  
O that I were where Helen lies  
On fair Kirkconnel lea.*

*Curst be the heart that thought the thought,  
 And curst the hand that fired the shot,  
 When in my arms burd Helen dropt,  
 And died to succour me."*

(Helen of Kirkconnel, stanzas 1 and 2) (3)

The following stanzas are from the well-known and oft-quoted AL INKISHAFI (4) composed around the year 1750. This Utendi describes vividly the heyday and later the decline of the city state of Pate on north Kenya coast in the fashion of the poet Omar Khayyam. The stanzas chosen here give an idea of the conditions in Pate and Lamu, the Isle of Pride. The English translation is the rendition of William Hichens, the Editor of AL INKISHAFI - the Soul's awakening:

37 *Nyumba zao mbake zikinawiri  
 kwa taa za kowa na za sufuri;  
 Masiku yakele kama nahari,  
 haiba na jaha iwazingiye.*

Their mansions, lantern-lighted, glittered bright  
 with brazen lamps and lamps with crystal dight;  
 Till light as day became their hours of night,  
 and in their Halls walked Fame and Honour twain.

49 *Nyumba zao mbake ziwele tame;  
 makinda ya popo iyu wangeme.  
 Husikii hisi wala ukeme;  
 zitanda matandu walitandiye.*

Their mansions bright, with empty echoes ring.  
 High in the halls the fluttering night-bats cling.  
 Thou hear'st no outcry; no sweet murmuring.  
 The spiders, o'er the couches, spin their skein.

In the following proverbs in the Utendi metre, the caesurae is at the 5th syllable:

*Tunda li tamu, halinishi hamu.*

The fruit is sweet, it does not satisfy my desire - it only increases it.



*Kipya ki nyemi, kingawa kidonda.*

Novelty is charming, even if it be a sore.

*Mfwata nyuki, hakosi asali.*

One who follows bees will not fail to get honey.

The following stanzas (*beti/baiti*) by Massamba(5) are a good example of a poem starting with a proverb and elaborating it and also having the same proverb as the refrain. The proverb used is *Usiache mbachao, kwa msala upitao*, i.e. do not throw away your own old mat for a new one that is being spread for some occasion. *Mbacha*, an old and coarse mat, stands for a friend or a wife, while *msala*, a mat made of softer and finer material used for praying on, stands for temporary friendship or fascination and infatuation.

- 1 *Mbachao siache kamwe, kwa msala upitao;*  
*Kikuu kuu ni chawe, kuwa na hicho angao;*  
*Ukifanye ni mwanawe, kila muda upitao;*  
*Usiache kamwe mbachao, kwa msala upitao.*

Never leave your simple old mat for a fine one passing;  
 However worn out it may be, let it be so;  
 Treat it as your own child and let time pass and show;  
 Do not ever leave your old mat for a new mat passing.

- 2 *Upatapo hicho kipya, akiba na haiozi;*  
*Ni ya maana hedaya, wala usipuuzi;*  
*Kipya takuwa hekaya, itapopita miezi;*  
*Siache kamwe mbachao, kwa msala upitao.*

When you get this new one, a reserve (old mat) does not  
 The old one is a worthy gift, do not neglect it; /decay;  
 Novelty will become a legend after a few months.  
 Never leave your own old mat for a fine one passing.

Note another proverb *Akiba haiozi* in the first line of the 2nd stanza. Massamba also changes the word order of the proverb in the other stanzas of the poem to "*Kamwe siache mbachao, kwa msala upitao.*"

Many lyrical proverbs and/or proverb-like expressions may appear in a sensible sequence to form a stanza or a whole song and can be sung. The poet thus demonstrates his profound know-

ledge of the literature in "neat symmetries and witty convergences of sound and meaning".(6) Here are 4 proverbs neatly linked together by an anonymous poet:

*Kijumba khasara, kina mazoweya;  
Endaye na mbili, hurudi na moya;  
Shuruti kwa pembe, kwenda kuzengeya;  
Cha mlevi wa tembo, huliwa na mgema.* (7)

The little cottage causing loss is addiction forming;  
One who goes there with 2 (rupees), returns with one;  
It is public knowledge, go and see it for yourself (i.e. it is like something necessarily known because of being announced publicly by blowing of horns, as was the custom in the past);  
The palm-wine drinkard's property is consumed by the palm-wine tapper.

These proverbial songs are cleverly composed by a chain of "tight formulations of logical relations, highly patterned repetition, structural balance and familiar metaphors".(8) These flowery and figurative expressions, with an established proverb or two, "contribute to the feeling that anything that sounds so right must be true".(9) It thus becomes impossible to say whether the wise sayings of a poet are authentic proverbs or they are his own inventions. One may safely say that Shakespeare's "To be or not to be, that is the question." is a proverb, and Sir Winston Churchill's "Never ..... was so much owed to so few." will soon become one. And what about President Julius K. Nyerere's challenge to the nation "Play your part, it can be done!" ?

The following are some of the proverbs used in poems and elaborated by the great Swahili poets of this century:

*"Bwana leo walalama, jana ulin'tendaje ?"*(10)

Sir, today you are complaining, how did you treat me yesterday ?

*"Sumu ya ua harara, khususa likikwanyuka."*(11)

Heat is poison to a flower, especially if it is picked away from its plant.

*"Mke ni fingo la nyumba, hadhari kumchezea." (12)*

A wife is the charm of the house, be careful not to ridicule her.

*"Unapokosa shukuru, kupata kuna rabuka." (13)*

When you miss something, be thankful, for everything is derived from God.

Sheikh Mathias Mnyampala was an all-rounder. He wrote religious poems for both Christians and Muslims, and his political poems of the 50s and 60s dealt frequently with ideas of non-violence, restrain, unity, human rights and equality, issues which President Julius K. Nyerere has expounded in his speeches and essays. The following examples are from one of Mnyampala's several works. (14) Page numbers are in the brackets.

*"Usifurahi mwanzoni, hadi ufike mwishoni." (p. 1)*

Do not rejoice at the begining, until you have reached the end. (He is referring here to the task ahead after Independence in 1961.)

*"Mali pepo ya dunia, yambatane na imani?" (p. 7)*

Wealth is bliss on Earth, how can it agree with faith?

*"Tusitukane wakunga, na uzazi ungaliko." (p. 18)*

Speak no evil of mid-wives while child-birth still continues. (He is referring to the continued British presence after Internal Self-government in 1960.)

*"Shirika ni kustawi, vibaya kufarakana." (p. 23)*

Cooperation brings prosperity, it is bad to differ. (He is propagating for the then proposed East African Federation.)

*"Yaliyopita si ndwele, tugange yanayokuja." (p. 91)*

That which has passed is no longer a disease, let us treat that which is on the way. (He is again referring to the struggle ahead after Uhuru.)

*"Wengi wakitaka wape, ama watajitwalia." (p. 120)*

If the majority wants it, give it to them, or else they will take it by force. (He is referring to the demands for Freedom from Colonialism. It can be applied also to the later demands for Socialism as described in the Arusha Declaration of 1967.)

*"Apendaye kudhulumu, hujidhulumu mwenyewe."*(p. 129)

One who enjoys oppressing others, oppresses himself.  
Paulo Freire has repeatedly stated this in his writings.  
Mnyampala has many ideas similar to Freire's PEDAGOGY OF  
THE OPPRESSED.

In his MALENGA WA MVITA(15), Ustaadh Bhalo uses several  
proverbs as opening verses or/and refrains:

*"Huwa yakiwa ya kuwa."*(p. 47)

'May be' becomes a certainty.

*"Kimya kiwapo si chema, na maneno hayafai."*(p. 82)

Constant silence is no good, neither is too much talk.

*"Imapo siku ya Mungu, hapatakuwa la kuwa."*(p. 107)

When God will cease to exist, nothing will exist.

*"Mnyonge kupata haki, ni mwenye nguvu kupenda."*(p. 108)

The underling gets justice only when the strong one  
pleases to do so.

*"Kitukwacho na Mungu, hakuna wa kukitweza."*(p. 115)

That which God takes away, no one can bring it back.

*"Fisi akila muwele, mzima hufunga mlango."*(p. 129)

If the hyena comes to eat the sick, the healthy one  
closes his own door.

Ustaadh Bhalo has many more examples in his POEMS FROM KENYA(16).  
He is probably the only Swahili poet who lives on and for his  
poetry.

Another young poet from Mombasa, Abdillatif Abdalla, now  
working with the BBC in London, in his SAUTI YA DHIKI(17)  
(=Voice of Distress), written in prison while being detained  
by President Kenyatta's government for political reasons,  
elaborates the theme *"Mtu kuwa na viungo, si kwamba  
mekamilika."* (= To have all parts of the body intact does  
not mean one has reached perfection.) in his poem *"Ukamilifu  
wa Mja"* (= The completeness of a human being.) on pages 12-14.  
Mnyampala has a similar poem *"Hakuna mkamilifu, kila mtu  
kapungua."* (= There is no one perfect, everyone has short-  
comings.) on pages 127-8 in his DIWANI YA MNYAMPALA(18).

Abdillatif has several other good examples in his present collection:

*"Leo n'singekuwako, kama taabu ni mauti."*(p. 63)

I would not exist today if hardships were death.

In his poem "Mwerevu hajinyowi" (= A clever man never cuts his own hair, i.e. he lets the barber do it for him.), there is no refrain; instead he uses the fourth line of each stanza to expand further the idea of that stanza.

Generally, *mashairi*, the topical quatrains, have the fourth line as the refrain as in Massamba's "Usiache mbachao ....." quoted earlier. This line-rhyme is often both the name of the poem and contains its theme. If the contents of such a poem are philosophical, the well-balanced rhyme gradually acquires the status of a proverb. Massamba's "Mapenzi ni maua"(19) (= Love is like flowers.) sounds like a genuine proverb, and one learns it and takes it to be authentic after going through the poem only once:

1. *"Mapenzi yanazuzua, jambo hilo tufahamu;  
Yananyesha kama mvua, kwisha choko ni vigumu;  
Bibi ukimchukua, usidhania yanadumu;  
Wandani mje fahamu, mapenzi sawa maua."*

Love makes you vaunt yourself, after a quarrel it is hard;  
It comes like rain (in plenty), then difficulties arise;  
If you take a wife, do not suppose it will last for ever;  
Know my friends, love is like flowers.

2. *"Mwali unapochukua, ubayake ufahamu;  
Mwanzoni yanachanua, mwayaona ya muhimu;  
Kabla hayajakua, kwa wawili ni matamu;  
Wandani mje fahamu, mapenzi sawa maua."*

When you take a virgin, you should know her weakness;  
Flowers bloom at first, and you see what is important;  
Before love (flowers) is grown much, it is sweet to both;  
Know my friends, love is like flowers.

A better translation of these verses would require a deeper interpretation of the puns used and the alteration of the

words *mapenzi* and *maua* which belong to the same noun-class and have the same pronouns.

In this short presentation I can but only give a glimpse of the prosodic forms of Swahili used in proverbs and proverb-songs; and the question of their function must be left to be dealt in a future essay. However, it seems appropriate here to conclude that "proverbs are a refined way of expressing the thoughts of a society, the philosophy of the people, customs and traditions of a culture", (20) though at times, they may appear "mediocre, tedious and banal". But Swahili proverbs in general enjoy the same popularity which has always been theirs. Though paroemiologists are a rare breed, the users of 'proverbs', 'sayings', 'aphorisms' or 'saws' are countless. To a modern Swahili-speaker, like the ancient Palestinians, a proverb "besides its narrower meaning" embraces "all that which we might designate as parables, allegories, oracles of blessing and cursing, taunts, poems, essays, and perhaps even acts of magic." (21)

The forms of proverbs in Swahili, and indeed more or less in all languages, are generally poetic. Proverbs and their function are best understood 'poetically', and as 'philosophical'. They have been universally "used to instruct, to entertain, and to preserve legal tradition." (22) For "A proverb is one man's wit and all men's wisdom." (23)

## NOTES

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3. Nasir, Sayyid Abdulla A., Al Inkishafi - The Soul's Awakening, edited & translated by William Hichens, Sheldon Press, London, 1939, and OUP, Nairobi, 1972.p.30.
4. *ibid.* pp. 70-71, 80-81.
5. Massamba, D.P., "Diwani ya Massamba" in KISWAHILI Vol. 40/2 Sept. 1970. Institute of Kiswahili Research, Daressalaam, p. 40.
6. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara, "Towards a Theory of Proverb Meaning" in PROVERBIUM No. 22, 1973. Society of Finnish Literature, Helsinki. p.821.
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8. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *op.cit.*
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11. *ibid.* p. 119.
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13. *ibid.* p. 71.
14. Mnyampala, M., Diwani ya Mnyampala, EALB, Daressalaam, 1965.
15. Bhalo, Ahmad Nassir Juma, Malenga wa Mvita, OUP, Nairobi, 1974.
16. Bhalo, A.N.J., Poems From Kenya, edited & translated by Lyndon Harries, Univ. of Wisconsin Press, Madison/Milwaukee/London, 1966.
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18. Mnyampala, M., *op.cit.*
19. Massamba, D.P., *op.cit.*
20. Lodhi, A.Y., *op.cit.*
21. Thompson, J.M., The Form and Function of Proverbs in Israel, Mouton, The Hague, 1974. I have relied heavily on Thompson for the phraseology used in these concluding paragraphs. p. 17.
22. *ibid.* p. 131.
23. Stevenson, B., ed. The Home Book of Quotations, Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1956. p. 1629.

### 3. LUGHA NA UTAMADUNI WA KISWAHILI

Kiswahili cha aina fulani kilizungumzwa labda zaidi ya miaka elfu moja iliyopita katika pwa za Afrika Mashariki kutoka kaskazini ya Barawa nchini Somalia mpaka kusini ya Beira nchini Msumbiji. Baadaye, katika karne iliyopita, wafanyi biashara, wamisionari na wakoloni walikitumia Kiswahili katika bara la Afrika Mashariki kama 'lugha saidizi'. Leo, watu karibu milioni 50 hutumia Kiswahili cha aina mbalimbali.

Neno 'Kiswahili' (au hasa kiini chake) lina asili ya kiarabu, na maana yake ni 'pwani'. Neno 'sahil' au 'sawahel' linapati-kana pia katika lugha nyingi za Bahari Hindi. Kiswahili ni lugha ya kibantu, na ni mojawapo za lugha za tawi la kaskazini-ya-mashariki la jamii ya lugha za Bantu. Kilikuzwa kama lugha ya kimiji labda katika karne ya nane kwenye pwa za mpaka wa Kenya na Somalia, na yamkini kilikuwa lugha ya Shungwaya, ile nchi ya jamii ya masimulizi ya kale katika sehemu zile za Pwani Mashariki. Lugha ya Kiswahili imeazima maneno mengi kutoka Kiarabu, Kiajemi/Kiirani na lugha za kihindi za Kachhi/Cutchi na Gujarati. Pia katika karne hii, Kiswahili kimeazima maneno mengi kutoka Kiingereza. Kiswahili kina maneno machache sana kutoka Kireno, Kidachi/Kijerumani, Kifaransa na Kituruki.

Aina mbalimbali za Kiswahili zinatumika pwani ya Afrika Mashariki kutoka Barawa mpaka pande za kaskazini za Msumbiji na visiwa vya karibu na pwani. Lugha zilizohusiana na Kiswahili zinapatikana huko visiwa vya Ngazija/Komoro. Kiswahili kina-fahamika kidogo pia huko kaskazini-ya-magharibi ya Bukini/Mala-gasi, bandari za Yemen ya Kusini (Hadhramaut, Sokotra, Mukalla, Shihir), Oman/Maskati na Khaliji (hasa Dubai katika Muungano wa Amirati za Kiarabu). Katika nchi za Zaire, Burundi na Rwanda, lahaja ya Kiswahili iitwayo Kingwana (lugha ya waungwana) imeenea sana na inapatikana kama lugha zazi ya Waislamu na pia Wakristo wa huko wasiofuata tena mila za babu zao hutumia Kingwana kama lugha yao ya kwanza.

Miongoni mwa karibu lahaja 20 za Kiswahili, Kiunguja (ambacho ni lahaja ya Unguja Magharibi na Mjini Unguja) kinajulikana vyema na kinatumika na zaidi ya nusu ya Waswahili kama lugha zazi. Kiunguja ni mojawapo ya lahaja za Kiswahili zilizozaliwa



na kukua karne mbili-tatu zilizopita, na kwa hivyo hakina fasihi ya asili ambayo iliandikwa daima kwa lahaja za Kiamu (Lamu) na Kimvita (Mambasa). Hapo zamani, Kiamu kilitumika kuwa lugha fasaha na kiliandikwa kwa aina ya herufi za kiarabu. Hati hizo hazitumiki sana siku hizi.

Fasihi ya Kiswahili ni maridhawa sana, ni hasa ushairi kwa Kiamu ambacho hata leo ni lugha kuu ya ushairi wa Kiswahili. Lakini karibu nathari yote ya Kiswahili ni kwa Kiunguja ambacho baada ya Wazungu kutawala Afrika Mashariki mwishoni mwa karne ya 19, kikatukuzwa kuwa 'lugha fasaha' au 'Kiserikali'. Maandiko ya zamani mno ya Kiswahili yaliyohifadhiwa ni utenzi mrefu wa HAMZIYA uliotungwa na Sheikh Aidarus bin Uthaima wa Pate (Kenya) mnamo mwaka wa 1652, barua fulani zilizopelekwa na Sultani/Mfalme wa Kilwa (Tanzania) kwa Amiri Jeshi wa kireno wa koloni ya Goa (India) mwaka wa 1710. Maandishi haya yote ya zamani ni ya Kiamu.

Kiswahili fasaha ni lugha ya taifa na lugha rasmi ya Tanzania. Nchini Kenya, Kiswahili ni lugha ya taifa na Kiingereza kimesalia kama lugha rasmi. Huko Uganda, Kiswahili kimatumika zaidi katika majeshi, mawasiliano na mabandari.

Kiswahili ni lugha ya awali ya Waislamu wazaliwa wa Afrika Mashariki; na Kiarabu kikiwa Kilatini cha Waislamu, kinajulikana sana na kutumiwa katika mazingira ya kidini. Lakini Kiswahili karne hii kimefaidi sana pia na mchango wa kifasihi wa Wafrika Mashariki wasio Waislamu k.m. marehemu Sheikh Mathiasi Mnyampala, Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, ndugu Euphrase Kezilahabi; na yule mtaalam na mshairi mashuhuri wa Kiswahili Marehemu H.E. Lambert alikuwa Mwingereza. Sheikh Muhammedi Kijumwa 'Masihi' alikuwa Mwislamu, lakini baadaye alikuwa Mkristo. Profesa Jan Knappert amethibitisha kwamba hata Fumo Liyongo wakati fulani aliwahi kuwa Mkristo.

Kwa mapokeo, Waswahili karibu wote walikuwa Waafrika Waislamu wazaliwa wa Afrika Mashariki; baadhi yao walichanganyika na Waarabu, Waajemi/Wairani na Wahindi. Na tangu zama za biashara ya utumwa, na utumwa kufutwa/kubatilishwa, Kiswahili kimekuwa lugha zazi ya mamilioni ya watu wa Afrika Mashariki na ya Kati.

Lakini utamaduni wa Kiswahili wa mapokeo ni wa mchanganyiko wa mila za kiafrika na kiislamu, za kibiashara na usafirishaji, uvuvi na ukulima, na pia maisha ya kimijini. Katika utamaduni wa Kiswahili kuna mambo mengi ya kivotu ya kutoka nchi za Mashariki ya Kati na Bahari Hindi zaidi kuliko kutoka Bara Afrika.

Waarabu wa Omani, Wahindi na Waajemi walifika Afrika Mashariki katika vikundi vidogovidogo kama wafanyi biashara, wanajeshi na watawala wa kikoloni. Walikuja kutoka pande za Asia ambazo kwa kawaida hazikukaza sana ufasaha kwani zilikuwa na upungufu au ufukara wa elimu na usomi, kwa hivyo watu hao mwanzoni hawakukikuza Kiswahili kwa mchango imara wa kifasihi, falsafa na elimu. Makala ya kifalsafa yenye thamani kubwa kuhusu tarika/maongozi ya Sayyid Jamaliddin Al Afghani yaliyoandikwa na Sheikh Al Amin wa Mambasa ni ya miaka ya baadaye sana, yaani mwongo wa 1920. Fasihi ya Kiswahili ya kabla ya mwaka wa 1890 (ambapo enzi ya ukoloni wa kizungu ulianza upya huku kwetu), aghlabu kutoka pwani ya Kenya, ni mara nyingi kazi za Mashekhe na Masharifu wa asili ya Hadhrami (Yemen ya Kusini), k.m. Seyyid Mansab, Seyyid Abdulla A. Nassir, Sheikh Aidarus bin Uthaima na Sheikh Muyaka bin Hajji wa Mambasa. Wataalamu wa Kiswahili wenye asili ya kiomani/kimanga au kihindi na kibulushi ni wa miaka ya baada ya 1890, nao ni Sheikh Abdulkarim bin Jamaliddin wa Lindi, Hemedi bin Abdalla el-Buhri wa Tanga, Maalim Shihabudin Chiraghdin wa Mambasa, Khadhi Sheikh Abdulla Saleh Farsi na wadogo wake waalimu Shaaban na Muhammad, wote wa Zanzibar. Lakini mlezi halisi wa nathari ya Kiswahili fasaha ni Maalim Shaaban Robert aliyekuwa Mswahili wa kizazi cha kwanza. Diana/theolojia ya Kiislamu katika Afrika Mashariki ilitukuzwa sana pwani ya Kenya na mabingwa wengi wa Kiswahili hata leo wanaamini ya kuwa Lamu ni Maka yao.

Kwa vile waliohamia Afrika Mashariki na kutamakani huku kabla ya zama za 1890 kutoka Asia walikuja kwa vikundi vidogovidogo, na kwa tawanyo la karne nyingi, wakamezwa kilugha na Kiswahili, na wakakitajirisha kwa wingi wa maneno yao. Shughuli zao za kibiashara na ubaharia zikakiongezwa Kiswahili hazina yake ya mambo, vitu na ujuzi wa kutoka nchi za Mashariki na Bahari Hindi. Hata vivumbuzi na vibuni vya kizungu (mashine za mvuke,

umeme, simu n.k.) vililetwa Zanzibar baada tu ya kuanzishwa kwake huko Marekani na Ulaya. Na athari hizi za kigeni zika-fanya hali ya maisha ya kiswahili izidi kuwa ya kimiji na kimataifa.

Neno 'Mswahili' limetumika kumaanisha watu wa aina mbalimbali wa Afrika Mashariki. Kwa kawaida, si zamani sana, maana yake ilikuwa ni Mwafrika yeyote wa pwani aliyesema Kiswahili na aliyekuwa Mwislamu. Walakini katika miji ya pwani na visiwani, si wengi waliopenda kuitwa 'Waswahili'. Waafrika na Waafro-asia (mchanganyiko wa Waafrika na Waasia) wote walio-sema Kiswahili na waliotoka daraja za chini za jamii, waliitwa 'Waswahili' na wakubwa/makabaila wao. Waarabu wahamiaji waliwa-ita Waafrika wote (ila Wahabeshi na Wasomali) 'Waswahili'. Wahindi wa Afrika Mashariki hapo mwanzoni walitumia majina ya 'Habsi/Habshi' (= Habeshi), 'Golo/Gola' (= Mtumwa/Watumwa), au 'Kario/Karia' (= Mtu mweusi/Watu weusi) badala ya majina ya 'Mswahili/Waswahili' au 'Mwafrika/Waafrika'. Na wasemao Kiswahili wenyewe hawakujiita 'Waswahili' asilani, kwani, jinsi A.H.J.Prins anavyoandika, istilahi ya 'Waswahili' "ilikuwa lazima neno la kueleza uhusiano, na kwa hivyo ilikuwa kionyesho muhimu cha kijamii".

Nadra sana lilitumika neno hilo kwa kujijulisha kwani lilileta mnyimo mwingi wa hali nzuri katika jamii. Hivyo, matambulisho mengine kama Mwarabu, Mshirazi, Mwafro-Shirazi, au mara chache Mhindi na Mbulushi yalipendwa zaidi. Tangu mwishoni mwa mwongo wa 1950, istilahi ya 'Mswahili' imetumika kumhusisha mwenyeji yeyote wa pwani, mwenye asili yoyote, anayesema Kiswahili kama lugha yake ya kwanza. Lakini maana hii haikutumika kirasmi kuainisha kabila lolote maalum. Basi Waswahili maana yake ilikuwa Waafrika wa makabila tafauti, Waarabu na Waasia wengine, wote pamoja. Mtu aliweza kuitwa Mswahili na pia Mwafrika au Mzaramo, Mnyamwezi n.k., aliweza kuitwa Mswahili na pia Mwarabu au Mhindi n.k. Wengi walijiita Washirazi (wenye asili ya kiirani) au Wafro-Shirazi (mchanganyiko wa Waafrika na Wairani), Bajuni (mchanganyiko wa Wayemeni, Wahabeshi na Wabantu), au walijiita Waunguja, Wapemba, Watumbatu, Wamrima, Waamu n.k.

Istilahi hii ya 'Mswahili' imetumika shelabela na waandishi wa

historia, wasafiri wa kigeni na wavumbuzi, lakini wakoloni waliikwepa ati kwani "haikuwako mipaka dhahiri ya kuwatafafutisha Waswahili na jamii za makabila jirani". Hiyo haikuwa kweli hata kidogo.

Leo baada ya Kiswahili kutukuzwa kuwa lugha ya taifa, wenyeji wengi mno wa Pwani wasemao Kiswahili kama lugha zazi, wenye asili mbalimbali na dini tafauti, wanajionea fahari kwa kujitambulisha kuwa 'Waswahili'. Vyovyote, tunaweza kueleza kwamba Mswahili ni yule anayefuata utamaduni wa kiswahili wa asili, awe ametoka kundi lolote la wasemao Kiswahili kikiwa lugha yao ya kwanza. Utamaduni wa kiswahili wa asili una jamii za pwani, athari za Kiislamu, wakulima na wavuvi waliochanganya mila za kiafrika, kiarabu na kidogo za kiirani, kihindi na kiindonesia. Wafuasi wa utamaduni huo hawashabihiani kwa sura wala asili na umbo. Umoja wa utamaduni wao unadhihirishwa na historia yao ya pamoja.

Michael Lofchie kwa mfano anawawasifu Waswahili kama "mchanganyiko wa mila za kiafrika na za kiarabu.... Ujenzi, sanaa na libasi za kiarabu, dini ya Kiislamu, na lugha ya Kiswahili - ni lazima lugha ya kiafrika kwa sarufi na msamiati, lakini iliyoingizwa athari nyingi za kiarabu". Lakini kwa mujibu wa yale yaliyoelezwa hapo mbele, ni wazi kwamba istilahi ya 'Waswahili' bila shaka inastahili maelezo bora zaidi ya yale yaliyojaribiwa na waandishi wengi wa Magharibi.

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#### 4. THE SWAHILI LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Some form of Swahili was spoken more than a thousand years ago along the coasts of East Africa from north of Brava in Somalia to south of Beira in Mozambique. In the last century traders, missionaries and colonisers used Swahili in the interior of eastern Africa as a 'lingua franca'. Today an estimated 50 million people communicate in various forms of Swahili.

The word 'Swahili' is of Arabic origin and means 'coasts'. 'Sahil/Sawahil' is also found as a loan word in many languages of the Indian Ocean. Swahili is a Bantu language belonging to the north-eastern branch of the Bantu family of languages. It developed as an urban language probably in the 8th century around the present Kenya-Somalia border, and was probably the language of the legendary Shungwaya culture in that area. Swahili has borrowed much from Arabic, Persian and the Indic languages of Kachhi/Cutch and Gujarati. In this century, Kiswahili has borrowed much from English. There are also a few loans from Portuguese, German, French and Turkish.

Varieties of Swahili are spoken along the coasts of East Africa from Brava in Somalia to northern Mozambique and the off-shore islands. Related languages are spoken on the Comoro islands. It is also understood to some extent in north-western Madagascar, in parts of South Yemen, Oman and the Persian Gulf. In Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi, the Kingwana dialect of Swahili is quite wide-spread and occurs as the mother-tongue of Muslims and de-trabalised Christians.

Of the about 20 dialects and sub-dialects of Swahili, the dialect of Kiunguja of Zanzibar Town and western Zanzibar Island (Unguja), is the best known and spoken by more than half of those who speak Swahili as a mother tongue. Kiunguja is one of the last Swahili dialects to develop and thus it lacks classical literature which was always written in Kiamu and Kimvita, the dialects of Lamu and Mombasa respectively. In the past, Kiamu served as the standard written form of the language using

a variation of the Arabic script which today is not used very much.

Literature in Swahili is plentiful, mostly poetry written in Kiamu which even today dominates poetry. Almost all prose is in Kiunguja which, since the beginning of European colonisation in East Africa towards the end of the 19th century, has served as the basis of the 'standard' form. The oldest known surviving documents in Swahili are the long poem HAMZIYA by Sheikh Aidarus bin Uthaima of Pate (Kenya) dated 1652, and some letters from the Sultan of Kilwa (Tanzania) to the Portuguese military governor in Goa (India) dated 1710. They are in the Kiamu dialect.

Standard Swahili is the national and official language of Tanzania. In Kenya, it is the national language while English survives as the official language. In Uganda, Swahili is mainly used in armed forces, the railways and harbours.

Swahili is the main language of traditional Muslims of East Africa; and Arabic, being the Latin of Muslims, is also widely known and used in connection with religious practices. However, the literary contributions to Swahili of non-Muslim East Africans in this century are great, e.g. the works of the late Sheikh Mathias Mnyampala, President Julius K. Nyerere, Euphrase Kezilahabi; and the Swahili scholar and poet H.E. Lambert was an Englishman. Sheikh Muhammedi Kijumwa 'Masihi' was originally a Muslim who later became a Christian.

Traditionally, the Swahili-speakers were mostly Muslim, some of whom had Arab, Persian or Indian strains. Since the abolition of slavery, Swahili has become the mother tongue of many millions of other peoples of eastern Africa. Traditional Swahili culture is Afro-Islamic, maritime, agricultural and highly urbanised at the same time. Its material culture shared more with the people of the Middle East and around the Indian Ocean than it did with the African Mainland. Omani Arabs, Indians and Persians came to East Africa in small numbers as traders, soldiers and colonial administrators. They came from parts of Asia which generally suffered scholarly and intellectual poverty

thus in the begining, they did not make any note-worthy contribution to the Swahili culture in the fields of secular literature, philosophy and learning. The philosophical treatises of high scholastic value on the teachings of Sayyid Jamaliddin Al Afghani by Sheikh Al Amin of Mombasa are of a much later date, i.e. 1920s. Swahili literature of the pre-1890 era (when the Scramble for East Africa was completed) mostly from the Kenya coast, is predominantly the product of Swahili Sheikhs and Shariffs having Hadhrami (South Yemen) connections e.g. Seyyid Mansab, Seyyid Aidarus bin Uthaima, Seyyid Abdulla A. Nassir and Muyaka bin Hajji. Swahili scholars of Omani, and Indian and Baluchi, origin belong to the post-1890 era e.g. Hemedi bin Abdalla el-Buhri, Abdulkarim bin Jamaliddin, Sheikh Abdulla Saleh Farsi and his brothers Shaaban and Muhammad, and the Kimvita writer Shihabdin Chiraghdin. But the real father of Standard Swahili prose was Shaaban Robert who was only a first generation native Swahili-speaker. Islamic theology in East Africa had most of its bearers on the Kenya coast, and Lamu is even today considered by the Swahili scholars to be their Mecca.

Since the pre-1890 immigrants to East Africa from Asia came in small numbers and over a long period of many centuries, they became linguistically absorbed by Swahili, and they enriched it by an abundance of lexical contributions. Their mercantile activities added a wealth of oriental and oceanic material and technology to the Swahili culture. Western inventions also, such as the steam engine, electricity, the telegraph and telephone, found their way to Zanzibar only a few years after their introduction in America and Europe, and added to the cosmopolitan nature of the Swahili way of life.

The term 'Swahili' has been used to mean many different categories of people in East Africa. Generally, in the not too distant past, it referred to any African from the coast who spoke Swahili and who was a Muslim. While locally in the coastal towns and islands not many liked to be called 'Waswahili'. The Swahili-speaking Africans and Afro-asians of lower social strata were referred to as 'Waswahili' by their superiors. Immigrant Arabs referred to all Africans (except for Ethiopians and Somali)

as 'Waswahili'. The Indians in East Africa referred to Africans as 'Habsi/Habshi' (= Abyssinians), 'golo/gola' (slave/slaves, serf/serfs) or as 'kario/karia' (black man/people). As Prins notes, the term 'Swahili' was "essentially an epithet of reference and hence an important sociological pointer".

It was seldom used for self-identification, for it invoked much deprivation of social status. As a result, alternative identities such as Arab or Shirazi, or to a lesser extent Indian or Baluchi, were always preferred. Since the late 50s, the term 'Swahili' has been used to refer to any coastal inhabitant of whatever origin who spoke the Swahili language as his mother-tongue, or first language. However, this definition was not formally applied to any particular ethnic group. The Waswahili therefore included Africans from various tribes, Arabs and other Asians also. Hence a person was a Mswahili and also an Arab/Persian/Indian/Baluchi; he was a Mswahili and also an African specified as Zaramu/Nyamwezi/Digo etc. Many Swahili-speakers of predominantly African blood called themselves Shirazi (originating in Persia), or Afro-Shirazi (of mixed Afro-Persian origin), or Bajuni (of mixed Yemeni-Ethiopian-Bantu origin) etc. The term Swahili has been used indiscriminately by travellers, explorers and historians, but carefully avoided by colonial administrators since "there were no clear boundaries differentiating the Swahili from members of the adjacent tribal communities". This of course was not true.

NAAPURI-

Today, after the rise of Swahili as a National Language, most coastal people and Swahili-speakers of different ethnic origins, and following different religions, take pride in identifying themselves as Swahili. However, one could define the Waswahili as members of a Swahili cultural group. The Swahili cultural area has Afro-Islamic maritime, agricultural and fishing communities which have blended African, Arab, Persian, Indian and Indonesian ethnic and cultural elements. The bearers of this culture are not homogeneous as far as descent or physique is concerned. Their cultural uniformity is shown by their common history.



Lofchie describes the traditional Swahili as "a mixture of African and Arab cultural elements..... Arab architecture, art and dress, the Muslim religion and the Swahili language - essentially African in grammar and vocabulary, but heavily infused with Arabic". The Swahili certainly deserve a better definition than the ones attempted by many Western writers.

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## KUHUSU WAANDISHI/ABOUT THE AUTHOURS

Mch. Leonidas Kalugila (amezaliwa 1941) alisomea theologia Makumira Theological College, Tanzania, Aarhus University, Demark, na katika Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago. Ame-shafanya kazi ya uchungaji katika Tanzania na Denmark na ali-kuwa mwalimu wa sekondari nyumbani Tanzania. Kabla ya kuja Uppsala, alikuwa mwalimu wa theologia, Kiyunani na Kihebero/Kihebrania kwenye chuo cha Makumira. Pamoja na wengine, ame-andika 'Klokkerne kimer', alishiriki na Bw. Joel Kibira, Mch. G. Jasper na Bw. Ph. Tibaijuka kutafsiri Zaburi katika Kihaya. Maandishi yake mengine ni: 'The Problem of the Messiah in the Old Testament' (speciale: Aarhus University), 'Utangulizi wa Vitabu vya Agano la Kale', 'Theologia ya Agano la Kale', 'Majina: Asili na Maana ya Majina', Methali za Kiswahili Toka Afrika Mashariki', 'Ebigano n'ebikoikyo', 'En To-vejs teologi', 'Carl Herbert Uhlin' na 'African Understanding of the Old Testament' (itachapishwa 1980). Hapa Uppsala amefanya utafiti na kuandika tasnifu ya udaktari katika theologia mwaka wa 1980 'The Wise King - Studies in Royal Wisdom as Divine Revelation in the Old Testament and Its Environment'. Alikuwa mwanakamati wa Association of East African Theological Institutions: Swahili Textbooks Committee. Ni mwanakamati wa kutafsiri Biblia katika Kiswahili cha kawaida.

Pastor Leonidas Kalugila (born 1941) studied theology at Makumira Theological College, Tanzania, Aarhus University in Denmark, and at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. He has already worked as a parsh pastor in Tanzania and Denmark and as a secondary school teacher in Tanzania. Before coming to Uppsala, he was teaching theology, Greek and Hebrew at Makumira. He is a co-author of 'Klokkerne kimer' and worked with Mr. Joel Kibira, Rev. G. Jasper and Mr. Ph. Tibaijuka in translating Psalms into Haya. He is also the author of 'The Problem of the Messiah in the Old Testament' (Speciale: Aarhus University), 'An Introduction to the Old Testament Books', 'Majina: Asili na Maana ya Majina', 'Swahili Proverbs From East Africa', 'Ebigano n'ebikoikyo', 'En To-vejs teologi', 'Carl Herbert Uhlin' and 'African Understanding of the Old Testament' (forthcoming 1980). Here in Uppsala he has just finished his doctoral thesis in theology 'The Wise King - Studies in Royal Wisdom as Divine Revelation in the Old Testament and Its Environment'. He was a Committee Member of the Ass. of E.A. Theol. Institutions: Swahili Text-books Committee, and is a Member of the Popular Swahili Bible Translation Committee.

Abdulaziz Y. Lodhi (amezaliwa 1945) ni mhadhiri wa Kiswahili katika Idara ya Lugha za Afrika and Asia, Chuo Kikuu cha Uppsala, Sweden, tangu katikati ya mwaka wa 1974. Alihudhuria King George VI Grammar School (Lumumba College), Zanzibar, na Chuo cha Waalimu cha Chang'ombe, Daressalaam. Alifundisha skuli ya Mkwajuni, Zanzibar, na shule za sekondari za Agha Khan na Saint Xaviar mjini Daressalaam kabla ya kuingia Chuo Kikuu cha Stockholm kusoma Kiswidi na kufundisha Kiswahili mwaka wa 1969. Alifundisha SIDA Training Center, Västerås, Sweden (chuo cha mafunzo kwa wataalam wa miradi ya maendeleo nchi za nje na watumishi wa Wizara ya Mambo ya Nje) miaka ya 1970-72, na baadaye miaka ya 1973-4 aliingia Chuo Kikuu cha Uppsala kusomea Kiswidi, Kiingereza na Kifaransa.

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Vitabu na makala yake muhimu ni:

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