

ABSTRACTS

Women Storying the Swahili Seas: Indian Ocean Feminist Aesthetics and Affective Imaginaries in Lubaina Himid's Political Painting

Franziska Fay

Recalling Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor's approach to "story the ocean", that is, what she calls the Swahili Seas, I am interested in thinking about the 'Indian Ocean' – and the making-intelligible of it – with 2017 Turner prize winning artist Lubaina Himid's paintings of women and water. As a Zanzibari-British artist growing up and working in the diaspora, her works can be described, again with Owuor's words, as somewhere between ocean-loving and ocean-haunted, depicting women characters in situations with the sea. Sea-situations that historical narratives have largely viewed through the lens of the masculine. How can Himid's paintings serve as a starting point to story the ocean, Indian – Afrabian – Swahili, otherwise? And how can women in art(works) more broadly contribute to decentering dominating male memories of Indian Ocean maritime worlds?

HĀM AND THE "ZANJ": ASSESSMENT OF THE HAMITIC MYTH IN 19 TH CENTURY EAST AFRICAN CHRONICLES

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This presentation proposal stems from my ongoing research, which aims to assess the presence and circulation of an Islamic version of the Old Testament narrative of the so-called "curse" of Ḥām and Kancān in the Swahili coast at the end of the 19th century. Through the analysis of two particular Arabic chronicles produced within the Muslim intellectual circles of the period - namely, the Kitāb al-Zunūj (late 1890s and early 1900s), an anonymous work, and the Kawkab al-Durrīyah al-Aḥbār lfrīqīyah (1913), by the hand of shaykh Fāḍil Ibn cUmār al-Bawrī of Malindi (Kenya), I have defined the following objectives: I. an investigation concerning the production, circulation and reception of the narratives contained within both aforementioned chronicles - focusing on the hamitic myth and its etiology -, in the context of a profound Islamic intellectual exchange across the Indian Ocean; II. an assessment of the reasons behind the discursive attribution, by Islamic culamā', of the so-called "curse" of Ḥām to populations of the East African hinterland such as the Mijikenda, Taita, and Pokomo, among others, described in our sources by means of the derogatory toponym/ethnonym zanj, derived from the Arab-Islamic scholarly tradition; III. finally, a commentary on the amalgamation of the Islamic hamitic myth with the term zanj itself, both relating to a simultaneous connotation of blackness and slavery as intrinsically related; as well as the relationship between such attribution and the socioeconomic context of East Africa along the 19th century - marked by the rise and decline of a chattel slavery system centered

around the Bū Sac

īdī Sultanate of Zanzibar, as well as its role in the construction of an alleged “Arab” identity of the Swahili elites as an essential opposition to the enslavable watoto wa Hami (“sons of Ḥam”), unable to claim such Arab ancestries (‘ansāb).

Keywords: Islam in East Africa - Genealogy - Hamitic myth - Swahili chronicles - Zanj

Swahili Feminist Publishing Networks: Investigating E & D Vision Publishing’s Editorial and Marketing Strategies for the Biography of Biubwa Amour Zahor

Zamda Ramadhani Geuza
Exeter

This paper investigates the editorial and marketing strategies through which Dar es Salaam-based feminist publisher E & D Vision Publishing have produced the biography of Biubwa Amour Zahor. This account of her life, written by the former BBC Journalist Zuhura Yunus and published in Swahili, documents Biubwa’s vital role in the Zanzibar revolution and through this the often overlooked contribution of women to the struggle for independence. Notably this 2021 publication was not only written by a woman about a woman, but also edited and published by a woman; this paper therefore works to highlight the significance of women-to-women relationships in enabling literary production and the circulation of female voices and histories in Tanzania – a publishing space that has often been dominated by men.

The paper will begin by positioning the work of E & Vision Publishing in the context of African feminist thought. It will then go onto argue for this case study as indicative of E & D’s longstanding commitment to the book as a cultural object through which women’s voices are amplified, highlighting the networks of prestige across Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania constructed to support this. Through this, the paper works to highlight the particular significance of publishing and writing in Swahili, social media platforms and networks of friendship in the success of this particular publication and for East Africa-based feminist publishing interventions more broadly. Ultimately the paper is interested in exploring emerging readership trends for Swahili literature that are taking shape in the innovative production and marketing of feminist knowledge.

Title: Mavuvi au Wavuvi

Mariam de Haan

Abstract: The Mafia archipelago, off the Southeast coast of Tanzania, has become a necessity when discussing marine conservation in Tanzania and East Africa because it hosts the largest marine park in the West Indian Ocean known as Mafia Island Marine Park. At the same time, the fishing industry employs the most people in the archipelago and is Mafia’s main economic industry. As a result, the culture and community of Mafia sits on an intricate balance between ever-permeating conservation efforts and a dependency on marine resources. This balance becomes a challenge when looking at the fishermen of Mafia. As the heart of the fishing industry, they are tasked with providing for the archipelago in a way that does not contradict the conservation endeavours of the Mafia Island Marine Park, the Tanzanian government and the World Wildlife Fund. This presentation will explore how the knowledge creation and

transfer of fishermen networks shapes the Swahili language, culture and community in the Mafia archipelago. It will discuss the ways that Mafia's fishermen have changed and created terms in the Swahili language to reflect their relationship with the marine ecosystem. Furthermore, it will analyse how the fishermen's methods of measuring the moon have created another way to view time in Mafia. It will also explore the ways that the fishermen's complex relationship with whale sharks have shaped their perception of community. Moreover, this presentation will touch upon the values that the people and fishermen of Mafia hold towards the ocean. It is based on six months of ethnographic fieldwork, which was conducted in Kilindoni, Mafia.

Studying Kiswahili kya mu Lubumbashi: Ethnographic insights into attitudes, perceptions and folklinguistic judgments of a well-researched Western Swahili variety

Ben Carson, Nico Nassenstein & Wilfried Sakabwang

Shaba Swahili, Katanga Swahili, or, as a recently suggested label, Kiswahili kya mu Lubumbashi (Mulumbwa 2021) is the best researched regiolect on the western Swahilispeaking periphery (see, for instance, Fabian 1986; Kapanga 1991; de Rooij 1996; Ferrari, Kalunga & Mulumbwa 2014). However, perceptions of this widely used variety differ according to the scholar's methodology, their own socialization with Swahili — whether they learned ECS or Congolese Swahili, or speak other LWCs such as Lingala — and in relation to practical issues of use (e.g., which Swahili to use in which context as a Swahili speaker and scholar). Coming from three different research directions, we aim to provide ethnographic insights into issues of perception, attitude, and practicality in studying, researching, and speaking Kiswahili kya mu Lubumbashi as linguists, translators, and speakers with different heteroglossic repertoires. Our joint presentation revolves around the contrast of an increasing implementation of this Swahili variety in literature, a formalization of it in Haut-Katanga and as a language of artistic expression versus a low or negative prestige of this seemingly "simplified" regiolect, diffuse folklinguistic judgments, and negative language attitudes (compared to ECS). Ethnographic findings — held in a conversational form between the three authors — from practical translation work (ECS to KkL and back), sociolinguistic research, and a grammar writing project (Western Swahili varieties) are brought together in this paper to raise the question of how affiliation, localist language ideologies, and metalinguistic debates about more acrolectal vs. basilectal speaking styles are reflected in interviews and conversations in contemporary Lubumbashi.

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Kiswahili Kitukuzwe

Omar Kibulanga

Kiswahili Kitukuzwe ni filamu iliyotayarishwa kwa kusudio la kudhihirisha utamu na upeo wa Kiswahili kupitia muundo wa lugha yenyewe na matumizi yake mbalimbali.

Filamu hii ya dakika 15 ilizinduliwa rasmi kwenye hafla ya kwanza ya kusherehekea Siku ya Kiswahili Duniani (7/7/2022) iliyofanyika Mombasa, Kenya.

Watazamaji wanakaribishwa na beti tamu kutoka kwa manju chipukizi, Hemed Abdallah, anayefuatiwa na muigizaji maarufu, Rukia Ngonyo, anayevaa uhusika wa Mwana Kupona. Aidha, filamu hii inaihuisha sauti na sura ya Fumo Liyongo kupitia beti zake maarufu alipomfunzia kijakazi Sada mbinu za kumsaidia yeye kutoroka jela.

Filamu hii inaangazia muundo halisi wa Kiswahili na maandishi yake ya Kiajami na Kiroma. Vilevile, inadhihirisha mvuto wa Kiswahili kupitia misemo, tamathali, tashbihi, mafumbo na methali zake.

Isitoshe, inawaenzi waandishi na washairi waliobobea kama vile Muyaka wa Muhaji, Shaaban bin Robert, Siti binti Saad na Profesa Nabahani.

Filamu hii inaonyesha jinsi Kiswahili kinavyoana na lugha mbalimbali kama vile Kiingereza, Kihindi, Kireno, Kifaransa, Kisomali na hata lugha za Amerika Kusini.

Vilevile, inaangazia burudani la Kiswahili kupitia nyimbo mbalimbali za taarabu, bango, kiafrika na hata kizungu.

Idhaa na stesheni za kimataifa zinazotangaza kwa Kiswahili pamoja na vyuo vikuu vya kimataifa vinavyofundisha Kiswahili, mfano SOAS University of London n.k.

Matumizi ya Kiswahili kwa viongozi wa serikali mbalimbali, mathalani Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), Barack Obama (Marekani) na wengineo.

Filamu hii inadokeza namna Kiswahili kinavyochangia pakubwa katika Mapinduzi ya Nne ya Viwanda (4IR) kupitia mifumo ya Android, Wikipedia, Google, Mozilla, Python na Blokcheni.

Aidha, inagusia uhondo wa baadhi ya lahaja za Kiswahili, mfano Kiamu, Kimvita, Kiunguja, Kipemba, Kikongo, Kimsumbiji na Chimiini.

Vilevile, inaangazia vichekesho vya Kiswahili kama vile vya King Majuto na Abdalla Moi.

Yaani, filamu hii ya Kiswahili Kitukuzwe inampa mtazamaji taswira kamili ya mvuto na ukunjufu wa lugha hii adhimu inayotumika katika jamii na sekta mbalimbali ulimwenguni.

LINK: <https://bit.ly/3xKbhvh>

Studying selected features of Swahili youth languages through a microvariationist lens:

Noun classes, agreement, and the “prefinal” in Dar es Salaam and Lubumbashi

Andrea Hollington, Nico Nassenstein, Hannah Gibson and Colin Reilly

Variation in Swahili (including the dialects from the periphery) has been a topic of much interest in recent years, and has been approached from different perspectives. In our talk, we focus on selected features found in the Swahili used by young speakers in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and Lubumbashi (DR Congo), namely the noun class system, distribution of gender and

patterns of variation in their associated agreement. For example, we examine whether youth languages maintain or alter the agreement patterns of their base languages and consider also the semantics associated with these practices.

In Dar es Salaam, for instance, speakers of *lughya ya mtaani* commonly use the noun classes associated with augmentative and diminutive semantics in their speech as well as using the noun class prefixes of class 1/2 for nouns that are realized without prefix in Kiswahili, such as some kinship terms like *mdada* ‘woman, girl’ from *dada* ‘sister’. We also take a look at variation in the realization of the prefinal suffix *-ak/-ag/-ang* in both varieties, their occurrence and

semantics. In Dar es Salaam, for example, the extension *-ag-* is used frequently to express intensity or repetition as in *ananimalizaga* ‘he finishes me (every time)’ (an expression with sexual connotations here taken from the song lyrics of Zuchu and Diamond Platnumz song “Cheche”).

We present novel insights from data collected in 2022 in both Dar es Salaam and Lubumbashi. Theoretically, our talk is based on morphosyntactic microvariationist studies in Bantu

languages (see, among others, Shinagawa & Abe 2019, Lee, Abe & Shinagawa 2021, Guérois

et al 2017, Marten et al. 2018) which are applied to Swahili youth languages building upon previous work (e.g. Mulumbwa 2009, Nassenstein & Bose 2020, Hollington 2022, etc.). Our focus on semantic aspects expands the notion of microvariation by taking sociolinguistic perspectives into consideration as well, as an understanding of the sociolinguistic contexts and

realities of the speakers helps us to understand practices of conscious linguistic creativity that exhibit variation on the morphosyntactic (e.g. noun class usage) and the semantic (e.g. metaphoric and metonymic extensions) level.

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Weaponizing Literature:

Swahili Novels on HIV/AIDS “partigiani” in the epistemic resistance war

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This paper illustrates the different forms of injustice and violence disseminated against knowledge and “other” ways of knowing as well as the struggles of epistemic resistance supported by the counterepistemological movement of “Epistemologies from the South” (Santos 2014; 2018; Santos & Meneses 2020) including “African-centred Knowledges” (Cooper & Morrell 2014). As an empirical example of resistance, I will illustrate three selected Swahili novels on HIV/AIDS (Mutembei 2005; Mauya 2017; Mkufya 2019), which exploit the topic of illness and treatment of illness as a battlefield for plural clashing epistemologies. Moreover, I will demonstrate how Swahili literature uses aesthetic and stylistic narrative devices as weapons to fight against “epistemicide” (Santos 2014). My argument is that Swahili novels are the “partigiani” in the war of resistance against epistemological fascism (Santos 2014), who fight by means of the aesthetic and stylistic weapons provided by their own narrative and language (Nicolini 2022).

Carving Out the Local: Zanzibari Indian Ocean Poetry

Clarissa Vierke

In my contribution, I will reflect on the Indian Ocean connections in the poetry of Ustadh Mahmoud Ahmoud Ahmed Abdulkadir, commonly known as Mahmoud Mau, a prominent Swahili poet, local intellectual and imam from the island of Lamu in northern Kenya. As I will show, his family history, his intellectual biography and his own poetry have been shaped by far-reaching Indian Ocean connections: his grandfather, born in Gujerat but sent to East Africa in the late 19th century, and his father, an engineer who also taught in the madrassa, followed and contributed to networks of the Alawiyya. Mahmoud Mau (born in 1952) was appointed imam of Lamu’s oldest mosque at the young age of 33, but soon took a more critical position towards the established tariqa. Relying on reformist literature which also travelled the Indian

Ocean, his preaching in Swahili (rather than Arabic) and fighting for progress and modern education have earned him a name as Mwalimu wa jamii “teacher of and for society”. He has been combining a variety of earlier concepts of reform Islam with activist engagement for his own local community: In his poems, he fights against HIV Aids, corruption, children’s rights and teenage pregnancies. I will refer to his poetry to examine how he has been forging his intellectual agenda and position, drawing on a variety of sources, which he roots locally but also in reference to a constantly shifting larger Indian Ocean Muslim world. -- My contribution is related to a poetry collection which I have recently edited with Annachiara Raia and Ustadh Mau with contributions by Kai Kresse, Jasmin Mahazi, Kadara Swaleh, and Rayya Timammy

DISPATCHED AND DISPLACED: RECONSTRUCTING A MATERIAL AND SOCIAL ARCHIVE THROUGH THE EARLY PHOTOGRAPHIC POSTCARDS OF ZANZIBAR

Dr Jonathan M. Jackson, University of Cologne

The contemporaneous collection and sending of photographic picture postcards of the East African island archipelago of Zanzibar (c.1895–1939) were acts that globally-dispersed and often unintentionally preserved a significant, underutilised, and often-overlooked historical source. These cultural objects are imbued with a multivalence of meaning, representation, and utility; typically depicting quotidian scenes, urban and rural landscapes, and portraits. The majority of studios on Zanzibar were owned by Goan photographers, which is distinguishing in that, as noted by Erin Haney, this ‘lens created a third space for interpretation; different from the gaze of colonial Europe and indigenous populations.’ These cards preserve a photographic record that might have otherwise been lost and possess a critical duality in that multitudinous cards might appear identical by their pictorial obverse, but are rendered entirely unique through their reverse. The writings of their senders; the recipient, address, and destination; the stamp and postmark: these present opportunities for broader histories to be told through the collation of these historical sources in ways that are a part of—and distinct from—the photographs themselves. Entangled histories of the local, colonial, and global collide in a single object. Their forgotten existence in accidental ‘attic archives’ or fixed in collectors’ volumes is a displacement and fragmentation that must be addressed. This paper details a personal attempt to reconstruct and make public such an ‘alternative archive’ through a years-long project of location, collation, and digitization—including the largest known private collection, constituting over one thousand such cards. This is ultimately a project to create and disseminate an accessible archival record that captures cosmopolitan Swahili culture and society.

From: Ngina Chiteji, Ph.D, New York University, USA <nc518@nyu.edu>

Title of proposed presentation: Teaching the Swahili Coast in Economics Courses

Abstract

My presentation will discuss the way that economics is taught in US colleges, and will argue that college-level economics instruction in the United States could be improved by incorporating a discussion of the ancient Swahili Coast. The presentation will discuss ways that I have attempted to weave a study of Swahili culture and the cross-Indian Ocean trade

that the region engaged in during premodern times into my own teaching. The presentation expands upon previous work that I have done (Chiteji 2022).

Many scholars have expressed concern about the views of Africa that Americans hold (Wolff 2016, Hershey and Artime 2014, and Osunde and Tlou 1996). Some worry that Americans know very little about Africa. Others worry that Americans' perceptions of Africa are inaccurate or simplistic. I argue that by making the economic discipline's curriculum more interdisciplinary, we can position the discipline to correct some common misconceptions about Africa, or, at the very least, to avoid contributing to misperceptions. The issue seems particularly pressing for US colleges and universities, where economics is typically taught in a way that's divorced from history and focused primarily on Western culture.

As colleges prepare students to enter a world where people of different countries are connected in unprecedented ways, being able to interact with persons from other cultures in a respectful fashion seems increasingly important. Accordingly, there are likely to be benefits from teaching US students about Africa in ways that do not always present the region as a space of blight and deficiency. Teaching about the culture and economic sophistication of the 6th – 15th century Swahili Coast city-states presents an opportunity to enrich the experience of American undergraduate students. My own work draws on the scholarship of archaeologists such as Wynne-Jones and LaViollette (2018), on linguistics, and on literary scholars such as Mbele (1986).

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SOAS connection: I spent my junior year of college at SOAS during the 1986-1987 school year. I was visiting from Brown University in Providence, RI, USA

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Where do Swahili fish names come from?

Martin Walsh, Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology

This presentation continues a project to examine the historical adaptations of the Swahili and their neighbours to the marine and other environments of the western Indian Ocean. As might be expected, the Swahili language has an extensive vocabulary of names for different kinds of fish and other forms of marine life, many of them shared across dialects. But where do all these names come from? The Bantu language-speaking ancestors of the Swahili were originally only familiar with riverine and lacustrine species: we should not be surprised therefore to find that few Swahili fish names can be traced back to them. A stronger case can be made for the coining of names by the Swahili and their immediate antecedents when they first encountered and learned to exploit the rich resources of the Indian Ocean. In this presentation I will examine the linguistic evidence for different scenarios, including the question of the relation between Swahili and Comorian terms. I will show that the development of new vocabulary involved different kinds of semantic and lexical innovation, and will consider the possibility that some names were adopted from other fishing communities that spoke non-Bantu languages, among them immigrants from other parts of the Indian Ocean. I will also discuss the potential for matching historical linguistic hypotheses with data from archaeological and specifically archaeozoological research, bringing different kinds of evidence to bear on the reconstruction of early Swahili practice.

INVESTIGATING THE USE OF ICT AS PANACEA TO POOR ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION AMONGST NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN MASS COMMUNICATION STUDENTS,

ABDU GUSAU POLYTECHNIC, TALATA MAFARA

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Abstract:

The frequency of poor pronunciation of English language among Nigerian Students remains an obstinate circumstances that defies a lasting panacea. Similarly, the stringent efforts from Received Pronunciation (RP) to the Estuary English have complicated the problems of English pronunciation worldwide. In this century however, study and intense researches in linguistics have revealed that ICT, which is a robust idiosyncratic evolution of the digital age, can at some degree salvage the unfortunate situation. This research work therefore aims at investigating some likely causes of poor English pronunciation amongst the chosen subjects in our environment, difficulties connected with the topic, and the capability of the digital age technique to addressing pronunciation problems as the ultimate solution to provide the preferred

results. This has been carried out using qualitative and quantitative techniques. Questionnaires have been administered to collect data which will be analyzed. It has been discovered that use of the ICT with Linguistic Sciences has for long been yielding remarkable effects. This paper therefore, discusses the several digital-age approaches used to control poor English language pronunciation amongst Nigerian students, as well as the magnificent contribution it will offer to linguistic pedagogics in the field of verbal English.

Key words: Digital Age, ICT, Pronunciation, Screen Readers, Language Pedagogy

Towards a more fine-grained understanding of linguistic variation in mainland Swahili: Evidence from Iringa

Hannah Gibson, Fridah Erastus, Tom Jelpke, Lutz Marten, Teresa Poeta and Julius Taji

Previous studies of dialectal variation in Swahili have mostly focused on the domain of morphophonology and lexical variation and on more prestige, often coastal varieties (e.g. Bakari 1985, Stigand 1915). Other varieties – many spoken in highly multilingual contexts – are often discussed as ‘colloquial’ or ‘mainland’ Swahili (Abe 2009, King’ei 2000) but have received little attention so far, especially in relation to morphosyntax. In this talk, we present newly collected data from Iringa, Tanzania to contribute to a more nuanced discussion of variation in these lesser-studied varieties and areas, focusing on specific variables such as TAM marking with the suffix -ag and evaluative morphology.

The use of the suffix -ag- has been analysed as an innovation in mainland, colloquial Swahili varieties and has been linked to the habitual function it takes in other Bantu languages (Abe 2009, Rugemalira 2010). However, the distribution of this feature in present day Swahili has not yet been systematically examined and uses of -ag- relating to interpretations other than the habitual, for example in subjunctive constructions as in (1), remain underexplored.

- (1) Tu-end-ag-e, tu-end-ag-e!
1PL-go-HAB-SUBJ 1PL-go-HAB-SUBJ
‘Let’s go, let’s go!’ [bajaji driver, Iringa]

Evaluative morphology has also been discussed as an area of variation in Swahili, with an emphasis on the formation of diminutives (Gibson et al 2017, King’ei 2000). Here too, recently collected data from Iringa shows that the variation might be wider than expected. Consider example (2) which shows the prefix gu- on both the nominal form and the on the modifier.

- (2) gu-nyumba gu-kubwa
20(?)-house 20(?)-big
‘a big house’ [university student, Iringa]

This talk presents newly collected data which contributes to our understanding of morphosyntactic variation in Swahili, especially going beyond well-established ‘dialects’. In discussing this variation and its distribution, we consider the importance of factors such as multilingualism and language contact (e.g. with Bena and Kihehe in the Iringa context) or urban youth language practices. Lastly, we also present preliminary observations on speakers’ perception of such variation.

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