

**BARAZA: Swahili studies Conference  
SOAS University of London**

**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

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BARAZA Swahili Studies Conference – Abstract

**Yahya Ali Omar's *Matembezi ya Peponi*: Translation, Translocality, and the Conceptual History of the Swahili Coast**

In its broadest sense, my research is inspired by the notion of an epistemic rupture and ethical reorientation brought about by colonialism in various parts of Islamic Africa. It is concerned with how wholly new or radically changing institutions were animated and adapted in attempts at creative continuity; and with how the very *form* of those institutions may have impinged on such attempts. It posits language as a kind of meta-institution that formed the organizing matrix in which these processes unfolded.

To this end, my current project is a case study set against the colonial standardization of Swahili: a thirty-year operation that worked through presses and classrooms to strip the language of non-modern and Islamic form and content, recalibrate it to a Western-modern world, and reproduce successive generations of Swahili-speakers in its mold. I seek to discursively contextualize and conceptually analyze the counter-efforts of three Muslim teachers in Mombasa, all native speakers of Kimvita and bilingually proficient in classical Arabic, and all of whom developed their work in a specifically “languaged” sense. I maintain that through them, the full stakes of language transformation become visible, and that the phenomenon can only be grasped through the alignment of three interpretive lenses: (1) concept formation, (2) logical change, and (3) the indissociable juxtaposition of both to semiotic assemblages of “lifeway.”

This presentation represents one component of the project, as an initial attempt to explore these ideas through the work of Yahya Ali Omar. Known for his commitment to the languaged worlds sustained in mother-tongue dialects of Swahili, he submitted written evidence to a British commission just before Kenyan independence expressing support for coastal autonomy. His letter is noteworthy for the way it invokes language to reorient the meaning of otherwise political tensions, signaling shifts in epistemology and cosmology that overflow strictly political analysis. Taking this as a cue, I use the three lenses above to sketch out some implications of Omar's creative decisions in his translation of an Islamic children's story from Arabic to Kimvita two years prior.

**Helle Goldman**

Goldman will present a very short video that features a group of youths hunting civets in Pemba, in 2019. The audio track includes a stream of whoops, exhortations and loud popping vocalisations, the nature of which may be elucidated by the linguistic experts among the conference participants. A brief

comparison is made with traditional British hunting calls. The presentation is intended as an intermezzo between more substantive talks and is neither full length nor analytical

## **A Perceptual Dialect Study of Sheng**

**Tom Jelpke**

This is a perceptual dialect study of Sheng, a non-standard variety of Swahili born in Nairobi, Kenya. This is the first such study of Nairobi or Sheng, and finds that six major perceptual dialect areas exist within the city. In addition to these perceptual dialect areas, several attitudes and beliefs came to light through this study regarding the origins and character of Sheng. This study found that two themes common to perceptual dialect studies were present in this work: stigmatized areas being the most frequently identified, and speakers of high linguistic security varieties identifying less secure varieties as most different from their own, or even unintelligible. Finally, as found by Githiora's comprehensive 2018 book on Sheng, the findings suggest different uses and perceptions of Sheng depending on gender, and a relationship between Sheng and ethnic and political identity. It would also appear that Sheng exists as a language in its own right in the minds of the participants of this study, rather than as a variety of Swahili as suggested by Githiora (2018).

## **Researching grammatical variation in Swahili:**

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

This talk explores issues involved in investigating dialectal variation in Swahili. We report on a new collaborative project 'Grammatical variation in Swahili: contact, change and identity' which seeks to explore factors involved in present-day variation in Swahili. The project focuses on the Swahili spoken in Tanzania and Kenya with a focus on the domain of morphology and syntax. It is structured around three strands and asks: 1) What is the present-day morphosyntactic variation found in Swahili? 2) What role does language contact play in the variation attested? 3) What is the relationship between structural variation in Swahili and the role language plays for the construction and negotiation of speakers' identity?

## **Polygamy amongst the Swahili speaking Zanzibaris in England**

**Inessa Hadjivayanis**

Polygamy, which cannot usually be legally practiced in England, is still practiced in England but as a parallel (Islamic) system to the legal system (Legal Pluralism). Some Zanzibaris in England practice it through this parallel system and there is a transnational aspect as to how it is practiced. Polygamy can also be practiced legally in England where the marriage takes place overseas in a jurisdiction that recognises polygamous marriages and where the parties were resident in that overseas jurisdiction at the time the marriage took place. Polygamy is legal in Zanzibar and so some Zanzibaris in England practice polygamy legally.

Zanzibaris come from Zanzibar which mainly consists of the islands of Unguja and Pemba. Zanzibar is a semi-autonomous region of the United Republic of Tanzania. The majority of Zanzibaris practice

Islam and many aspects of family life in Zanzibar centre around Islamic rules and requirements. In fact, Islamic laws are used by the Kadhi courts in Zanzibar to determine disputes involving family. Zanzibaris migrated to the UK at different times in history and for different reasons. Some migrated as sea men, others as students and others as professional workers. Some also migrated as refugees. This was mainly following the Zanzibar Revolution in 1964 and later following election disputes that lead to political instability in the 1990s. While it is not possible to determine the Zanzibari population in the UK, (because Zanzibar is not a sovereign state and Zanzibar cannot be an item in the census, and because some Zanzibaris have come to the UK under different citizenships) Zanzibaris would be a minority population in England and the UK overall.

This presentation will focus on how the Zanzibaris in England practice polygamy in this parallel (Islamic) system. The main focus of the presentation will be on dispute resolution, mainly divorce. Where marriages are not legally recognised in England, there would be no protection of the law and a divorce decree, and other court orders such as financial orders, cannot be issued by the courts.

### **Ufeminia? Translating Feminist Politics in Tanzania** **Frenziska Faye**

In this presentation I offer some preliminary reflections on how ideas of feminism are discussed in present-day Tanzania. I draw on 6 weeks of exploratory fieldwork with women's rights and gender activists in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar between July and August 2021 to point to some of the main actors, themes, concepts, characters, and challenges that were central to the discussions I engaged in. A returning theme across conversations with gender equality advocates was the concept of kutetea (to defend), or kujitetea (to self-defend). What exactly was considered in need of being defended and how one was to defend oneself always depended on the respective person speaking, such as journalists, lawyers, art-makers or scholars. What frequently united these positions was the understanding that in Tanzania ufeminia (feminism) should be understood in its own right and with specific emphasis on local women's matters and the discourses that frame them. I hope that these points of orientation, and the language associated with them, may help to frame and orient contemporary approaches to feminist political thought in Swahili-speaking contexts such as Tanzania.

### **Shame and the history of slavery: what does it mean that the slave past is jambo la aibu?** **Felicitas Becker, Ghent University**

In many ways, the aftermath of slavery in continental East Africa – the islands of Zanzibar are a different story – appears unusually benign. Former slaves seem to have melted into the general peasant population, turning to a mixture of subsistence and cash cropping like so many others, and acquiring unspoiled identities as Christians and Muslims. How come, though, that despite this apparent peaceful resolution, it remains difficult to ask and speak about slave origins a hundred years later? When I asked about the era of slavery and its aftermath around Lindi in the early 2000s, respondents would agree that there had been many slaves in the area, and that the descendants of many of them still lived nearby. But only one person owned up to having slave ancestry, and nobody was willing to ascribe it to others. More recently, Dr Nyanto has had similar interactions in the Tabora region. Some respondents opened up about slave ancestry after initial hesitation, while others responded with fury to the suggestion that their name implied slave origins, and many people did not agree to be recorded when discussing slavery. The term aibu, shame, is widely used to explain this unease. But who is ashamed of what exactly, and why? Is it shameful to be a slave descendant, or also to be an owner's? Is 'aibu' shorthand for the gamut of emotions associated with the trauma of enslavement, and the hardship of emerging from it? Why

does the issue remain so ‘hot’ despite its apparent resolution? The presentation examines some examples of the unease referred to as ‘aibu’ and contemplates their implications. Resource sovereignty and resource curse?? Money alternatives, non-foreign-exchange economy

### **“Hii sheria inashida sana.”: The Law of Marriage Act of 1971, Muslims and the demands for Kadhi courts in**

**Tanzania in the 1970s – 2010**

**Shabani Mwakalinga, History Department, Ghent University**

This paper relies on archive materials, oral testimonies and discussions on social media forums to explore the role of the Law of Marriage Act of 1971 (hereafter LMA) in the rise and development of the demand for the reintroduction of the Kadhi courts in mainland Tanzania. The rise of Muslim activism in Mainland Tanzania brought forward, among many other things, the demands for the reintroduction of the Kadhi courts in the country. In their efforts, Muslim activists contend that the passing of the Law of Marriage Act in 1971 greatly affected the general application of Islamic law and traditions among the Muslim communities in Tanzania. as a result, the majority of the activists feel that to rectify the situation there is a need for the reintroduction of the Kadhi courts in the country to help resolve the challenges created by the passing of the law in 1971. Specifically, the paper intends to analyse the conditions set forth by the LMA and to what extent they affect the general principles of Islamic law and traditions as understood by different Muslim communities in Tanzania. While the rhetoric of the LMA being a hindrance to the Islamic faith continues to gain traction among different Muslim communities in Tanzania, it is not clear to what extent the law actually affects Islamic practice. Available records show that the law faced less opposition from Muslim leaders than from Christian ones when it was being proposed and passed. By using oral sources and social media forums, this paper intends to capture the understanding of both experts and ordinary Muslims about the role of the LMA in the rise of the demands for the reintroduction of sharia law into the Tanzanian legal system. Moreover, based on that methodology, this paper contributes to the general studies of legal pluralism and their challenges and the legal encounter between secular and Islamic laws.

### **ATHARI YA UTAMADUNI KATIKA UTEUZI WA LUGHA INAYOTUMIWA NA WANAUME HOSPITALINI KUTAFUTA HUDUMA ZA AFYA YA UZAZI**

**Melvin Ouma**

**Chuo Kikuu cha Egerton**

Utamaduni huathiri lugha na tabia za utafutaji wa huduma za afya. Utamaduni vilevile huweka kaida za jinsi lugha inavyopaswa kutumika katika muktadha wa utafutaji huduma za afya. Kazi hii inaangazia athari ya utamaduni katika matumizi ya lugha miongoni mwa wanaume hospitalini wanapotafuta huduma za afya ya uzazi. Nadharia ya Uchanganuzi Hakiki wa Usemi ndio dira inayoongoza kazi hii. Utafiti ni wa kithamano, mkabala wa uchanganuzi usemi. Deta ya kazi hii unatokana ni mazungumzo kati ya daktari na wagonjwa wa kiume wanaotafuta huduma za afya ya uzazi katika hospitali ya umma mjini Nakuru, nchini Kenya. Mbinu za ukusanyaji deta ni uchunguzi shiriki na mahojiano. Mazungumzo ya wanaume ishirini waliohudumiwa na daktari wa kiume na kike yanaangaziwa kwenye utafiti huu. Maneno kama vile: kwetu, kulingana na mila yetu, kimila yetu, kule ninakotoka, yalitumiwa kama vigezo vya kurejelea na kuonyesha utamaduni. Utamaduni uliongoza wanaume katika kuteua lugha waliyotumia kuzungumza na

daktari walipotafuta huduma za afya ya uzazi. Ingawa wanaume huepuka kutimbia tasfida katika mazungumzo yao kila siku, wanaume hawa walieleza kuwa kulingana na tamaduni walimokulia, haikuwa vizuri kutaja sehemu za siri waziwazi. Baadhi ya wanaume walitumia tasfida kwa sababu utamaduni wao hairuhusu kutaja sehemu za siri waziwazi. Baadhi ya wanaume walinyamaza hasa walipota kuwa daktari alikuwa wa kike. Walingojea daktari aulize maswali kisha wajibu aidha kwa neno moja tu au kwa kutitikia kwa kutumia kichwa. Wanaume wengi walitumia isitiari kama vile “nyumba imeharibika” ili kueleza kuwa na tatizo kwenye sehemu za siri. Utafiti huu unatoa mchango katika taaluma ya Isimujamii kwani imeangazia lugha na utamaduni kama kipengele cha kijamii.

### **Demonstrative systems in different Swahili varieties:**

#### **Investigating cross-varietal developments**

##### **Makoto Furumoto**

The Bantu language Swahili, widely spread across East Africa, has diverse varieties. In the coastal areas, similar regional varieties, which are traced back to Proto-Swahili and Proto-Sabaki, are categorised as Swahili dialects, whereas in the western periphery (DR Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and parts of Uganda), there are a number of pidginised varieties. Additionally, Swahili-based youth/urban language registers have also received attention recently.

This talk deals with demonstratives in three different kinds of Swahili varieties:

Kimakunduchi, a coastal dialect spoken in the southeast part of Unguja, Zanzibar; Bunia Swahili/Ituri Kingwana, a variety spoken in and around the city of Bunia in Ituri Province, DR Congo; Sheng, a variety that developed as an ‘urbanlect’ in post-colonial Nairobi.

Demonstratives in these varieties have different features compared to those in the standard variety of Swahili. For example, Kimakunduchi has developed compound (e.g., yuno+va), contracted (e.g., =yu) and reduplicated demonstratives (e.g., yuyuyu) in addition to three basic demonstratives. In contrast, Bunia Swahili only retains -le forms and has developed new compound forms (e.g., le+apa, le+pale etc.). A closer investigation reveals that these changes come along also with notable functional features; In Bunia Swahili, the -le form is used as determiner and pronominal form, whereas the Kimakunduchi contracted demonstrative has developed into a topic pronoun. In Sheng, demonstratives can signal a specific type of relative clauses.

A significant point is that each variety has, although apparently similar to the standard variety, developed a unique linguistic system. This preliminary study aims to unveil such systematic uniqueness focusing on demonstratives and intends to provide new perspectives on variation across Swahili varieties, taking into consideration both systematic differences (threefold vs. less/more distinctions), functional differences (deixis, relativization, discourse-related functions etc.) and matters around word-order.

### **New perspectives on the Swahili based youth language practice Yabacrâne**

#### **Antonia Carla Fendt, Goethe University Frankfurt**

Yabacrâne is a youth language practice which is spoken in Goma, North Kivu province in the Eastern DR Congo. It is based on Kivu Swahili, a regiolect spoken in the Kivu provinces in DR Congo, and combines diverse multilingual resources, particularly French, Lingala and Kinyarwanda. While Swahili youth language practices like Sheng or Lugha ya Mitaani have

been studied in various frameworks, very little comparative data from Yabacrâne is available. Previous studies with a sociolinguistic approach on Yabacrâne have focused on the Community of Practice of Yabacrâne speakers, their identity concepts and language ideologies (see Nassenstein 2016), as well as the stylized practice and its multiple meanings (see Bose 2018). I will concentrate on structural features comparing the nominal and verbal morphology of Kivu Swahili and Yabacrâne. The presentation aims at discussing selected salient typological features from a micro-typological perspective related to current studies on microvariation (see e.g. Shinagawa and Abe 2019). Data on Kivu Swahili is especially drawn from Nassenstein and Bose 2016 and Bose and Nassenstein 2016. Through revising and completing data from a transcript of a conversation in Yabacrâne together with a consultant and extending the morphological features described for Swahili based youth languages (see e.g. Nassenstein and Bose 2020, Shinagawa 2007) this talk intends to give insights into phenomena of language change and language contact in Goma. The presentation is an attempt to investigate whether the youth language practice Yabacrâne is primarily based on Kivu Swahili or shows processes of divergence from its base language due to the influence of Lingala and other regional languages.

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## **Sniffing Oriental Scents: the Eroticized Swahili Odes**

**Ahmad Kipacha**

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#### ABSTRACT

Prolific Swahili poets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have foregrounded in their meticulous works the adapted perfumery customs with great awe. Yet scanty attention is paid by literary critics to the analysis of the orient perfumery trope in Swahili classical literature as a vital cue of trans-Indian Ocean commonalities and a marker of influence of Manga-Arabian perfumery civilization into the Swahili customs. This paper invigorates the (de-) odorised scent

culture in Utendi wa Mwanamanga by Fumo Liyongo (1160-1204), and Utendi wa Mwanakupona by Mwanakupona Mshamu (1810-1860). I argue, beside historically cuing the cross-cultural adornment practices between Manga and the Swahili coast, these two poets still subliminally de-odorize body, mind and soul of their readers to experience imagery of passionate intimacy.

**Abstract for Baraza VI: Swahili Studies Conference at SOAS, School of Oriental and African Studies,**

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**Doum palms, dhows and speckled green snakes**

**Martin Walsh, Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology**

What do doum palms, dhows and speckled green snakes have in common, in addition to being characteristic features of East African coastal life? The short answer is that they are all linked by etymology: a particular set of names for them in Swahili and neighbouring languages have a shared origin. As I've argued in recent articles, the Anglo-Indian word 'dhow' may also be a member of this set, being derived from the Swahili term dau rather than the other way round, as is sometimes assumed. In today's presentation, I'll elucidate these and other etymologies as part of an overview of ongoing research based on cross-dialectal comparison and historical reconstruction in Swahili and related Sabaki languages. As well as exposing some surprising historical connections, etymological exploration of this kind highlights the role played by indigenous innovation and adaptation, while also deepening our understanding of the 'genius' of Kiswahili and the richness of its inherited lexicon. It also allows us to both build upon and question existing wisdom about linguistic history and geography on the East African coast and islands. And it underlines the urgent need to record and conserve the endangered dialects and local varieties of language and idiom that are such an important part of the intangible cultural heritage of the Swahili-speaking world.

**NADHARIA YA UMBO UPEO KATIKA USWAHILISHAJI WA MANENO YA**

**KIINGEREZA**

**Nasra Habibu Ally**

**Chuo Kikuu Huria cha Tanzania**

**Kitivo cha Sanaa na Sayansi za Jamii, Idara ya Lugha na Taaluma za Fasihi**

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Ikisiri

Lugha ya Kiswahili na Kiingereza zimekuwa na mwingiliano wa muda mrefu kiasi cha lugha ya Kiswahili kukopa maneno kutoka katika Kiingereza ambayo yameswahilishwa. Uswahilishaji ni dhana inayoeleza mchakato wa kuingiza maneno ya mkopo ya Kiingereza katika sarufi ya lugha ya Kiswahili kimuundo, kimaana, kimofolojia na kifonolojia. Maneno hayo ya mkopo yanaposwahilishwa hupokea mabadiliko mbalimbali ili kukubaliana na sarufi ya lugha ya Kiswahili. Kwa hiyo, makala hii imekusudia kuyabainisha na kuyafafanua mabadiliko hayo kwa kutumia nadharia ya Umbo Upeo. Nadharia ya Umbo Upeo inahusu mpangilio wa mashartizuizi ya lugha inayohusika. Nadharia hii inabainisha kuwa, miundo mbalimbali ya lugha hujengwa kwa kuzingatia mikinzano kati ya Mashartizuizi (MASHA-ZU) yaliyopo katika lugha inayohusika. MASHA-ZU hayo ni ya kimajumui lakini lugha zinatofautiana katika upangiliaji wa mashartizuizi ambayo yanapangwa kimsonge. MASHA-ZU yanapangwa kimsonge kulingana

na nguvu ya thamani yake katika kuamua ukubalifu wa umbo linalozalishwa katika sarufi ya lugha inayohusika na wala si kanuni. Hivyo, makala hii imeshughulikia mabadiliko yanayojitokeza katika maneno ya Kiingereza pale yanaposwahilishwa na kuingizwa katika mfumo wa lugha ya Kiswahili, kwa kuzingatia mpangilio wa mashartizuizi katika maumbo ya maneno ya Kiswahili. Data zilizotumika katika makala hii zimepatikana katika makala ya Kishe

(2016) ambayo imejadili njia zinazotumika kuingiza maneno ya Kiingereza ya mkopo katika mfumo wa lugha ya Kiswahili na mbinu za uswahilishaji wa maneno ya kigeni katika sarufi ya lugha ya Kiswahili. Kwa hiyo, maneno ya mkopo kutoka katika Kiingereza ambayo yamebainishwa katika makala hiyo ndiyo yaliyoweza kuchunguzwa na kufafanuliwa namna nadharia ya Umbo Upeo inavyoweza kueleza mabadiliko yanayojitokeza katika maneno hayo. Uchunguzi huo umefafanua ni mashartizuizi yapi katika uundwaji wa maneno ya Kiswahili yaliyoongoza mabadiliko katika maneno ya Kiingereza ambayo yameswahilishwa.

### **Nyaraka/Archives of the Free Swahili: Seeking ‘Art’ and Re-Discovering Heritage of a Post-Emancipation Ruin** **Dr. Donald Kuira Maingi**

Swahili public imagery, aesthetics and visual culture has provided for most East African artists, diverse repositories for experimenting an inspirational coeval dialogical relationship with the unique topos and imaginative topographies of post-emancipation. The ethereal nature of their venerable secular mercantile modern cultures and religious legacies, however problematise how artists conceptually encounter such heritage to reconstruct its daily nyaraka or Swahili archives and past legacies of the once runaway or freed Swahili slaves. This paper engages this problematic by examining how artists from Kenya’s Wasanii Art Workshops have internationally engaged and experimented their creativity within the topos of Swahili post-emancipation and legacies of ‘freedom’ drawn from the ‘Lamu story.’ Inhabiting its historical, architectural, mercantile and post-slavery sites amidst local creative post-nationalist cultures, this paper questions how new material cultures and materiality of language emerged within the modern East African littoral world. Such encountered lived meanings contributed archival metaphors, which as I shall argue, contemporary artists transformed as the orality and visual cultures of the legacy of slavery. As an art historian, I question how Swahili language becomes resolutely materially transactional through art and material culture owing to its evolved metaphorical, conceptual and ideational polysemy that shape how public images or taswira are produced. Drawing from the art history of translation studies and studies on the materiality of language that aim at decolonizing the museum, I restrain from categorising traditional versus the modern Swahili, but, rather, aim at encountering polysemic meanings of nyaraka or archives of the free Swahili. Hence, I examine how modern artists conceptually dialogued with Swahili art and artefacts, to further represent its unstable meanings, material identities, histories and heritage of freed slaves as the ‘post-emancipation ruin’- characteristically envisioned in oral narratives of visualised belonging.

### **A Relevance-theoretic analysis of metaphor in Utendi wa Mwana Manga**

**Rachel Wangari Maina**  
**University of Wisconsin-Madison**

**BARAZA - Swahili Studies Conference**  
**Fri 29 October 2021**  
**Abstract**

Swahili narrative poetry has a long history. The Swahili did not have a writing tradition before the Arab traders' arrival by the 8th century. Therefore, their folklore was preserved in oral traditions. One popular form of Swahili narrative poetry is the *utenzi* (*tenzi* in plural), also known as *utendi* (*tendi* in plural) because of dialectical differences in pronunciation. The *tendi* are considered the epics of Swahili literature; they are lengthy narratives that mainly focus on history and religion. Most classical *tendi* have a religious theme, making the *Utendi wa Mwana Manga* stand out because it is incredibly secular. The *utendi* is attributed to Fumo Liyongo, a renowned warrior-poet of the Swahili. It is not clear when this hero and bard lived; it is believed he lived between the 8th and 17th centuries. In the *utendi*, Liyongo describes his wife's body from head to toe. Such a description goes against traditional Islamic beliefs; a woman should remain covered. Liyongo uses figures of speech to sketch his wife's body. This paper uses the tenets of Relevance Theory to examine the metaphors that Liyongo uses. Relevance Theory is a cognitive pragmatics theory that seeks to examine the hearer's inferences to identify the speaker's communicative intentions. The theory helps analyze the predictions of relevance that Liyongo made when selecting a metaphor to code his thoughts. An analysis of metaphors sampled purposively from *Utendi wa Mwana Manga* as collected and edited by the Liyongo Working Group (TUKI, 2006) follows a discussion of relevance theory and metaphor.

**By Omar Kibulanga**

**THE BIOGRAPHY OF HABIB SWALEH (LAMU, KENYA)**

Habib Swaleh is an iconic individual whose legacy and influence on education, science and culture still lingers along the East African coastline.

The scholar-cum-herbalist was born in Comoro Islands in 1800s but later settled and thrived in Lamu, Kenya.

This one-hour film highlights the life and significant contributions of this natural leader mainly through the lenses of his great grandchildren in order to assert authenticity.

His relentless attempts to trigger social transformation and globalization of the conservative community with a careful consideration to the indigenous traditions and spiritual values. The individual's role in the production and propagation of educational

heritage by establishing arguably the earliest institution of higher learning in Eastern and Central Africa - Riyadhha.

It explains how he brings an open door policy at Riyadhha and provides quality education to locals, regardless of their social stratification, despite huge opposition from the Lamu's elite.

He sends emissaries to various places and introduces regional and international exchange programs.

In the spirit of people's welfare and propagation of scientific intangible heritage, Habib Swaleh upholds alternative medicine. He inherits, masters and promotes the knowledge of herbs, medical therapies and

naturopathy.

This film shows how Habib Swaleh enriches the cultural diversity and human creativity through the establishment of Lamu's Grand Mawlid Festival where believers gather annually, at Riyadhha, to commemorate the birth of Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W.) through ceremonial rituals. This film also includes an exclusive tour of Habib Swaleh's archaic home and exploration of the artifacts of extreme intrinsic value. It unravels the profound intangible heritage and expertise in Swahili architecture, carpentry, tailoring, pottery, entertainment as well as mystical powers. The story is scripted and narrated in poetic Swahili language, accompanied with Arabic and English subtitles. It encompasses a background of a special Swahili poem dedicated to Habib Swaleh by the late legendary poets from Lamu - The Kadaras (father and son). Generally, this film seeks to prevent further deterioration, disappearance and destruction of the rich multifaceted heritage propagated by the late Habib Swaleh, that has long been as threatened as it has been existent.

WATCH THE BIOGRAPHY OF HABIB SWALEH VIA THIS LINK:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?app=desktop&list=PLRETL0JvkxWcn-WS-ztPxIWPQpFiSY9DU>

**New Epistemological Perspectives in William E. Mkufya's latest novel Kuwa Kwa Maua (The Existence of Flowers)**  
**Cristina Nicolini**  
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This paper represents an analysis of the newly released second volume of William Mkufya's trilogy - "The Poetry of Flowers", published -in October 2019- with the title Kuwa Kwa Maua - The Existence of Flowers. This novel starts where the story of Ua la Faraja - The Flower of Consolation (2004) ends; the third volume is still unpublished. The trilogy deals mainly with the issue of HIV/AIDS through the lenses of existentialism (Bertoncini 2005; Rettovà 2007) and brings together deep philosophical reflections on the value of the ephemeral human life, fear of death and sexuality. This paper reflects original material gathered during the fieldwork research conducted in Tanzania from October 2018 to April 2019. I conducted participant observation in the author's life so as to obtain a thorough understanding not only of his works, but also of his world view through both interviews and informal conversations. I argue that this Swahili novel is an important example of literature in Afrophone language, which drives philosophical thoughts based on an authentic African discourse.