

**MASHAIRI YA WAADHI "VERSES OF ADMONITION":  
the people of Mombasa rebuked**

by

P.J.L. Frankl and Yahya Ali Omar

**MUKHTASARI [SUMMARY]**

Aliyetunga kasida hii, Sheikh Abdallah al-Husni, alikuwa ni mtu maarufu sana Mambasa. Kwa muda wa myaka arbaini takriban alikuwa akisomesha ilimu za dini, msikiti wa Anisa, Mjuwakale; piya alikuwa akiitoa waadhi msikiti huu na mahali pengine. Antunga kasida mbili za waadhi, moja katika hizo ndiyo hii tuliyoishereheya katika makala haya. Wakati wa kutungwa waadhi huu - 1368 (mwaka 1948 wa miladi) - Mambasa ilikuwa ikali mji wa kiSawahili, yaani mji wa kiSilamu; lakini kulikuwa kuna mabadiliko makubwa yaanza, mabadiliko ambayo mwisho yanaondowa sura za uSawahili katika Mambasa na pwani nzima ya Afrika ya mashariki.

**INTRODUCTION**

Shaykh Muhammad Abd Allah al-Husni, the author of the poem studied in this article, was a prominent personality in Mombasa from the 1920s until the mid-1950s. Born in Malindi of Hadrami stock, he and his brother Abd al-Rahman seem to have been the first members of his family to assimilate wholly to the Swahili way of life (the Swahili people have been familiar with the phenomenon of acculturation for countless generations). In due course, the family moved to Mombasa, living in Kwa maDobi, Mjuwakale - the old part of the Old Town.

Shaykh Abd Allah was well-known to his fellow Muslims for a number of reasons. First, because he travelled throughout East Africa preaching and teaching; secondly, because he established the Falah Madrasa on Salim Road,<sup>1</sup> as well as *darasa* 'religious classes' in many of Mombasa's mosques; thirdly because he founded a *Maulidi* (a celebration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad)

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<sup>1</sup> *Na haya Madrasa ya Jam'iyyatul-Islamiyya yaliyosimama hivi sasa kwa himma ya raisi wetu Shaikh Abdalla bin Muhammad el-Husny, natuyafanyize ndiyo mte wa madrasa hayo makubwa tusimame pia sote kuulitia maji mte huu, na kuupalilia hatta ukuwe uwe mkubwa, utuzaliye matunda mema 'Let us make the school belonging to the Jam'iyyatul-Islamiyya, which has recently been established by the efforts of our president Shaykh Abd Allah bin Muhammad al-Husni, like a shoot of that great Madrasa [which is to follow]; let us set to work to water this shoot; let us hoe round it until it grows and becomes large, so that it may bear us good fruit' (al-Mazru'i, 1350 AH/AD 1931. In: *ibid.* 1955, 27).*

- which was celebrated every year on the first Thursday of the month of *mfungo sita* (*rabī' al-awwal*) at the Anisa mosque, the mosque where Shaykh Abd Allah taught and preached for some three decades.

Additionally, he took over the editorship of the Mombasa newspaper *al-Islah* ('Reform') from Shaykh al-Amin bin Ali when Shaykh al-Amin was appointed *qādī* of Mombasa in 1932. *Sheikh Abdalla al-Husni alijitolea kujaribu kuendelea na jarida hiyo [al-Islah], lakini uandishi wake haukuwapendeza wasomaji, na baada ya muda mfupi ikafa 'Shaykh Abd Allah al-Husni volunteered to continue al-Islah, but the way he wrote did not please the readers, and after a short time the newspaper collapsed'* (al-Mazru'ī 1980: x).<sup>2</sup>

One further reason for his renown was as the composer of *waadhi* (Ar. *wa'z*). Usually *waadhi* are exhortations in prose, delivered either to a congregation in a mosque, or to an open-air assembly such as is found for *maulidi*; sometimes, however, *waadhi* 'admonitions' might be composed in verse. The genre, didactic and religious as it is, tends towards repetition and does not, in general, produce great poetry, but Shaykh Abd Allah's two versified *waadhi* became immensely popular in Mombasa. He wrote them down in Arabic script, and his manuscript version was copied many times by admirers of the verses.

There have been no less than four printings of the *waadhi* in romanised script (full details are furnished in the Bibliography):

- i as a booklet (Mombasa, undated);
- ii in the weekly periodical *Mwongozi* (Zanzibar 1376/1957);
- iii in *Swahili*, the journal of the East African Swahili Committee (Dar es-Salaam 1963 & 1964);
- iv in the anthology *Mashairi ya mfungo wa Ramadhani* (Dar es-Salaam 1979).

The admonition which we have selected for study was composed in 1368 AH/AD 1948; the text of the earlier Admonition appears in the Appendix.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 'There developed a noticeable difference in approach and style in the paper [*al-Islah*], which was not now [1932] as popular and effective, so that the paper declined and its publication ended soon afterwards' (Ahmad Idha Salim 1981: 248).

<sup>3</sup> Since Shaykh Abd Allah died in 1375 the earlier Admonition cannot have been composed in 1379 (Knappert 1964: 40) - the year of death is inscribed on Shaykh Abd Allah's headstone outside the Anisa mosque.

Shaykh Abd Allah died in Mombasa in 1375 AH/AD 1955, and was buried outside the Anisa mosque - the mosque with which his name had been associated for so many years - and where he now 'waits for the opening of the great Doomsday Book, in which nothing is recorded of men but whether they meant good or evil, whether they loved or neglected God'.

During his lifetime Mombasa was still recognisable as a Swahili, Islamic town; but changes were already afoot which would efface the Swahili character of Mombasa for all time.

### MASHAIRI YA WAADHI

- |    |                                                       |   |                              |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1  | <i>Bismillahi naanza<br/>nipate kuyatimiza</i>        | * | <i>jina la Mola muweza</i>   |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>haya nalokusudiya.</i>    |
| 2  | <i>kuusiya moyo wangu<br/>na Isilamu wenzangu</i>     | * | <i>na alo swahibu yangu</i>  |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>akubaliye wasiya.</i>     |
| 3  | <i>Natuzidi kufikiri<br/>hakika zimekithiri</i>       | * | <i>tuzangaliye khatari</i>   |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>zimezidi kueneya.</i>     |
| 4  | <i>Tangu zikiwa kwa siri<br/>imekuwa ni fakhari</i>   | * | <i>hata sasa ni dhahiri</i>  |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>kuyapanda maaswiya.</i>   |
| 5  | <i>Zamani zimegeuka<br/>maovu yametukuka</i>          | * | <i>mambo yameharibika</i>    |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>hakuna wa kukemeya.</i>   |
| 6  | <i>Tumeidharau dini<br/>tumemtui shetwani</i>         | * | <i>pasi na kuithamini</i>    |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>hatuna kuzingatiya.</i>   |
| 7  | <i>Na swala tumeziwata<br/>kwa ngoma na tarumbeta</i> | * | <i>misikiti twaipita</i>     |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>wala hatuoni haya.</i>    |
| 8  | <i>Imekuwa Ramadhani<br/>ni paziya milangoni</i>      | * | <i>ukenda migahawani</i>     |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>ndani wat'u wajiliya.</i> |
| 9  | <i>Wangapi walo weza<br/>na kwenda Maka waweza</i>    | * | <i>wa zaka kuitimiza</i>     |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>hawatendi hata moyo.</i>  |
| 10 | <i>Twazini pasi na khofu<br/>na mengineyo machafu</i> | * | <i>na kisha tukajisifu</i>   |
|    |                                                       | * | <i>siwezi kuwatajiya.</i>    |

- 11 *Na riba ndiyo amali* \* *na kugema tembo kali*  
*na yoṭ'e twataka mali* \* *ingawa twaangamiya.*
- 12 *Tumekuwa Isilamu* \* *hatuchi tena haramu*  
*twaiba tukidhilimu* \* *na urongo kutumiya.*
- 13 *Kiburi ndiyo uvazi* \* *kusengenya ndiyo kazi*  
*na salata na upuzi* \* *na kuyawata ya ndiya.*
- 14 *Wanawake nyuso wazi* \* *watambeya wazi wazi*  
*banati na vijakazi* \* *wamekuwa hali moya.*
- 15 *Na twaa hakuna tena* \* *ya wazee kwa vijana*  
*wake wamekatazana* \* *kutwii waume piya.*
- 16 *Na ndugu hawapendani* \* *hakuna tena imani*  
*na haki za majirani* \* *zimetupwa zoṭ'e piya.*
- 17 *Isilamu tumeswiri* \* *kuigiza makafiri*  
*kwa dhahiri na kwa siri* \* *na dini kuitukiya.*
- 18 *Na mengineyo maovu* \* *yaliyo na upotevu*  
*tumeyashika kwa nguvu* \* *pasi nyuma kurejeya.*
- 19 *Na yoṭ'e twalohisabu* \* *amekataza Wahabu*  
*ameweka na adhabu* \* *ya mwenye kuyangiliya.*
- 20 *Ukorofi duniyani* \* *wa riziki na wa deni*  
*na ikabu kaburini* \* *na motoni kuingiya.*
- 21 *Na baa nyingi daima* \* *za duniya na kiyama*  
*na kuikosa salama* \* *na mema kukwepukiya.*
- 22 *Na Mngu kughadh**i**bika* \* *na Mtume kuudhika*  
*na shufaa kukwepuka* \* *hapo ndipo pa kuliya.*
- 23 *Ituze akili yako* \* *ufikiri mwisho wako*  
*siku ya kutoka kwako* \* *na wat'u wakuliliya.*

- 24 *Huyu aliya mwanangu  
mwana aliya babaangu* \* *na mwengine ndugu yangu*  
\* *nani uletuatiya.*
- 25 *Na mke awe mjani  
na vijana masikini* \* *yupekee kit'andani*  
\* *hawana wa kuwaleya.*
- 26 *Uwate wat'u wako  
na wot'e swahibu zako* \* *na yot'e majambo yako*  
\* *huzuni zimewangiya.*
- 27 *Vit'anda vyot'e na viti  
wende ukalazwe nt'i* \* *uepushwe kuvik'eti*  
\* *na sanda kukutatiya.*
- 28 *Ufukiwe kaburini  
khofu nyingi na huzuni* \* *wat'u warudi nyumbani*  
\* *zot'e zimekushukiya.*
- 29 *Yak'oboke mato yako  
uwoze muili wako* \* *lipasuke tumbo lako*  
\* *mabuu wakijiliya.*
- 30 *Uwapi uzuri wako  
wawapi na wat'u wako* \* *ziwapi jeuri zako*  
\* *yot'e yamekupoteya.*
- 31 *Kuna na kufufuliwa  
na moto kuutambuwa* \* *kaburini kutolewa*  
\* *na swirati ndiyo ndiya.*
- 32 *Siku hiyo ifikiri  
na Hakimu ni Kahari* \* *ilo na nyingi khatari*  
\* *hakuna kupendeleya.*
- 33 *Upawe hisabu yako  
uvikat'e vyanda vyako* \* *uzione dhambi zako*  
\* *kuuma na kujutiya.*
- 34 *Na hayo hayako mbali  
itafakari ajali* \* *yakaribu kweli kweli*  
\* *ghafula hukujiliya.*
- 35 *Ewe fakiri dhalili  
ni lipi nambiya kweli* \* *usokuwa na akili*  
\* *ulilolitegemeya.*
- 36 *Wallahi nakuapiya  
labuda ukitubiya* \* *huna la kukuombeya*  
\* *kwa Mola ukarejeya.*

- 37 *Ujitahidi kukidhi* \* *zilokufutu faradhi*  
*uushike na waadhi* \* *maisha kuutumiya.*
- 38 *Kulla wakati ujute* \* *na maovu uyawate*  
*na mema yasikupite* \* *umuandame Nabiya.*
- 39 *Na ilimu ukisoma* \* *uk'eti na wat'u wema*  
*waovu wakikwegema* \* *uwe mwenye kukimbiya.*
- 40 *Hifadhi viungo vyako* \* *visimuasi Bwanako*  
*umtwii Mola wako* \* *kwa kulla alokwambiya.*
- 41 *Na haya ukiyashika* \* *utashukuru hakika*  
*moto utakuepuka* \* *na p'eponi utangiya.*
- 42 *Ya Rabbi tupe salama* \* *duniyani na kiyama*  
*utupe na mambo mema* \* *maovu kutwepushiya.*
- 43 *Na swala ifikilize* \* *na salamu iyeneze*  
*kwa Mtume na Alize* \* *daima kuwashukiya.*

Mambasa 1368/1948

**Abdallah Muhammad al-Husni**

## An English translation

- 1 In the Name of God I begin  
in the Name of the Almighty  
so that I can accomplish  
my intentions.
- 2 To give instruction to my heart  
and to the one who is my close friend  
and to my fellow Muslims  
to [any] one who is ready to take advice.
- 3 Let us think hard  
let us look at these dangers  
truly they have multiplied  
they have spread far and wide.

- 4 Previously they were done in secret  
but now such deeds are performed openly  
[indeed] it has become a matter of prestige  
to commit sin.
- 5 Times have changed  
matters have got worse  
evil deeds are now glorified  
there is no one to offer rebuke.
- 6 We have despised religion  
without valuing it in any way  
we have obeyed Satan  
not one of us pauses to consider.
- 7 We have abandoned the prescribed prayers  
we pass by the mosques  
with drums and trumpets  
and we feel no shame.
- 8 When Ramadhan comes  
you will see if you go to the restaurants  
curtains draped across the doorway  
inside folk are eating brazenly.
- 9 How many are the people  
who can afford to give alms  
and who can afford to go on pilgrimage  
but who fulfil neither of these religious obligations.
- 10 We fornicate without fear  
and then we boast about what we have done  
and other dirty things  
which I cannot name.
- 11 And usury is our full-time work  
and producing strong fermented palm-wine  
all this so that we can become wealthy  
although we destroy ourselves [in the process].

- 12 We Muslims have become  
unafraid of forbidden things  
we steal and acquire money by fraudulent means  
and make use of lies.
- 13 Pride is our outer garment  
backbiting is our permanent occupation  
creating disharmony and talking nonsense  
instead of occupying ourselves with meaningful matters.
- 14 Women have their faces unveiled  
they walk about [in the streets] without covering;  
ladies and their maid-servants  
have become indistinguishable.
- 15 No longer is there any obedience  
of young people towards their parents  
and women have forbidden one another  
to obey their husbands.
- 16 Relatives no longer love one another  
there is no kindness any more  
and the rights of neighbours  
have all been abandoned.
- 17 We Muslims have become  
imitations of the European-Christians  
openly and in secret  
hating our own religion.
- 18 And there are other bad things  
which lead one astray  
we cleave to them with enthusiasm  
without [so much as] a backward glance.
- 19 And all that we have enumerated  
God has forbidden  
He has prepared suffering  
for the one who heeds them.



- 20 In the world there is misfortune relating to  
the necessities of life and debts  
followed by suffering in the grave  
and entry into hell.
- 21 Always [you will experience] numerous calamities  
in this world, and on the Day of Doom  
and an absence of safety  
and good things will pass you by.
- 22 God will be angry  
the Prophet [Muhammad] will be annoyed  
he will not make intercessions on your behalf  
it is this that should cause you to weep.
- 23 Ponder  
consider your end  
the day on which you are borne from your home  
while folk weep for you.
- 24 This one cries "O my child"  
another cries "O my son"  
a child cries "O my father  
whom have you left behind to take care of us"?
- 25 The wife becomes a widow  
alone in the bed  
and the unfortunate children  
have no one to rear them.
- 26 You will leave your relatives behind  
and all your business affairs  
while all your close friends  
will be filled with grief.
- 27 You will be prevented from sitting  
on all your couches and chairs  
you will be laid in the earth  
and a shroud will be wrapped round you.

- 28 Once in the grave you will be covered [with earth]  
folk will return home  
much fear and grief  
have descended upon you.
- 29 Your eyes will burst out [of their sockets]  
your stomach will split open  
your body will decay  
and maggots will consume [your flesh] unrestrainedly.
- 30 Where are your good looks now  
where is your arrogance  
where are your [innumerable] relatives  
you have lost all.
- 31 Moreover there is the resurrection  
[when] you will be taken out of the grave  
and given a taste of Hell  
and the path thereto is called Swirati.
- 32 Ponder then that Day [of Doom]  
which is full of dangers  
and the Deemster is God Himself  
He favours none.
- 33 You will be presented with your account  
when you will see your sins  
and you will cut open your fingers  
as you gnaw them in remorse.
- 34 All these things are not far off  
indeed they are near  
consider then the hour of [your] death  
it will visit you unexpectedly.
- 35 O you poor wretch  
without understanding  
tell me truly what is it  
on which you rely?

- 36 By God I swear to you  
there is nothing that can save you  
unless you repent  
and return to your God.
- 37 Make an effort to pray the prescribed prayers  
which you have omitted [to pray]  
obey this admonition  
and use it in [what remains of your] life.
- 38 Feel remorse at every opportunity  
leave evil behind  
do not allow good to pass you by  
and follow the Prophet [Muhammad].
- 39 You should study religious knowledge  
spend your time in the company of decent folk  
if bad people approach  
you should flee from them.
- 40 Care for your limbs  
do not permit them to transgress against your Lord  
obey your God  
in all that He commands you.
- 41 If you follow this advice  
you will be truly grateful  
you will avoid hell  
and enter paradise.
- 42 O Lord grant us safety  
in this world and on the Day of Doom  
grant us that which is good  
and deliver us from evil.
- 43 [O Lord] grant [us] mercy  
and spread peace  
upon the Prophet [Muhammad] and his relatives  
may these [blessings] descend upon them for ever and ever.

## NOTES

## STANZA 1

1a *Bismillahi*: in the Name of God; for observations and full references on the employment of the Arabic word *Allāh* in Swahili see 'The word for GOD in Swahili' (*JRA* xx/3 1990) and 'The word for GOD in Swahili: further considerations' (*JRA* xxv 1995).

1b *Mola*: God; from the Arabic *mawlā* 'Lord'.

## STANZA 2

2a *Isilamu*: Muslims; this noun is assigned to the 'N Class' and thus has no prefix - e.g. *waJomvu ni Islamu* 'the Jomvu are Muslims'. *Islamu k'anzu* is a Muslim who does not practice Islam. Nowadays, of course there is no shortage of instances of *waIslamu* - but in the Swahili speech of the Swahili people it is to the 'N Class' that the word is properly assigned.

## STANZA 5

1a *zamani*: the times (i.e. the prevailing conditions of the period) as in the pessimistic *wimbo* 'song':

*hizi si zamani*                   \* *zamani sizo*  
*umuoneaye imani*               \* *ana wawazo*  
*mtenda njema n'nani*       \* *akalipwa zizo?*

'These are bad times, the times are not good;  
the one to whom you show kindness has [different] ideas;  
is there one who has done good and who is then rewarded with good?'

## STANZA 6

1a *Dini*: religion, i.e. the religion of Islam.

## STANZA 7

1a *swala*: prayers, i.e. the five prescribed daily prayers; for a further observation on *swala* see Stanza 43 below.

1b/2a This is a reference to *gwaride* ('military-style bands') marching past mosques at one of the prescribed prayer times, the bandsmen thus not joining in the obligatory prayers - the derivation of *gwaride* is from Engl. 'guard', and not as in Johnson 1939: 121.

The tradition of Swahili bands can be traced back to 1877 when a military force was first raised, organised and drilled along European lines in Zanzibar town, at the request of Sayyid Barghash bin Sa'īd bin Sulṭān (reigned 1287-1305/1870-1888), by Lloyd Mathews, 1850-1901 (Lyne 1936: frontispiece; Ranger 1975). At the same time Mathews established a military band which was to play

for Sayyid Barghash and his successors. Soon similar bands were to be found along the length of Swahili-land for, as the Arabic proverb has it, *an-nāsu 'alā dīni mulūkihim* 'the people follow the customs (literally 'religion') of their rulers' - i.e. the *cuius regio eius religio* principle. In Mombasa there were initially two bands, Kingi (founded by Khamisi Mustwafa Tangai of Birkau, Mombasa) and Kilungu (subsequently renamed Setla); these two were later joined by Skotchi. They would parade and perform on Sunday afternoons (the 'protecting' power having decreed that Sunday would be the weekly day of rest). The custom was that as a band marched past a mosque the musicians would fall silent as a mark of respect.

#### STANZA 8

1a *Ramadhani*: the ninth month of the year in the Islamic calendar, during which Muslims observe strict fasting between dawn and sunset. A paper dealing with the observance of Ramadān in Swahili-land is being prepared for publication.

1b *migahawani*: restaurants; the 'g' echoes the Ḥaḍramī pronunciation (the script has *qāf*).

2a *paziya milangoni*: curtains across the doorways; during Ramadān it was and is the custom in Mombasa for Ḥaḍrami-owned restaurants to be closed from dawn to dusk. By contrast, restaurants owned by Indian Muslims remained open, but with a red curtain (red for danger!) draped across the doorway. During a visit to Mombasa in Ramadān 1415 (1995) Indian-owned restaurants remained open, but without any curtains.

2b *wajiliya*: they eat brazenly; the idiomatic use of the *-ji-* infix with the prepositional form of the verb denotes indifference, i.e. not caring that they have been seen eating during the hours of fasting.

#### STANZA 9

1b *zaka*: alms; *zaka* (Ar. *zakāt*) is an obligatory payment made annually under Islamic law on certain kinds of property and used for charitable and religious objects.

2a *kwenda Maka*: go on pilgrimage (the place-name has only one 'k' in Swahili); this is a reference to the pilgrimage to the Sacred Mosque at Mecca undertaken in the twelfth month of the Muslim year and constituting one of the religious duties of Islam.

#### STANZA 11

1a *amali*: work; in Swahili this Arabic-derived word has a moral connotation (good or bad) which is absent from the Bantu *vitendo*.

1b *tembo kali*: strong fermented palm wine; the contrast is with *tembo la tamu* 'sweet unfermented palm wine' - the former being *haramu* 'unlawful', while the latter is *halali* 'lawful' (and much used by the Swahili for cooking and baking, and as a refreshing drink).

## STANZA 14

1a/b In times gone by, before Mombasa and other Swahili towns had shops (the Swahili for 'shop' is a word of foreign, non-Bantu, etymology) Swahili ladies of rank would normally remain at home (*-tawa*), their slaves being the ones who went out to draw water from the well or to gather firewood. However on special occasions such as weddings or funerals ladies might venture abroad, but in groups, and within the seclusion of a *shiraa* (a kind of mobile tent, fully described in Werner & Hichens 1934: 92).

2a *banāṭi*: ladies; the Swahili carries a different meaning from the Arabic *banāt* 'daughters'.

2a *viyakazi*: young slave girls (Steere 1875: 70) with *-kazi* functioning as a gender marker - also *wajakazi* 'adult female slaves'. In general, the phenomenon of nouns morphologically marked for gender is not found in Swahili and other Bantu languages (Frankl & Yahya Ali Omar 1993).

## STANZA 16

1a *ndugu*: relatives

The word *ndugu* may have three meanings:

- i brother/sister - the Bantu languages being, generally indifferent to gender.
- ii relatives, of the same generation as oneself.
- iii one's friends who live nearby, who go to the same school, who work in the same place, etc.

The concept of *ndugu* as 'comrade' was introduced to Swahili speech in the 1960s by the socialist government of Tanzania in imitation of a fashion then prevalent in eastern Europe. This usage was out of sympathy with the genius of the language for, in the Swahili speech of the Swahili people, the word *ndugu* when used apostrophically is always followed by a possessive adjective, e.g. not *ndugu!* but *ndugu zangu!* 'comrades'!

2a *imani*: kindness.

The verbal stem *-amini* has the same meaning as the Arabic verb from which it derives, i.e. 'believe'; however, for first-language speakers of Swahili the noun *imani* (Ar. *imān*) means 'kindness', not 'belief' as in Arabic. In this connection, European-Christian missionaries in East Africa imitated Arabic usage, and it is this meaning which *imani* carries for second-language speakers.

A 14th/19th century hemistich runs: *tuoneeni imani* 'show us kindness' (*Afrikanistische Arbeitspapiere xxxvii: Swahili Forum 1*, 29-46).

## STANZA 17

1b *makafiri*: European-Christians - i.e. non-Muslims, but non-Muslims with their own religion. The *ma-* prefix implies a group of people with which the Swahili people have little contact. It is hoped that a future article will discuss the problem of ethnic/religious groups and Swahili noun class assignment.

## STANZA 19

1b *Wahabu*: God the Giver, the Bestower (Ar. *Wahhāb*) - also employed in Stanza 26 of the Appendix.

2a *adhabu*: suffering, e.g. *adhabu ya kaburi ajua maiti* 'only the dead man knows the torture of the grave' (Taylor 1891: Item 2). *Adhabu* ought not to be confused with *adabu* with the primary meaning of 'good conduct' and thus 'punishment', e.g. *kijana akikosa adabu hutiwa adabu* 'if the child is ill-mannered he must be punished'. Confusion between *adabu* and *adhabu* is common amongst second-language speakers, so much so that the error, *adhabu* = punishment, has probably become the orthodox version (e.g. Johnson 1935: 1, *adhabu* 1).

## STANZA 20

1a *ukorofi*: unlucky in financial and material matters, the antonym is *baraka*.

2a *ikabu*: punishment (the antonym is *thawabu* 'reward').

2b *kuingiya*: the first 'i' has been inserted to make up the correct number of syllables.

## STANZA 22

2a *shufaa*: intercessions (Ar. *shafā'a*). The word is usually found in a theological sense, especially in eschatological descriptions.

In the Holy Qur'ān intercession occurs mainly in a negative context, e.g. the Day of Judgement is described as a day on which no *shafā'a* will be accepted (Sura ii). In the *hadīth* literature there is the teaching that the power of intercession is limited to the Prophet Muhammad to the exclusion of other Prophets. For a fuller exposition the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* should be consulted.

## STANZA 27

The craftsmanship is defective here: *viti* has an unaspirated alveolar 't', *-k'eti* has an unaspirated dental 't', while *nt'i* has an aspirated dental 't'.

1a *makochi*: couches, a twentieth century English loan, assigned to Noun Classes 5/6.

2b *sanda*: shroud - the etymology of this word is obscure.

#### STANZA 29

1a *k'oboka*: from *k'oboa* 'wrench in one movement'; *-k'oboka*, the stative extension, infers that the eyes are forcefully dislodged of their own accord.

1b *pasuka*: from *pasua* 'split', the stative extension suggests that the corpse splits open of its own accord.

#### STANZA 30

1b *jeuri*: rough, arrogant behaviour; the word is often used by the Swahili - in general, a gentle and courteous people - to describe the charactersitic behaviour of European-Christians in East Africa (there is documentary evidence from northern Swahili-land suggesting that the words *jeuri* and *Purtuges* 'Portuguese' were already juxtaposed in the 12th/17th century).

#### STANZA 32

2c *Kahari*: God the Omnipotent (Ar. *qahhār*).

#### STANZA 33

2c *uvik'ate vyanda vyako*: *vyanda* may mean either 'fingers' or 'toes' but, in the context, 'fingers' are meant. An eighteenth century Swahili poem has the line: *wakafa na zanda waziumie* 'they die gnawing their fingers' - 'gnawing the fingers is a way of expressing a man's utter despair ... We [English speakers] should express it as 'gnashing the teeth'...' (Taylor 1915: 88 & 99). The Swahili saw goes: *utauma kumi \* usipate kimoja* 'you will gnaw all ten fingers in remorse, but you will not obtain any benefit by so doing'.

#### STANZA 36

1a *Wallahi*: see Note on Stanza 1 (1a).

#### STANZA 37

1a *kukidhi*: to make up for an obligatory religious observance which has been omitted; e.g. *sasa saa t'ano za mtana - waswali swala gani?* 'It's 11.00 a.m. now - which of the prescribed prayers are you praying [at this hour]? *Nakidhi - kwa sababu swala ya asubuhi sikuipate* 'I'm making up for what I missed - for I didn't manage to pray the dawn prayers'.

1b *-futu*: from the Arabic consonantal root *f w t* 'omit, neglect, fail, forget to'.



## STANZA 38

This stanza contains a minor technical blemish in that the final consonant of 1a and 1b is an unaspirated dental 't', while in 1c it is an unaspirated alveolar 't'.

## STANZA 43

1a *swala*: mercy (i.e. *reheema*); if *swala* emanates from God (as it does in this line) it carries this meaning, but if *swala* derives from Man then it denotes 'prayer(s)', as in Stanza 7.

2a *alize*: a contraction of *aali zake* 'his relatives'.



## APPENDIX

## WAADHI KWA MASHAIRI

1	<i>Kwa jina la Mola wetu na swifa za Bwana wetu</i>	*	<i>twaanza maneno yetu</i>
		*	<i>na kuswaliya Nabiya.</i>
2	<i>Mwana adamu sikiya ina ghururi duniya</i>	*	<i>yataka kuzingatiya</i>
		*	<i>tahadhari nakwambiya.</i>
3	<i>Sighurike kwa ujana wala kwa wako ungwana</i>	*	<i>wala kwa mali na wana</i>
		*	<i>fahamu utapoteya.</i>
4	<i>Wat'u wot'e na majini ela sababu ya dini</i>	*	<i>hangewaumba Manani</i>
		*	<i>yafahamu sana haya.</i>
5	<i>Shikamana na ibada utaepukwa na shida</i>	*	<i>uifanye ndiyo ada</i>
		*	<i>na kheri kukujiliya.</i>
6	<i>Na swala usiiwate kwa nguzo na suna zot'e</i>	*	<i>kipindi kisikupite</i>
		*	<i>na sharuti kuzitiya.</i>
7	<i>Mwenye kuwata kuswali kwa hadithi ya Rasuli</i>	*	<i>huwa kafiri wa kweli</i>
		*	<i>sikiya tena sikiya.</i>
8	<i>Kisha utowe na zaka na haya ukiyashika</i>	*	<i>wende ukahiji Maka</i>
		*	<i>motoni hutangiya.</i>
9	<i>Ufungue na Ramadhani sitezeze na dini</i>	*	<i>kama ilivyo vyuwoni</i>
		*	<i>fahamu utaangamiya</i>
10	<i>Na kujifunza ilimu mume na mke fahamu</i>	*	<i>ni wajibu Isilamu</i>
		*	<i>ujinga una udhiya.</i>
11	<i>Usipojuwa ilimu fahamu kisha fahamu</i>	*	<i>ibada haitotimu</i>
		*	<i>khatarini utangiya.</i>
12	<i>Watwii wazee wako na Isilamu wenzako</i>	*	<i>wapende jirani zako</i>
		*	<i>tahadhari kutukiya.</i>
13	<i>Usidhilimu chochof'e na zina nayo iwate</i>	*	<i>usisengenye yoyof'e</i>
		*	<i>ukiyataka ya ndiya.</i>

- |    |                                               |        |                                              |
|----|-----------------------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------|
| 14 | Zingatiya mwanzo wako<br>matumboni mwa mamako | *<br>* | na nguvu za Mola wako<br>riziki kukungiliya. |
| 15 | Mekuleya matumboni<br>huoni huonekani         | *<br>* | mezi tisiya yakini<br>wangojewa kutokeya.    |
| 16 | Kisha kakuonya ndi ya<br>yako wewe kutokeya   | *<br>* | yenye dhiki na udhiya<br>duniyani kakutiya.  |
| 17 | Ukitoka matumboni<br>udhaifu masikini         | *<br>* | uchafu mwingi mwilini<br>huwezi ela kuliya.  |
| 18 | Akawatiya huruma<br>hata ukiwa yatima         | *<br>* | wazee baba na mama<br>hukosi wa kukuleya     |
| 19 | Tangu huwezi kusema<br>hata t'ungu kikuuma    | *<br>* | huwezi na kusimama<br>huwezi kujiteteya.     |
| 20 | Akakuumba kwa umbo<br>akakupa mengi mambo     | *<br>* | wallahi halina k'ombo<br>yakutengeza duniya. |
| 21 | La kwanza mato mawili<br>na mashikiyo mawili  | *<br>* | waona hapa na mbali<br>kulla jambo wasikiya. |
| 22 | Mikono ya kushikiya<br>ulimi wa kusemeya      | *<br>* | maguu ya kwendeya<br>na mdomo wa kuliya.     |
| 23 | Tena amekupa p' uwa<br>na meno ya sawa sawa   | *<br>* | harufu waitambuwa<br>vigumu watafuniya.      |
| 24 | Amekupa na akili<br>la urongo na la kweli     | *<br>* | mizani ilyo adili<br>waweza kutambuliya.     |
| 25 | Na afiya na hifadhi<br>sikiya wangu waadhi    | *<br>* | na kukupoza maradhi<br>udhibiti yot'e haya.  |
| 26 | Neema nyingi ajabu<br>huwezi kuzihisabu       | *<br>* | alizokupa Wahabu<br>wallahi nakuapiya.       |
| 27 | Na zot'e hizo neema<br>jaza ya mema ni mema   | *<br>* | kushukuru ni lazima<br>maovu kutoyatiya.     |
| 28 | Mbona umeghafilika<br>shetwani umemshika      | *<br>* | kwa neno lisilo shaka<br>umemuwata Nabiya.   |
| 29 | Umejifanya mtesi<br>umevitupa viyasi          | *<br>* | kwa Mola wako mkwasi<br>sina la kukwambiya   |
| 30 | Silaha zot'e ni zake<br>wayanwa na maji yake  | *<br>* | waila riziki yake<br>mbona umekosa haya?     |
| 31 | Na vita vyako fahamu<br>ela wewe bahaimu      | *<br>* | havimdhuru Karimu<br>jijuwe utauumiya.       |
| 32 | yatafakari mauti<br>wala hayana wakati        | *<br>* | yoyot'e hayamuati<br>ghafula hukujiliya.     |
| 33 | Ituze yako fikira<br>wenye ngome na minara    | *<br>* | uwafikiri mabora<br>na p'anga za kutindiya.  |

- |    |                                                      |        |                                                       |
|----|------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 34 | <i>Wawapi maFirauni<br/>na Shadadi maliuni</i>       | *<br>* | <i>tena yuwapi Karuni<br/>wot'e wameangamiya.</i>     |
| 35 | <i>Ajali zilipokwisa<br/>wakayawata mapesa</i>       | *<br>* | <i>Ziraili kawapesa<br/>na mabo haya na haya.</i>     |
| 36 | <i>Wameshukiya akhera<br/>uwapi wao ubora</i>        | *<br>* | <i>madhalili mafukara<br/>yot'e yamewapoteya.</i>     |
| 37 | <i>Wametoka duniyani<br/>wametiwa kaburini</i>       | *<br>* | <i>kwa viliyo na huzuni<br/>sanda ubao mmoya.</i>     |
| 38 | <i>Kaburi zimewakaza<br/>kot'e kumefunga kiza</i>    | *<br>* | <i>hapana la kupumbaza<br/>adhabu huwashukiya.</i>    |
| 39 | <i>Tena watafufuliwa<br/>Kisha wataaziriwa</i>       | *<br>* | <i>kiyama kuhisabiwa<br/>mbele za Mitume piya.</i>    |
| 40 | <i>Adhabu hizo ni k'uu<br/>majuto ni mjukuu</i>      | *<br>* | <i>tena na moto kwa juu<br/>tahadhari na duniya.</i>  |
| 41 | <i>Wapite na swiratini<br/>wateketee maini</i>       | *<br>* | <i>waangukiye motoni<br/>maisha kuteketeya.</i>       |
| 42 | <i>Na yot'e tuliyosema<br/>safari mbele na nyuma</i> | *<br>* | <i>yatakupata lazima<br/>wengine hutanguliya.</i>     |
| 43 | <i>Na utakapo salama<br/>upate na mambo mema</i>     | *<br>* | <i>ya duniya na kiyama<br/>yaepuke maasiya.</i>       |
| 44 | <i>Fanya ibada kwa nguvu<br/>na kulla mt'u muovu</i> | *<br>* | <i>usiwe mtepetevu<br/>mwepuke hatuwa miya.</i>       |
| 45 | <i>Uwombe na maghufira<br/>natuombe na sitara</i>    | *<br>* | <i>na toba mara kwa mara<br/>Mngu tatukubaliya.</i>   |
| 46 | <i>Atupe na taufiki<br/>atupe nyingi riziki</i>      | *<br>* | <i>tuandame yalo haki<br/>na baa kutwepushiya.</i>    |
| 47 | <i>Atupe nyingi amani<br/>atutie na p'eponi</i>      | *<br>* | <i>akhera na duniyani<br/>motoni kutongiya.</i>       |
| 48 | <i>Wot'e walohudhuriya<br/>Mola tatutengezeya</i>    | *<br>* | <i>maulidi ya Nabiya<br/>kulla lilo na udhiya.</i>    |
| 49 | <i>Atutiliye baraka<br/>atuondolee na chaka</i>      | *<br>* | <i>mak'ulima kulla mwaka<br/>atupe na kheri piya.</i> |
| 50 | <i>Kulla aliye mjani<br/>na vijana majumbani</i>     | *<br>* | <i>apate mwinyi imani<br/>wake wakituvyaliya.</i>     |
| 51 | <i>Thuma swala na salamu<br/>na swahabaze kiramu</i> | *<br>* | <i>zimshukiye hashimu<br/>na ali na sisi piya.</i>    |

Mambasa

Abdallah Muhammad al-Husni

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