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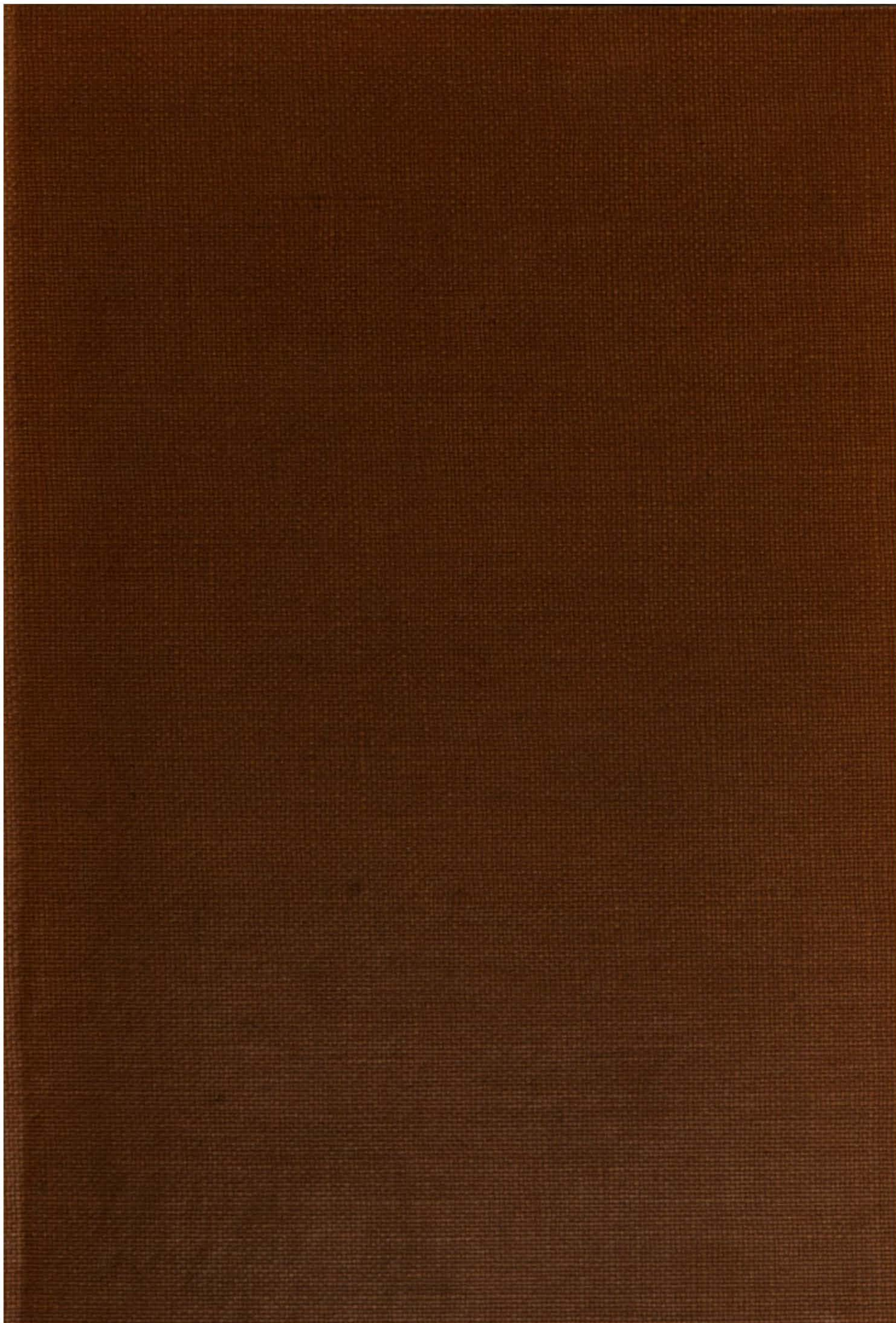
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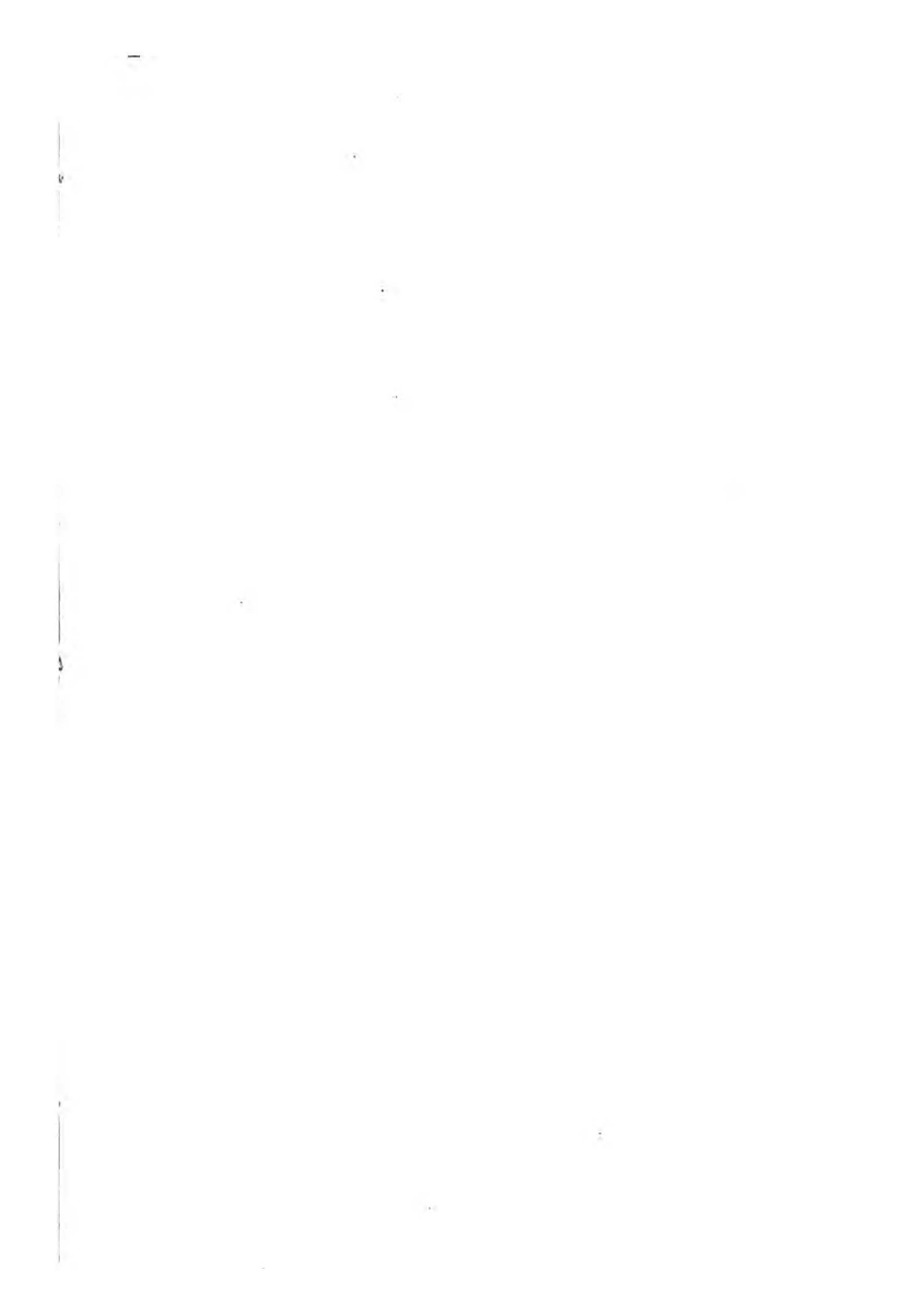




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MIQDAD AND MAYASA



The AZANIAN CLASSICS

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MIQDAD & MAYASA

Dr Alice Werner

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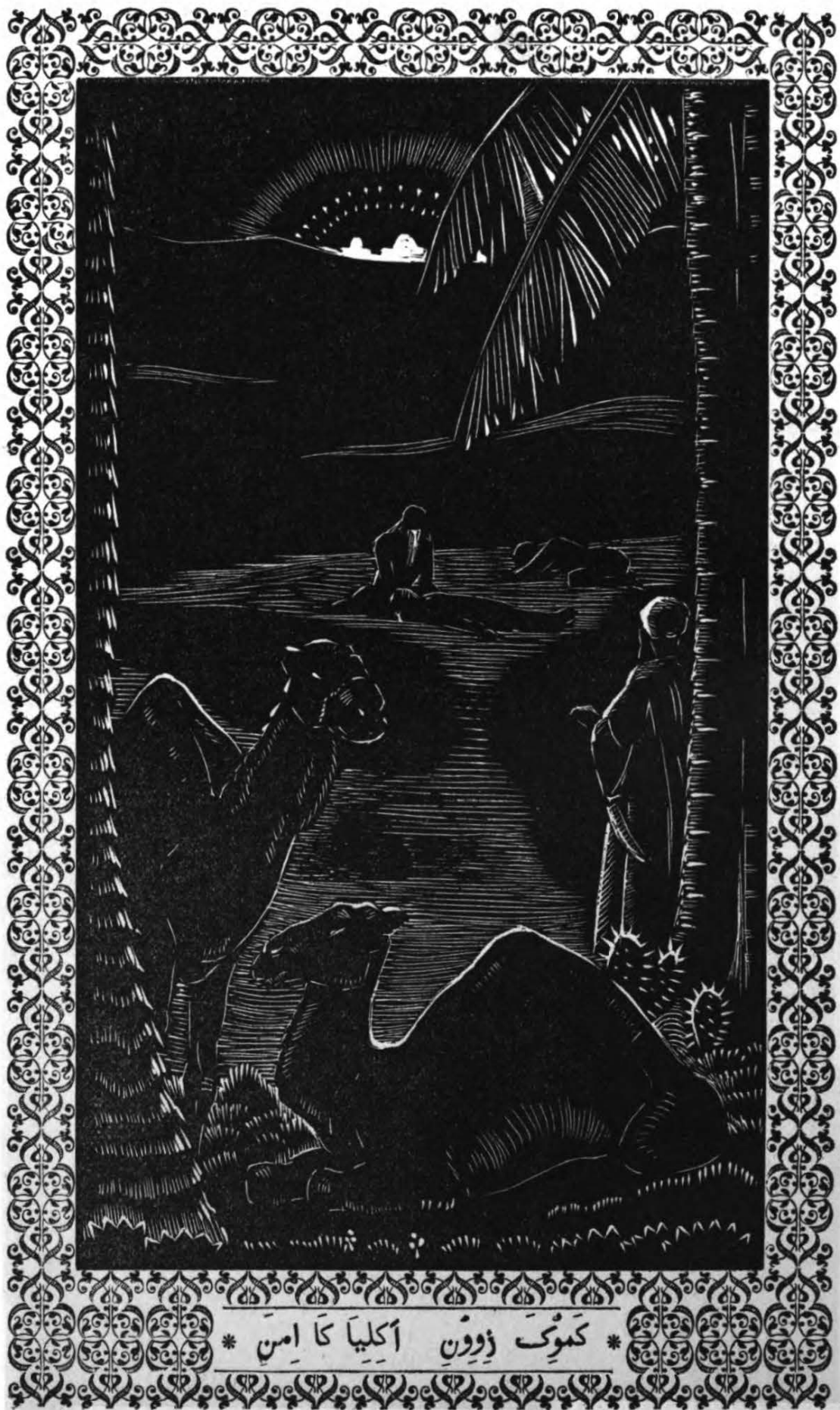
Dr Alice Werner

THE LIONGO SAGA

VOL. I. THE HISTORY OF LIONGO

VOLS. II-IV. THE SONGS OF LIONGO

Dr Alice Werner & W. Hichens



* كَمْوَك زَوونِ اَكَلِيَا كَا اَمِنِ *



THE STORY OF
MIQDAD & MAYASA

from the Swahili-Arabic text

BY

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“Read and thy Lord is Most Honourable,
Who taught with the pen,
Taught man what he knew not.”

Al-'Alaq.

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INTRODUCTION



Little seems to be known of Miqdad as an historical character, beyond the fact of his having fought at Badr (A.H. 3: A.D. 624) which gives him a place in the liturgy, popularly known as *Ahl Badri*¹, consisting of prayers offered in the names of these saints, including the fourteen who fell in battle and are counted as martyrs.²

He is here mentioned as Sayyidina (our Lord) Miqdad ibn 'l Aswad. It is related that, in the fight, he took captive Nadhr ibn Harith, whom he wished to hold to ransom, but Muhammad ordered Nadhr to be beheaded, saying, 'May Allah grant to Miqdad better captives than this.'

There are various romantic legends connected with Miqdad, extant both in poetry and in prose. Dr. Paret of Tübingen,³ has made an exhaustive examination of the manuscripts preserved at Berlin and of others. One of them contains a Turkish version, but not one corresponds with the Swahili poem before us. It may therefore be accepted as an original composition

¹ *أهل بدر* In Swahili *Hal Badiri*. It is chiefly known on the coast as a book of incantations, usually maleficent. To "read *Hal Badiri*" against a person is to compass his death.

² See Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, London, 1861; Vol. III, pp. 82, 107. The 8th Sura of the *Quran*, (*Al-Anfal*), deals with the battle of Badr, the first Muslim battle. See Muhammad Ali, *Translation of the Holy Quran*, Lahore, 1928, pp. 178, seqq. and footnotes.

³ See Paret: *Die Legendäre Maghazi Literatur*, Tübingen, 1930. Maghazi is the name applied to poems dealing with the Prophet's wars after the Hijra.

based on traditional matter which has no doubt undergone considerable modification in the transit between the Hejaz and the Swahili coast.

The Arabic romance relates how Miqdad after many adventures and hair-breadth escapes, won Mayasa, the daughter of Jabir, Sheikh of the Banu Kinda, for his bride. The marriage was desired by Abu Sufian and the other Quraish, to gain Jabir as an ally against Muhammad.⁴

Mayasa, an Amazonian heroine, had sworn to marry no man who could not overcome her in single combat.⁵ Miqdad fulfils the condition, but Jabir puts other obstacles in his way, and after vicissitudes too numerous to be related here, has him treacherously seized and bound, and gives Mayasa to one Malik.

Mayasa, however, contrives to get a message sent to the Prophet at Medina. He dispatches Ali to free Miqdad and deliver Mayasa. The lovers, who had previously been converted to Islam, are now happily united. They had twelve children. Miqdad ended his career by a martyr's death in battle, some say at Siffin, though the authorities are not agreed on this point.

I first made acquaintance with this Swahili

⁴ Paret, *op. cit.* p. 119. Two Mss. of this romance are numbered 8993, 1, 2, in Ahlwardt's *Catalogue*, p. 23 seq.

⁵ It has been suggested that this part of the story — suggestive of Siegfried and Brunhilde — may be ultimately of Teutonic origin; but there are various Eastern parallels, and the Greek legends of the Amazons seem to have come from Asia.

poem in 1913, while staying at the little Swahili town of Mambrui, about ten miles north of Malindi in Kenya Colony. When spending the day at Bomani, a village in the neighbourhood, I was hospitably entertained by, among others, Sharif Hassan and his wife, Mwana Bamu. The latter possessed a copy of the *Hadithi ya Mikidadi na Mayasa* and entertained her guests during the afternoon by reading part of it aloud.⁶

I inquired about the poem from Muhammad bin Abubakar, (Muhamadi Kijuma), of Lamu, to whom I am indebted for procuring me several original manuscripts and many copies, and he sent me the copy from which the present transliteration was made. My original transcription was checked either by Abdallah Bamaharusi of Malindi, or by the late Abdul Alim bin Abdurrahman Bakthir, of the same place, but I think the former. I have not been able in every case to adopt his suggestions. Since then I have received valuable help from the Reverend W.G. Howe, from Professor Meinhof, who published my first translation,⁷ and, more recently, from Mbarak bin Ali Hinawy of Mombasa, and Mrs Wake Bowell, wife of the Headmaster of the

⁶ Manuscripts, sometimes of considerable age, are treasured by many Swahili families in comparatively humble circumstances, but by no means illiterate. Many Swahili women are well acquainted with religious poems, such as the *Utendi wa Ayubu* and the *Kutawafukwe Mubammadi*, and know passages of them by heart.

⁷ *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenensprachen*, Vol. xxi, 1; Hamburg, 1930.

Coast Secondary School, Mombasa. I have also to acknowledge a considerable debt to Dr Paret for information bearing on the possible origin of the poem.

This, unlike most narrative poems of a serious cast, is called *Hadithi*, not *Utenzi*.⁸ It is further distinguished from them, if it is complete as it stands here, by the absence of a lengthy preamble invoking the Divine blessing and the assistance of the Prophet and the Companions,⁹ sometimes individually by name. This is very commonly prefaced by a demand for writing materials, as in the *Utendi wa Ayubu*:-

Nduzangu pani karatasi,	My brothers, give me paper,
Na kalamu ya unyasi,	And a reed pen,
Na wino mwema mweusi;	And good black ink;
Ambao ya khitariwa.	Things which are choice.

The metre is a favourite one for *tenzi* and *hadithi*.¹⁰ It bears a curious resemblance to the 'loose rhymes' of the Welsh bards, used by them for fluent narrative of a less elevated kind.¹¹ It consists of four short lines, each containing two stressed syllables, three rhyming together and the

⁸ In the Lamu dialect *Utendi*.

⁹ '*l As'hab*: Ali, Abu Bakar, 'Omar, 'Athman and Hamza; others are sometimes added.

¹⁰ *Tenzi*, pl. of *utenzi*, are epic or didactic poems. They treat of "matters of war and religion", according to a native authority.

Hadithi are mere "tales", either in verse or prose. The latter, although transmitted orally, in some cases over many years, were never written till quite recently.

¹¹ See Stephens, T. *Literature of the Kymry*, London, 1876.

fourth having one rhyme throughout the poem.

In the present case this is *-ya*. That is not a very satisfying rhyme to the English ear, since it cannot bear the accent. In this instance the Swahili system of accentuation on the penultimate syllable conflicts with Arabic prosody.

I have throughout written with *-ya* all words (at the ends of lines) which, in ordinary prose would end in *-ia* or *-ea*, for the sake of uniformity, which the Swahili scribe strives to preserve for the eye as well as for the ear, as may be seen in any well-written manuscript. The remaining rhymes are usually double, in harmony with the genius of the Swahili language:-¹²

Stanza 63: Sasa túwe masahíbu,
Twende kóte ugharíbu,
Tena múi ni karíbu,
Sasa tútasikilíya.

though sometimes the poet contents himself with a mere assonance, as:-

St. 68: Mpande wángu farási,
Kwa lijámu mnafísi,
Atakuonya upési,
Kwetu ndía humweléya.

The nearest approach to this metre that I can recall in English verse, occurs in a poem¹³ of the

¹² The poem is written in the Lamu dialect, the chief peculiarities of which are the substitution of *z* for *v* (*zita* = *vita*), *y* for *j* (*yuu* = *juu*), *nd* for *nz* (*anda* = *anza*), and sometimes *y* for *l* (*yeo* = *leo*), the dropping of *j* (*ina* = *jina*), and the use of the contracted relative, e.g. *alofungwa* for *aliyefungwa*. The elision of *l*, as in *chakwetea* for *chakuletea*, *pecke* for *peleke*, &c., must be noted.

¹³ *Mater Dolorosa*, by William Barnes; *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, Oxford, 1901.

late Dr. William Barnes, where it is used for the second half of every stanza:-

As in Heaven high,	Each in lífly whíte,
I my child did seek,	With a lámp alíght,
There in train came by,	Each was cléar to síght,
Children fair and meek.	But they díd not spéak.

The metre no doubt lends itself to *longueurs*, and there are passages where, with the best will in the world, one cannot account for an epithet otherwise than by supposing that the poet selected any syllables that would fill out his line.

But I think it will be agreed that the story is well told and goes with a swing.¹⁴ Though naturalised on African soil, it still bears traces of its exotic origin: the marriage of cousins¹⁵, the plundering of caravans considered as an occupation for gentlemen, the chivalries of single combat; whereas, as Dr Paret has pointed out, the wedding festivities bear a distinctly African character. Nothing, so far, has transpired as to the author of this poem. Every effort has been made to clear up difficult and obscure points by notes in the glossary, but some have had to be left unsettled, owing to what are, perhaps, corruptions in the text of the manuscript.

Alice Werner

London, 1932.

¹⁴ No attempt has been made to produce a metrical translation.

¹⁵ This does exist among Bantu-speaking tribes, but subject to restrictions which need not be discussed here. Some of the Arabic romances appear to make Miqdad and Mayasa first cousins.

MAYASA

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*Title-piece to the Manuscript
by Muhammad bin Abubakar.*

HADITHI YA MIKIDADI NA MAYASA
THE STORY OF MIQDAD AND MAYASA



HADITHI YA
MIKIDADI na MAYASA

Baiti 1 - 4

*Naanda kwa Arabamani,
Nisalie na Amini.
Kisake niyabaini
Zamani yaliyotukiya.*

*Siku moya Muhammadi,
Sababa na Mikidadi,
Maka, nde ya biladi,
Wali kati kutembeya.*

*Wa katika kutembeya,
Mvua ikawashukiya.
Wakenenda kuzengeya
Pangoni wakaitiya.*

*Katikati mwa jabali
Wakaingia marijali,
Na Muhammadi rasuli,
Ili mvua kukimbiya.*



THE STORY OF
MIQDAD and MAYASA

Stanzas 1 - 4

*I begin in the name of the Compassionate,
And pray for the Faithful One.
Whereafter let me set forth
That which happened long ago.*

*One day, Muhammad,
The Friend, and Miqdad,
Outside the town of Mecca,
Were going for a walk.*

*While they were walking,
The rain came down upon them,
So that they went to seek for shelter,
And betook themselves to a cave.*

*Into this cleft in the rock
The men entered,
With Muhammad, the Prophet,
To escape from the rain.*

*Akanena Muhammadi,
‘Tupumbaze, Mikidadi,
Kwani mvua imezidi?
Twambie hadithi moya.’*

*Mikidadi akanena,
‘Nikwambie ipi, Bwana?
Ambayo nimezoona,
Au nimezosikiya?’*

*Mtume akadhukuri,
‘Umezoiona ni kheri;
Ni sabihi ya uzuri.
Nina tumo busikiya.’*

*Mikidadi kamwambiya,
‘Zamani za ujahiliya,
Mayasa alinambiya;
‘Kwangu watu wamekuya,*

*Wangwana mabashumu,
Wamezokuya kaumu.
Wamenalika karamu,
Nami nimewaridhiya.*

Stanzas 5 - 9

*And Muhammad said,
‘Need we be idle, Miqdad,
Because the rain has increased?
Tell us some story or other.’*

*And Miqdad said,
‘Which shall I tell thee, my Lord?
Whether that which I have seen,
Or that of which I have heard?’*

*The Messenger replied,
‘What thou hast seen is better;
That has the seal of interest.
I have a desire to hear it.’*

*Then Miqdad said,
‘In the days of the Ignorance,
My wife, Mayasa, said to me,
‘Some people have visited me —*

*Honourable gentlefolk,
Who have come in a large company.
They have invited me to a banquet,
And I have acceded to their request.*

*Kwako nataka idhini,
Kesho nende karamuni,
Bwanangu, hatta iyonu,
Kwako tairejeleya.'*

'Usinende!', kamwambiya,
'Hali yangu yakweleya.
Sina kitu chakweteya.
Kisa wivu utaliya.'

Anijibu Muyuzi,
'Alovaa lulumizi,
Hasbutuki kwa mavazi!
Nimevaa miya miya.

Zingapi nimetumiya
Nimezozivaa bulia?
Sishutuki! Yakweleya;
Hayo umeineneya.'

Kamwambia, 'Ni rubusa,
Enenda zako, Mayasa!
Wallai, fahamu, kisa,
Usinitie khatiya.'

*I ask permission of you
To go to the feast tomorrow,
My lord, until the evening,
When I will return to your roof.'*

*'Do not go,' I said to her,
'My state is known to you.
I have nothing for you to contribute.
In the end you will weep for envy.'*

*The-One-who-Knows answered me,
'She who wears pearls,
Is not astonished by fine apparel!
I have worn hundreds upon hundreds.*

*How many times have I used
The ornaments that I have worn?
Be not perturbed! It is quite plain!
Thus have you excused yourself.'*

*I told her, 'You have permission;
Go your way, Mayasa!
But understand that, afterwards,
Let you not lay blame on me.'*

*Hatta kukipambauka,
Naye Mayasa katoka.
Akenenda kwa haraka,
Na furaha amengi ya.*

*Akingia karamuni,
Akaona anuwani
Ya zitu zenye thamani,
Nda walioko hitiwa,*

*Kama koja na libasi,
Na kama za alimasi,
Mayasa yake nafusi
Liongo kikamngiya.*

*Sana akaghadhibika;
Mno akasikitika.
Moyoni akikumbuka
Yaliyompitikiya.*

*Hasira zikamngiya,
Kinya kainyamaliya.
Asinene hatta moya,
Hatta akaitokeya.*

*As soon as the morning dawned,
With it Mayasa set forth.
And she went her way with haste
And with joy she entered.*

*When she went in to the banquet,
And she saw the display
Of the precious things,
Worn by those there assembled,*

*Such as necklaces and fair robes,
And jewels such as diamonds,
Mayasa — into her soul
Entered the pang of jealousy.*

*She was exceeding angry;
And full sore she grieved.
In her heart brooding over
The things which had befallen her.*

*Wrath so entered into her,
That she fell quite silent.
She spake not, even one word,
Until she withdrew from the banquet.*

*Hatta akiya nyumbani,
Mekoma, nami baneni,
Kauli naitamani:
Ghadhabu zimemngiya.*

*Kamwambia, 'Salinena?
Sasa nawe umeona.
Imetimu yangu dhana,
Nana, nalokudhaniya.'*

*Hunena maneno miya—
Hanjibu neno moya.
Maana yakaneleya.
Kawaga, kaitokeya.*

*Kamwambia, 'Nenda zangu
Itilifu robo yangu,
Au mali, Nana wangu,
Nipate ya kukweteya.'*

*Nikatoka papohapo,
Na usiku nao upo.
Asubuhi nipetepo
Mahala kailaliya.*

*Even when she came to our house,
She was silent and spoke not to me,
Though I longed for speech with her:
But wrath had entered into her.*

*And I said to her, 'Did I not say?
Now you also have seen.
Fulfilled is my foreboding,
Lady, as I opined to you.'*

*I said a hundred words —
She answered me not one.
The reason was quite clear to me.
I took my leave and I went forth.*

*I said to her, 'I go my way.
I will throw away my very life,
Or, Lady mine, will gain
And bring you wealth.'*

*I went forth there and then,
By night, while night was there.
In the morn, wherever I found
A place, I laid me down to rest.*

*Kapata pakupumua
Kwa zakula na ziniwa.
Papo hapo kapasua
Mabarani nikangiya.*

*Mabarani nikangiya,
Ili mali kizengeya;
Hatta pana siku moya,
Kafila ikatokeya.*

*Kawaona marijali,
Watukuzie na mali.
Papo kawakabili,
Yangu haya kawambiya.*

*(Na wao ni watu miya;
Hakupungua mmoya:
Kwa panga na majambiya,
Silaha za kutimiya.)*

*Nikawambia, 'Nipani!
Mali yenu yawateni!
Au yeo adhabuni,
Na mashaka mtangiya!'*

*Then I found a place wherein to pause
For food and drink.
And just there I cut across country,
And sallied into the wilderness.*

*And so I roved the Desert,
In order to seek for plunder;
Until, upon a certain day,
A caravan appeared.*

*Then I saw them, many men,
Carrying with them merchandise.
When they were in front of me,
I spoke to them thus —*

*(Now they were a hundred men;
Not one was wanting:
With swords and daggers,
With weapons of war complete.)*

*I commanded them, 'Deliver to me
Your goods! Abandon ye them!
Or, today, into torment,
And into trouble shall ye enter!'*

*Wakajibu kwa umoya,
‘Wewe ni mtu mmoya!
Utashinda sote miya?
Haya! Utaioneya!’*

*Nao, kisa kunambiya,
Mimi naliwashangiliya.
Kwa upanga kawangiya,
Kwa jambia wote piya.*

*Kakusanya mali yao,
Pamoja silaha zao.
Kafutwa nguo zao,
Nikapata mali ghaya.*

*Walisalia mateka,
Amani waliitaka:
Na mimi nikawaweka,
Kunitungiya ngamiya.*

*Kaenenda siku mbili,
Nikauona wa pili
Msafara una mali,
Kwa farasi na ngamiya.*

*Then they answered with one voice,
‘You, you are but one man only!
Will you vanquish us, a hundred?
Go to! You shall see for yourself!’*

*When they had said this to me,
I rushed at them triumphantly.
With my sword I drove amongst them,
With my dagger, both together.*

*I gathered all their merchandise,
Together with their weapons all.
Of their clothing they were stripped,
And I got a store of wealth.*

*They, as captives they remained,
Then for peace they entreated.
And I, I appointed them,
To herd the camels for me.*

*For two days we travelled on,
And then I espied a second
Caravan and with it wealth,
Borne on horses and camels.*

*Wangu mimi msafara,
Kausimamisha marra.
Kaenenda kwa kutura,
Hatta kawakurubiya.*

*Nikawambia, 'Shukani!
Mali yenu yawateni!
Au yeo akherani,
Ni sharuti mtangiya.'*

*Haya kisa kuwambiya,
Walinishambuliya.
Kati mwao kawangiya,
Kawangusha wingi ghaya.*

*Katiti wakasaliya,
Kamba, 'Mtanichungiya,
Au nanyi tawangiya,
Niwaue marra moya!'*

*Wakajibu himahima,
'Bwanangu tutakwandama.
Sisi ni wako watumwa;
Tutakutumikiya.'*

Stanzas 35 - 39

*My own caravan
I halted at once.
But I went on furiously
Until I came near to them.*

*Then I said to them,
'Dismount! Yield up your goods!
Or today into the next world
Assuredly ye shall enter!'*

*As soon as I said this to them,
Violently they fell upon me;
But I rushed into their midst
And felled to earth many of them.*

*To those few who had survived,
Said I, 'Ye shall herd for me,
Or you, too, shall enter into torment,
For I will slaughter you at once!'*

*Then they answered with speed,
'My Lord, we will follow you!
We, we are slaves of yours.
We will submit to you.'*

*Mali yao kiyatunda
 (Hushinda zaidi kwanda!)
 Mbee kwenda nikapenda,
 Mali kwenda kuzengeya.*

*Kaenenda mbee tena—
 Ghafula nikamuona—
 Shaba mmoya kijana.
 Farasi hunieleya,*

*Ni silahaye mzima.
 Una zibi na alama,
 Kama simba alo mwema.
 Nami kamkurubiya,*

*Yowe nikimpijiya,
 Alianguka nabiya.
 Hatta nikimwangaliya,
 Ameziye kuifiya.*

*Kazitwaa nguo zake,
 Akiba mfukoni mwake.
 Pamoya farasi wake—
 Zote kaitwaliya.*

*When I had gathered up their goods,
 (They far excelled the first!)
Forward I longed to go,
 Yet more wealth to go seeking.*

*So again we travelled on —
 And suddenly I beheld him —
A young man in the bloom of youth.
On horseback he appeared before me,*

*With his weapons of war fully armed.
His body was marked with strength,
Like that of the most splendid lion.
 But, I, I drew near to him;*

*And when, with a shout, I struck at him,
 This stranger fell down.
Even when I had but looked at him,
 He had given himself up for dead.*

*But I took all his garments,
 And the stores in his saddle-bag.
Together with his horse —
 All I took for myself.*

*Mimi na zangu ngamiya,
Na watunga wote piya,
Tu katika kutembeya,
Vumbi tukaioneya.*

*Vumbi kuu kwa yakini!
Hatta bukoma nyangwani,
Kanama! Ni mume shani
Mara ametutokeya!*

*Silaha ametukuwa,
Ni mwanamume wasitawa.
Ameng'ara kama yuwa
Kwa mapambo na huliya.*

*Farasi wake mbwa mali,
Farasi njema asili.
Na mimi nikamkabili:
'Nipa! Utapata ndiya!*

*Nipa sasa mkononi,
Walau kwa saa hini,
Utakwenda akherani,
Uisabau duniya.'*

Stanzas 45 - 49

*Then, as I and my camels,
And all the herdsmen altogether,
Were on the way, journeying onward,
We beheld a cloud of dust.*

*A great cloud of dust in sooth!
As soon as it halts on the plain,
Behold! It is a valiant man
Who has suddenly come upon us!*

*He carries the weapons of war,
He is a man of fine stature.
He shines like the sun
With decorations and jewels.*

*His horse is a horse of price,
A thoroughbred horse.
And I, I confront him:
'Yield to me, and you shall go your way!*

*Yield ransom now into my hand,
Or if you do not, in this very hour,
You shall go into the Hereafter
And forget this world!'*

Kajibu, 'Haya! Tuwane!

Nikuone unione.

Haya! Tupembeane!'

Kupigana tukangiya.

Sana tukapijana

Nikakikuta kitana!

Wangu mimi Saidana,

Mayuto yakaningiya.

Nikaikosa salama,

Kazindwa mikono nyuma.

Nikawa kama mtumwa.

Silaha kanitwaliya.

Naye, kisa, akanena,

'Takufungua, mngwana!

Tawana mimi nawe tena,

Upate kuioneya.'

Papo akanifungua,

Na silaha nikapowa,

Kama kwanda nalokuwa.

Akanipa zote piya.

Stanzas 50 - 54

*He answered me, 'Come, let us fight!
So that I test you, and you try me!
Come, let us strive together!'
Then in fighting we engaged.*

*Mightily we fought together,
But I had found my match!
For my part, O my Lord,
Regrets were borne in on me.*

*And I failed to safeguard myself.
I was overpowered, hands behind me.
And I was like a slave.
He took my weapons from me.*

*And he, when this was done, he said,
'I will set you at liberty, Sir!
We will fight again, you and I,
That you may satisfy your pride.'*

*There and then he unbound me,
And I was given the weapons
That I had at the outset.
He gave me them all, complete.*

*Akinambia rijali,
 'Tuwane marra ya pili.'
 Na mimi nikakubali,
 Kuwana tukarejeya.*

*Tukapembeana sana,
 Panga tukatiana,
 Kanifunga papo tena,
 Kama kwanda kirejeya.*

*Nami ni zifungoni.
 Kanena, 'Wewe n'nini?
 Kuitia udhiani,
 Una nini ya kuniya?'*

*Kamwambiya kisa changu
 Cha mimi na mke wangu:
 'Nataka mali, bwanangu,
 Nipate kumpeekeya.'*

*Na yeye kanambiya,
 'Yeo mimi buku kuya,
 Nafusi ina udhiya.
 Kisa changu takwambiya.*

*Then he said to me, this man,
 'Let us fight for the second time.'
And as for me, I assented,
 And we returned to the combat.*

*We swayed back and forth strenuously,
 We cut at each other with swords.
But he overcame me then again.
As at first, to the same plight I reverted.*

*And I was bound in bonds.
 Then he said, 'What are you,
To put yourself in such trouble;
 What have you as your purpose?'*

*Then I told him my story
 Of myself and my wife:
'I want riches, my good Sir,
 That I may take to her.'*

*Then he said to me,
 'Today I have come here,
Because my soul is troubled.
 I will tell you my story.*

*Ninaye na mposi wangu
Tangu ujana wake na wangu
Hatta sasa ammi yangu
Mgine amezengeya.*

*Mimi meniziwiliya,
Mgine amezengeya.
Yeo nyumbani hungiya:
Kheri kuikimbiliya.*

*Mui nimeukimbiya
Nisisikie zawiya.
Illa sasa twarejeya,
Mimi na wewe pamoya.*

*Sasa tuwe masahibu.
Twende kote ugharibu.
Tena mui ni karibu,
Sasa tutasikiliya.'*

*Papo tukafuatana
Kwa kuteka na kunena,
Na khabari tukipana
Mui tukakurubiya.*

*I have a sweetheart betrothed to me
Since her childhood and mine.
But, after all this time, my uncle
Has sought another for her.*

*Me, he has thrust me aside
For a new-comer whom he has found.
Today the marriage takes place —
'Twere better that I hide myself away.*

*I have fled from the village,
That I may not hear the rejoicings.
But now, let us return,
You and I together.*

*Now let us be friends.
Let us go together to yonder place.
Since the town is near-by
We shall soon arrive there.'*

*Then we set forth together,
Laughing and talking,
And, while we told each other our news,
We drew nigh to the town.*

*Naye, kisa, kanambiya,
 'Ngoma hizo busikiya!
 Hapana baja kungiya?
 Hapa tutaiketiya?'*

*Kisa, shauri kanipa,
 Kanambiya, 'Keti hapa.
 Moyo wangu hunipapa,
 Sina buddi kumwendeya.*

*Mtwae farasi wangu,
 Nipa wako, bui wangu.
 Ukiniona, ndu yangu,
 Sikurudi, nandamiya.*

*Mpande wangu farasi,
 Kwa lijamu mnafisi;
 Atakuonya upesi:
 Kwetu ndia humweleya.'*

*Ule kijana jalila —
 Ina lake Abdallah —
 Akapanda kwa ajila
 Muini akaemeya.*

*And then he said to me,
‘Hear you those drums!
Have I not a right to go in there?
Shall we, then, dally here?’*

*Then he unfolded to me his plan.
He said, ‘Stay here.
My heart misgives me!
I must needs go to her.*

*Let you take my horse;
Give me yours, my friend.
If you find, brother mine,
That I do not return — follow me.*

*Mount my horse,
Ride him with a loose rein;
He will quickly show you the way:
He knows the road to our home.’*

*That noble youth —
His name was Abdallah —
Then mounted in haste
And pressed onward to the town.*

*Hatta mui kitokeya
Kamkuta, 'Hukwambiya
Arusi enda kungiya
Kwa matezo na hidaya!*

*Kawaona watu hao
Kwa matezo wenda kwao,
Kawangiya kati mwao
Kwa upanga na jambiya.*

*Waliopo zaidi miya,
Akashikwa kwa umoya.
Akazindwa yote piya
Wa kushoto na kuliya.*

*Ammi yake akanena:
'Ni mambo makuu sana!
Na kama haya hakuna
Walau siyasiya!*

*Hima! Hima! Enendeni!
Mukamtie pembeni;
Mumfunge tendeuni
Bwana takapolaliya.*

Stanzas 70 - 74

*When he appeared in the town,
People accosted him, 'They say
The wedding is just about to begin,
With dances and music and gifts.'*

*And, as he came upon those people,
Wending their way with merriment,
He went in amongst them
With sword and dagger.*

*They were more than a hundred people,
And he was seized with one accord.
He was hard pressed on every side,
Both to the left and to the right.*

*Then his uncle declared,
'This is indeed a serious matter!
The like of this there has never been,
Nor have I ever heard of it!*

*Quick! Quick! Go with all speed!
Put him in the corner of the bride-chamber;
Lash him to the legs of the bedstead
On which the bridegroom will sleep.*

*Hiyo ni adhabu yake
Asikie nyono zake
Salima, mposi wake;
Ndiyo adhabu tangiya.'*

*Abdallah kisa kuwa,
Kwa kamba ametatiwa,
Hatta pembeni katiwa
Arusi pakulaliya.*

*Kafungwa kati maguu,
Na mposi wake yuu.
Akaona ni makuu,
Kheri kufa marra moya.*

*Akanena kwa moyoni:
'Kheri kawa kaburini
Na kama adhabu hini
Ammi amezonitiya.'*

*Huwaza akifikiri
Kuzikata kwa uzuri.
Kamwe kamba hazikiri,
Sana wamemtatiya.*

*This is his punishment —
Let him hear the soft breathings
Of Salima, his sweetheart —
Thus shall chastening enter his soul.'*

*To Abdallah it is the end.
With ropes he is enwound,
And so thrust into the bride-chamber
Where the bridal couple slept.*

*And tied between the legs of the bed,
With his betrothed above,
He felt it greater than man can endure;
It were better to die at once.*

*And he said in his heart,
'Better were I in the grave
Than in this torment
Into which my uncle has thrust me!'*

*And he ponders, considering
How best to cut his bonds.
But the cords resist all his efforts,
So closely have they enwound him.*

(Twarejea Mikidadi.)
Saa henda zikizidi,
Isihimili fuadi.
Farasi kaipandiya

Kenenda batta kutani,
Kamwe ndia sioni;
Nikampija kitwani,
Farasi akarukiya.

Akarukia kwa ndani
Akanipeeke yakini,
Hatta kwao mlangoni.
Nikasbuka nikangiya.

Watu wamelaliana;
Aengezewo hakuna.
Waliteza mno sana
Kwa ngoma wameregeya.

Kati kaisimamiya,
Marra zite kasikiya.
Taratibu kazendeya
Hatta kamkurubiya.

*(Let us now return to Miqdad.)
As time went on, increasingly,
My heart could not bear the suspense.
I mounted the horse*

*And went as far as the wall of the town;
Yet I saw no way to enter;
So I struck the horse upon the head
And he leaped over.*

*He leaped over to the inside.
Then he carried me, assuredly,
Even to their doorway.
I dismounted and entered.*

*People were gone to their sleep;
There was no one who was awake.
Having danced most excessively,
From the dance they had gone home.*

*While I stood there,
Suddenly I heard groans.
Cautiously I crept towards them,
Until I came near.*

*Kamuona Abdallah.
Amefungwa kwa dhalala.
Kamkata kwa ajila
Alofungwa zote piya.*

*Akisa kupata kuwa
Pazia alifunuwa,
Salima kamuinuwa.
Mume ameilaliya.*

*Kakitoa kisu chake
Kamtinda koo yake,
Kamwemeza guu lake
Hatta sana kaifiya.*

*Tukatoka sute hima;
Tumtukuze ye Salima.
Abdallah buterema
Kama hakufanya haya.*

*Tukenenda si watatu
Hatta pale mahala petu,
Yaliopo mali yetu,
Kbaimani tukangiya.*

*Then I saw that it was Abdallah.
He was helplessly bound.
I cut him with haste
From all his bonds.*

*When he had recovered
He drew aside the bed-curtains,
And lifted up Salima.
The man was still asleep.*

*Then he drew his knife
And cut his throat
And set his foot upon him
Until he was quite dead.*

*We then went forth together in haste,
We carried Salima between us.
Abdallah rejoiced
Like one who is unashamed.*

*We went on, the three of us,
To our place yonder
Where our spoil was lying;
And went into the tent.*

*Hatta kukipambauka
Khabariye yalitoka.
'Bwana harusi, hakika,
Ametindwa marra moya!*

*Na mke metukuliwa!
Yeo haya yamekuwa!
Abdallah una kuuwa!'
Watu wakinena piya.*

*Bake nana kisikiya,
Wazee aliwendeya.
Kawambia, 'Kama haya
Ni kberi kumsikiliya.'*

*Kawatuma wasemai
Wote wazee wa mui.
'Mwambieni haifai
Kama haya kuneteya.*

*Mwambieni apulike,
Salima ukhti yake
Na mimi ni ammi yake:
Ya aibu bunitiya.*

*As soon as the dawn broke,
The tidings went abroad.
'The bridegroom, in truth,
Has been slain, just now!*

*The wife has been carried off!
This day have these things befallen!
Abdallah, he has done the killing!
People were saying, with one accord.*

*The lady's father, when he heard,
Went to the Elders.
And said to them, 'In affairs as these,
It is best to go to him.'*

*He despatched orators,
All Elders of the town.
'Tell him that it is wrong
To do such things to me.*

*Say to him so that he hears,
Salima is his cousin
And I am his uncle,
He is putting shame upon me.*

*Na nipe binti yangu;
Hendao kisa utungu;
Na dhambi haya kwa Mngu.
Wala si jema tabiya.'*

*Wazee wakatakana,
Wa mui wakakutana.
Kwa wote wakafuatana
Hatta wakasikiliya,*

*Wazee wenye maina.
Wakikurubiya sana,
Mikidadi kawaona.
Abdallah kamwambiya,*

*'Hoko wayao shuyuba,
Wafuatene si haba!
Wametoka kwenye baba,
Labuda, nimedhaniya.'*

*Abdallah anambiye,
'Wawate wakurubiye,
Tuiyue jinsiye.
Tuwajibu marra moya.'*

*So let him give me my daughter;
For his conduct will end in disaster.
Such things are a sin against God;
Nor are they of decent custom.'*

*The Elders summoned each other,
They of the town; they assembled.
In a body they went together
Until they arrived,*

*Old men of name and note.
When they had come quite near,
Miqdad saw them.
To Abdallah I said,*

*'Yonder come some venerable old men,
A goodly company, in sooth!
That they have come from your uncle's
Is possible, I suspect.'*

*Abdallah said to me,
'Let them come near
That we may know what it means.
Let us answer them at once.'*

*Wakaya, wote wakaya,
Hatta wakakurubiya,
Yowe wakampijiya,
'Abdallah! Tumekuya!'*

*Abdallah akatoka,
Kiwaitika, 'Labeka!
Nitumani tatumika,
Baba zangu nyute piya.'*

*Wakanena, 'Tumetumwa
Na babako wa heshima
Utupe nduyo Salima,
Naye radhi mekuwiya.'*

*Abdallah kawajibu,
'Kumtoa ni aibu!
Walao musitulubu
Hilo sitowatendeya.*

*Muwe radhini, endani,
Haya mukamwambieni,
Kumtoa na sidhani,
Wala halitotukiya.'*

*They came on, all of them; they came
Until they were near.*

*They cried out with a loud cry,
'Abdallah! We have come!'*

*Abdallah went forth
And answered them, 'I am here!
Command me, and I will serve you
In all ways, my fathers!'*

*Then they said, 'We have been sent
By your honoured kinsman
That you yield us your cousin Salima,
And he grant you pardon.'*

*Abdallah answered them,
'To deliver her up is black shame!
Do you not follow us,
For that I will never do for you.*

*Be pleased to depart
And tell him thus,
To yield her up I do not intend,
Nor will that ever befall.'*

*Wazee wakairudiya,
Muini wakarejeya
Hatta wakimsikiliya
Babake wakamwambiya,*

*'Hatumbo, menena
Usidhani hilo, Bwana!
Hakuna hilo, hakuna.
Ndiyo amezotwambiya.'*

*Babake yakamkasiri.
Kwa kisa akifikiri,
Akanena, 'Yangu kheri
Zita tukampekeya.'*

*Akatoa asikari
Mia, walo mashuhuri;
Na akida mwenye shari
Shujaa wakuemeya.*

*Akawambia, 'Endani!
Kwanda yeye mwambieni,
Ukiitaka amani,
Tupe Salima. Sikiya!*

The Elders betook themselves back.

*They returned to the town,
And as soon as they arrived,
They told her father.*

'He has said he will not give her up.

Do not think it, my Lord!

There is no chance of that, none at all.

Indeed that is what he has told us.'

Her father was wroth with him.

Finally he pondered

And said, 'It seems best to me

That we launch an attack upon him.'

He called out the soldiery,

A hundred men of renown,

With a valiant captain,

A warlike man to lead them on.

He said to them, 'Go ye forth!

First say ye to him,

If you desire peace,

Yield Salima to us, do you hear!

*Utupe binti yake,
Tumpeeke kwa babake,
Wewe usikhasirike.
Pamwe na sisi pamoya.'*

*Asikari wakatoka
Kwa furaha na kuteka.
Huona ataridhika
Kwa kuwa wao ni miya,*

*Asikari wenye ina.
Wakikurubia sana
Mikidadi kawaona;
Abdallah akamwambiya,*

*'Kuna kaumu midani;
Watu wengi nimedhani,
Sababu vumbi nyangwani
Hatta limekurubiya.'*

*Abdallah akamjibu,
'Hiyo si kuu ajabu!
Ngoja wawapo karibu
Nitatoka kwangaliya.'*

*Let you give us his daughter
So that we may take her to her father.
Do not be defiant.
It is you against us all together.'*

*The warriors went forth
With merriment and gladly,
Believing that he would be reconciled
Because they were a hundred strong,*

*Warriors of name.
When they had come near,
Miqdad beheld them
And he said to Abdallah,*

*'There is a host on the plain,
A great number of men, I suspect,
Because the dust on the desert
Even now comes close.'*

*Abdallah replied,
'That is no great wonder!
Wait till they are near
And I will go forth to look at them.'*

*Ile kaumu ikaya
 Hatta ikakurubiya,
 Mikidadi kamwambiya,
 'Ndoo, wameziye kuya!'*

*Abdallah akatoka,
 Wote akawadhirika
 Akida akamtamka,
 'Kwangu sute tumekuya;*

*Ammi yako metutuma.
 Ukiitaka salama,
 Upesi tupe Salima!
 Ni wakati kurejeya.'*

*Abdallah akasema,
 'Sitomtoa Salima.
 Nyamaani! Yamekoma
 Hayo tena kunambiya.'*

*Asikari wakajibu,
 'Sisi nawe ni harubu!'
 Akawajibu, 'Karibu!'
 Abdallah kawangiya.*

Stanzas 115 - 119

*That host came on
Until it was quite near.
Then Miqdad said to him,
'Come! They are already here.'*

*And Abdallah went forth
And confronted them all.
The captain commanded him,
'We have come to you, all of us.*

*Your uncle has sent us.
If you want peace,
You must yield us Salima speedily.
It is time to return.'*

*Then Abdallah said,
'I will never give up Salima!
Hold your peace, for words are ended
By your telling those to me again.'*

*The soldiers then replied,
'Between us and you it is war!'
He answered them, 'Come on!'
And Abdallah rushed upon them.*

*Saa haikutimiya,
Kawaua wengi ghaya.
Wangine wakakimbiya
Babao wakamambiya,*

*Wakamweleza khabari,
'Ameua asikari!
Twalosalia ni kheri
Kuya kukuarifiya.'*

*Babake kasuguika,
Kawamkua baraka
Wane kwake kuwapeeka
Abdallah kumwambiya.*

*Akawambia, 'Endani!
Umbulenu muweteni!
Akiiza kwa yakini,
Pijanani, nawambiya!'*

*Zijana wakaifunga
Mikuki, zisu na panga,
Walau hapana changa—
Wanaume haribiya.*

*Before the hour was out,
He had slain exceeding many.
The rest of them fled,
And bore the tidings to her father.*

*Set forth the events to him,
'He has killed the warriors!
We who were left — it seemed best
To come to inform you.'*

*Her father was wroth of heart,
And quickly called to him
His sons, to send them
To Abdallah to speak to him.*

*To them he said, 'Go ye!
Bring ye your sister!
If he refuses definitely,
Then fight him, I tell you!'*

*The young men girded themselves
With spears, swords and daggers,
Nor was there one untrained —
They were men terrible in war.*

*Wa tatu wao, khalisi,
Ni nduye bwana harusi.
Ni kama simba mtesi,
Kisasi meazimiya.*

*Na wawili walokwima
Ni hao nduze Salima.
Kwa zita wakasimama,
Zita wakaazimiya.*

*Wakatoka kwa umoya,
Zita wakaazimiya.
Hatta wakakurubiya,
Abdallah kasikiya*

*Kishindo chumu khalisi
Na mayowe ya farasi,
Kamwambia kwa upesi,
'Mikidadi! Angaliya!'*

*Mikidadi akitoka,
Sana akiwamunika.
Wamekuya kwa haraka
Watu watatu pamoya.*

*The third of these, in truth,
Was the bridegroom's brother.
He was like a furious lion
Resolved upon his vengeance.*

*And the two who were so upright
Were brothers of Salima.
They stood arrayed for war;
Upon war they were resolved.*

*They set forth as one man
Intent upon fighting.
As soon as they came near,
Abdallah heard*

*A great clangour, in truth,
With the neighing of horses.
Quickly he said,
'Miqdad! Beware!'*

*When Miqdad came forth,
He gazed intently at them.
They were coming on with speed,
The three men together.*

*Kamwambia, 'Ni zijana
 Watatu hufuatana.
 Wameifunga waungwana
 Karibu wamekurubiya.'*

*Kanambia, 'Bui wangu,
 Ziyete silaha zangu.
 Sasa hizo mbee zangu
 Zita zikuu ghaya.*

*Zita zisizo kadiri;
 Hao ni watu jauri,
 Mashujaa masuburi.
 Ngoja, utaioneya!'*

*Moyoni nikatushiya —
 Hakuwa cha watu miya,
 Watatu wamezokuya
 Hadhari zimemngiya.*

*Wakisa kuya karibu,
 Walinena Waarabu,
 'Abdallah, twatulubu
 Kwako wewe yambo moya.*

*He said, 'They are young men.
Three riding together.
They have armed themselves like nobles
And they have already come near.'*

*Then he said to me, 'My friend,
Bring my weapons.
Now this fight is before me —
An exceeding great affray,*

*A fight without compare.
For these are men of violent deeds,
Heroes of renown.
Wait! You shall see for yourself!'*

*My heart misgave me —
Not on account of a hundred men,
But from the way these three came on
Caution was borne in upon him.*

*When they had come near,
Those Arabs said,
Abdallah, we require
Of you one thing.*

*Babako akusalimu,
Mekuomba mubeshimu.
Mpe Salima timamu,
Kama walomtwaliya.*

*Ammi yako budbukuri,
Kwa nini kumuadhiri.
Upesi mpe saghiri
Ungatenda yote piya.*

*Ammi yako amenena,
Upesi mpe kijana,
Nanyi mumesameheana;
Na hayo mezotwambiya.*

*Ukiiza kumtoa,
Ifabamu ni balua!
Tumekuya kukuua —
Tuwane marra moya!'*

*'Simtoe!' kamambiya.
Akajibu kama haya.
Nduye akatanguliya
Kwa panga kamsongeya*

*Your uncle greets you.
He entreats you to pay him respect.
Yield him Salima unharmed,
As you took her from him.*

*Your uncle sends you word,
Why do you provoke him?
Give him the young maid quickly.
Then you would requite all.*

*Your uncle has declared,
Let him yield up the maiden quickly,
And all is forgiven between you.
Those very words he spake to us.*

*If you refuse to hand her over,
Understand, it is a trial of strength!
We have come to kill you —
Let us fight at once!’*

*‘I will not give her up!’ he said.
Thus did he answer.
Her kinsman stepped forward
And rushed upon him with a sword.*

*Akampija upanga,
Abdallah kaukinga.
Kampija hakunyonga,
Wakawana mno ghaya.*

*Abdallah akawaua
Wo watatu sawasawa.
Silaha kazitukua
Walokipijaniya.*

*Waliopo wote piya,
Haya wakiangaliya,
Zita zalizotukiya,
Watatu wakaifiya,*

*Wakarudi kbaimani
Wakalala kwa amani.
Asubuhi fahamuni,
Vumbi likatokeya.*

*Mikidadi kamwambiya,
'Vumbi limetutokeya,
La mwanamume mmoya
Uyao kwa kasi piya!'*

*He struck at him with the sword,
But Abdallah warded off the blows.
He struck him without faltering.
They fought exceeding fiercely.*

*Abdallah slew them,
All three alike.
And took all their weapons
With which they had attacked.*

*All those who were there,
When they beheld these happenings,
The fight and what had befallen,
How the three went to their death,*

*They returned to their tents
And rested in safety.
At dawn, when things could be seen,
A cloud of dust appeared.*

*Miqdad said to him,
'A dust-cloud comes out towards us,
Of a solitary man
Who comes on with all haste!'*

*Abdallah kadbukuri,
 'Sasa biyo ni khatari!
 Ni mauti ahamari,
 Hiyo yamezotukiya!'*

*Kikurubiya ye pweke,
 Kanama! Ni ammi yake.
 Papo kiya atamke
 Abdallah, akamambiya,*

*'Abdallah, nipe mwanangu,
 Baba, nami nende zangu.
 Hiyo ni aibu yangu,
 Baba, na yako pamoya.'*

*Kamwambia, 'Baba wangu,
 Niwia radhi, Babangu,
 Ni mubali mbee zangu,
 Kama haya kuridhiya.'*

*Kamwambia, 'Na tuwane,
 Kama hapana manginge.
 Yeo roho tutoane
 Na khitari kama haya.'*

*Then Abdallah said, with foreboding,
‘Now, indeed, is there peril!
It is the Red Death
This which has now appeared!’*

*When he approached, he alone,
Behold! It was his uncle.
There, as he came on, he cried out,
He said to Abdallah,*

*‘Abdallah! Give me my daughter,
Sir, and let me go my way.
This is my shame,
My son, and yours likewise.’*

*Abdallah said to him, ‘O my father!
Let me be pardoned, my Lord!
It is a thing abhorrent before me
To agree to such as that.’*

*His uncle answered, ‘Then let us fight!
Since there is no other way than this,
Today we must have each other’s life.
And in that way decide.’*

*Abdallah kenda hima,
Akamwambia Salima,
'Babako nitamegema?
Kukutoa ni udhiya!'*

*Salima akamwambiya,
'Ni babako ni mamoya.
Kapijane enda, haya.
Na mimi nimeridhiya.'*

*Abdallah akatoka,
Na upanga ameshika,
Mbaraza kautaka,
Upanga kamfutiya.*

*Na babake wakawana.
Kitambo kikenda sana,
Nguvu wakakosa tena,
Wakaanguka pamoya.*

*Wakaanguka saghali.
Wakafa wote wawili.
Mwanamke kakabili,
Kwa kilio akiliya.*

Stanzas 150 - 154

*Abdallab went speedily
And said to Salima,
'Shall I attack your father?
Yet, to give you up is sore grief!'*

*Then Salima answered to him,
'He is your kinsman; it is all one.
Let you go and fight. Go to!
And as for me, I consent.'*

*Abdallab went forth
And seized his sword,
And called the assembly to witness,
And then drew sword against him.*

*And he and her father strove together.
After a great time had passed,
Their strength failed them,
And they fell, together.*

*They fell exhausted
And they died, the two of them —
And the woman in sight of them
Cried out with a great and bitter cry.*

*Akitoa mashairi,
 Kiwasifu kwa uzuri;
 Na matozi yakijiri
 Kama sili, nakwambiya.*

*Akampakata nduye,
 Na shemeji, nikwambiye.
 Kenda kwa babake yeye,
 Kimsifu akiliya.*

*Mikidadi kamwaniya—
 'Twende zetu,' kamwambiya,
 'Yamekoma yote haya.
 Twende kwetu ni mamoya,'*

*Salima akabaini,
 'Nitakwandamiliani?
 U mwanamke yakini;
 Mimi nawe tu mamoya!'*

*Kisa kunijibu haya,
 Abdallah kamwendeya.
 Salima akamtiya
 Ziweuni akiliya.*

Stanzas 155 - 159

*Then did she chant a dirge;
She praised them gloriously.
And her tears flowed
Like a Stream, I tell thee.*

*She took her brother in her arms;
And her kinsman, let me tell thee.
She went to her father,
Praising him, lamenting.*

*And Miqdad yearned towards her —
'Let us go our way,' I said to her,
'All is ended, everything —
Let us go together; our ways are one.'*

*But Salima said clearly,
'Shall I go with you —
You are like a woman!
I and you, we are the same!'*

*Then, having answered me thus,
She went towards Abdallah.
Salima laid him upon her lap,
While she wept.*

*Kamuweka ziweuni,
Akilia kwa imani.
Achubua masikini
Kwa kilio akiliya.*

*Naye, kisa, kaifiya —
Salima, na wote piya.
Kakusanya mali piya;
Mayasa kumpeekeya.*

*Muhammadi Shafiina,
Kwa mato naliyaona.
Si ya kusikia, Bwana,
Haya nimezokwambiya.'*

*Mtume akatongowa,
'Mahala hapo helewa?
Hatta leo wapayuwa?'
'Naamu,' kamuitikiya.*

*Akanena, 'Twenendeni.
Kuwaona natamani,
Watu hao kwa yakini.'
Tukenenda sute piya.*

*She laid him upon her lap,
Weeping with all her heart,
And bruising herself, poor soul,
With bitter lamentation.*

*Then she abandoned herself to death—
Salima, with them all.
And I gathered together my spoil;
And carried it to Mayasa.*

*O Muhammad, our Healer,
With mine eyes beheld I these things.
They are not hearsay, my Lord,
These things, as I have told them to you.?*

*The Prophet said,
'Is that same place distinguishable?
Do people know it to this day?'*
'Yes,' I answered to him.

*And he declared, 'Then let us go there.
I wish to see them,
Those people, in truth.'*
So we went, both of us.

*Tukikoma sawasawa
Nikamwambia rasuwa.
Akamuomba Moliwa,
Wakatoka wote piya.*

*Hadithi imekhitimu
Kwa auni ya Karimu,
Na Taba Tumwa hashimu
Auwali mwisu nambiya.*

*When we had reached the right place,
I told the Holy Prophet.
He prayed to our Lord,
And all of them came forth.*

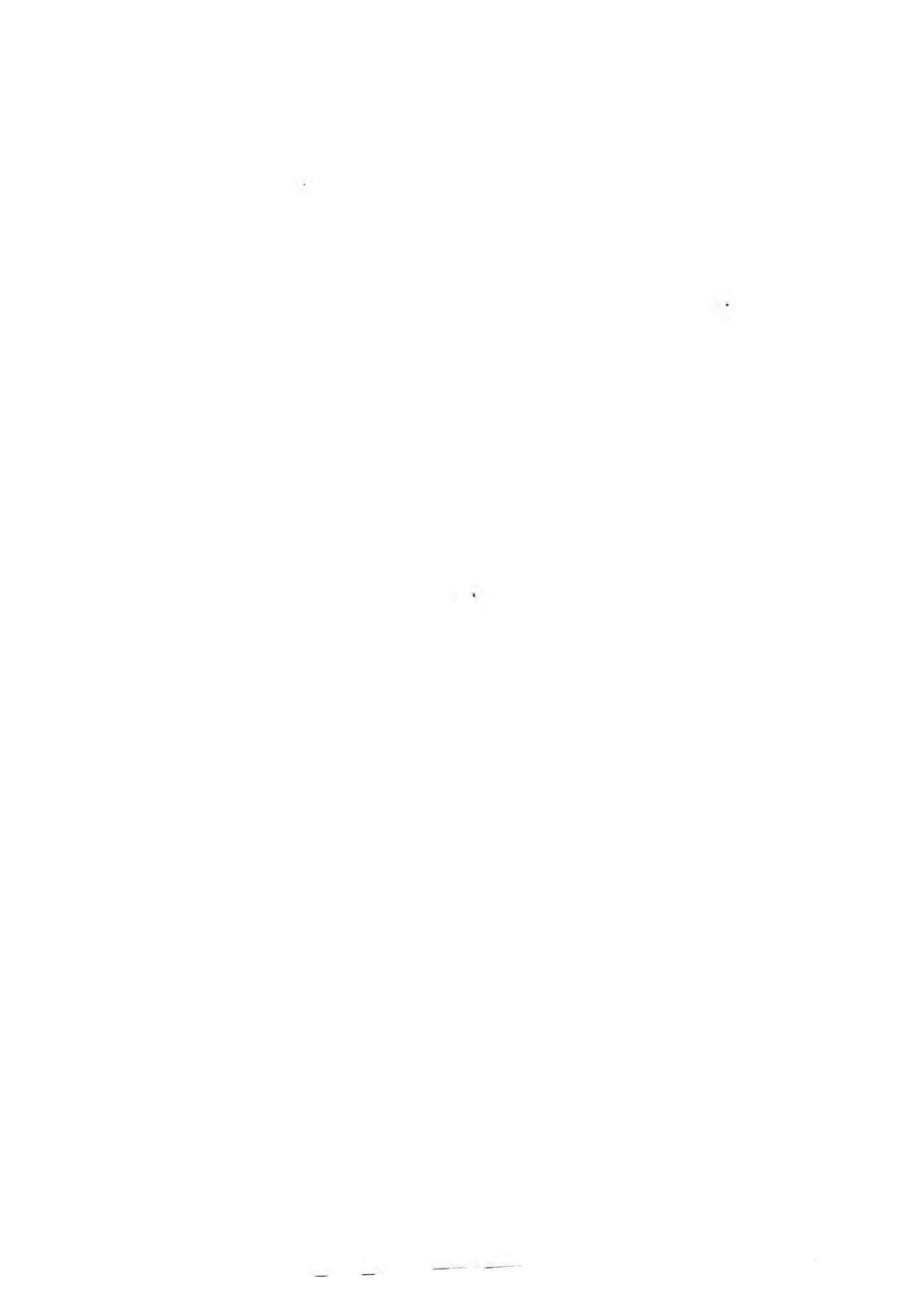
*The story is finished.
By the help of the Bountiful
And Taha the Apostle, the Honoured,
From beginning to end have I told it.*

1
2
3

1
2

1

GLOSSARY



GLOSSARY

The Glossary is intended to explain all those words occurring in the poem, the definitions of which are *not* given in one or other of the following works of reference:-

Krapf: *Swahili-English Dictionary*, London, 1925.

Madan: *Swahili-English Dictionary*, Oxford, 1928.

Steere: *Handbook of the Swahili Language*, London, 1928.

These and other authorities consulted are acknowledged thus:-

Kr. = Krapf. St. = Steere. M. = Madan.

B. = Wake-Bowell. Hw. = Howe.

Mb. = Mbarak bin Ali Hinawy.

Hk. = Scott & Hetherwick, *Dist. Nyanja Language*, London, 1929.

Otherwise all notes are by Dr. Werner, except those in square brackets, thus, [—], which are by the Editor.

NOTES ON THE MANUSCRIPT

The Narration. The reader will notice that at st. 80, 97, 112, 115, and elsewhere, the poet appears to forget that Miqdad is the narrator and speaks of him in the third person. The close of the poem exhibits a different confusion. Here, Miqdad speaks to the Prophet, in concluding his story with the words "These things which I have told you" (st. 162). In the following three stanzas, however, Miqdad narrates as though he were speaking directly to the reader, and he refers to the Prophet in the 3rd and 1st persons, e.g. "And I answered Him", and "We went &c.". These variations may have originated as recitative errors, introduced during a long period of oral transmission before the poem was committed to writing.

[In effect, the poet opens with an ascription to Allah, and then relates the circumstances in which Miqdad tells his story.

Miqdad begins his narration in the second line of st. 8.

He continues to the end of st. 69. The poet resumes, and in st. 70—79 describes the events in the town, concluding on the first line of st. 80, with the injunction, "Let us now return to Miqdad".

In the second line of st. 80 Miqdad resumes narration; and continues to the end of st. 89. Here the poet again narrates the events in the town until the Elders are seen by Miqdad, (st. 98), who then continues his narration to the end of st. 104. Here the scene again moves to the town and is described by the poet until

the end of *st.* 129, where Miqdad takes up the narrative until the end of *st.* 141. The poet interpolates *st.* 142—3 and the first line of *st.* 144, when Miqdad resumes the narrative until the end of *st.* 165, with but a single interpolation by the poet — the first line of *st.* 157 — to reveal Miqdad's emotion. The poet concludes, in *st.* 166, with homage to Allah and to the Holy Prophet.

That these alternations of poet and Miqdad as narrators may have been by design is a possible conjecture. The passages narrated by Miqdad in the 1st person, describe only those events which he saw. The poet seems to narrate all those events of which Miqdad, (albeit cognisant of them), was not, of his own eyes, an observer.

Upon this conjecture the alternation of narrators could be deemed a device to bear out in a literal sense, the Holy Prophet's behest that Miqdad relate what he had *seen*, rather than what he had *heard*. The confusion of tenses in *st.* 163—5, however, conflicts with this deduction, which Dr. Werner regards as savouring too much of conscious literary artifice for a poem of this kind, it being more likely that successive reciters have confused the speakers.]

Orthography. In manuscripts of this kind, great stress is laid upon the orthographic unity of the line-endings. In this instance the 166 lines of the Ms., are graced with the terminals يا or يا , with but four exceptions. These exceptions are:-

هتوا (*st.* 16), دي (*st.* 48), نهدي (*st.* 70) and مكوي (*st.* 102).

These have been read as, hitiwa, ndiya, na hidaya, mekuwiya. It is difficult to account for these lapses from orthographic precision.

They may arise from errors or defects in an earlier Ms., from which Muhamadi Kijuma supplied the present copy. Hitiwa yields a defective rhyme and possibly should read "hitiwiya".

st. 7 NI SAHIHI YA UZURI. Hw. renders this phrase as "it is the perfection of beauty", — lit. "is correctness of beauty."

[*Sabibi* is commonly used in the sense of "testimony," e.g. *Kutia sabibi*, to sign (put) one's name or mark to a document, i.e. to attest, guarantee, affirm: cf. M. *Uzuri* has the significance, in a wide sense, of "merit, excellence", predicating the inherence of a pleasing, worthy or gratifying factor. Here the phrase seems to mean — "It (i.e. the seeing of it) is an attestation of appeal to sense," i.e. it has the seal of interest.]

st. 13 The word هلي is a mistake in the Ms., since ه cannot be

vocalised by both dhumma and kesra at the same time. The word intended would appear to be either هَلِي or هَيْلِي and the former has been adopted.

- §. 17 LIONGO. The Ms. gives, لِيغِ كَمَغِيَا; Hw. reads لِيغِ as a copyist's error for كِيغِ and would render *kiwingu*, a little cloud. [Assuming the word as written in the Ms. not to be an error, it would seem to be derived from *kulia ngoa*, to cry for envy. *Liongo* is possibly a contraction of *kilio ngoa*, a little "cry", (i.e. a pang,) of envy. In either case the elided *ki-* is implied by the pronominal prefix of *ki-kamngiya*.]
- §. 49 AU, in the Ms. وَأُو seems a mistake for وَلَوْ, *walau*, used throughout the poem emphatically as "Otherwise—!"
- §. 61 YEO NYUMBANI HUNGIYA, i.e. "today he (the bridegroom) is entering the house", i.e. the marriage is taking place, the bridegroom is being conducted to the bride's home.
- §. 70 MATEZO YA 'ARUSI, the wedding gaiety and dances.
Dr. Paret comments that in Arabia, wedding guests would not take part in the dancing, as this line would imply: and he points out that this must be an African touch.
- §. 116 KWANGU, in the Ms. كَغ seems to be a mistake for *kwako*, and is so translated.
- §. 152 Line 3. The Ms. gives مِبْرَازِ كَوْتِكْ: which Mb. reads as in the text. [It is just possible that it may be "meparaza kwa udakua," he raised his sword with protest: cf. *paa*, v. and *daka*, v. M.]
- §. 156 NDUYE NA SHEMEJI, Salima's brother and the bridegroom's brother. Cf. §. 125-6.
- §. 158 ? Salima reproaches Miqdad for not backing up Abdallah.

VOCABULARY

(Reference numbers to the stanzas are in the right-hand column.)

- AHAMARI, Ar. أَحْمَرُ 'abmar, red. Adj.(deverbal) from حَمَرٌ 145
- AJILA, Ar. عَجَلٌ *ajal*, haste. 69
- ANUWANI, Ar. عنوان; titulus libri: the address of a letter; used here to mean a distinguishing mark, or style. 16
- ARAHAMANI, Ar. الرَّحْمَانُ; *er-Rahman*, the Compassionate:

one of the names, implying Divine attributes, by which Allah is referred to in the Holy Quran.	1
ARUSI, here means <i>the bridal couple</i> .	76
BABA, lit. <i>father</i> , but used in numerous forms for male relationship. Cf. Kr. M. St. [Also colloquially as a form of address to equals and seniors, and to Europeans as an address of friendly esteem.]	147
BAKE = <i>babake</i> for <i>baba yake</i> , his or her father. Is commonly used before the name of a son or daughter, e.g. <i>Bake Almasi</i> , father of Almasi. Also <i>mamake</i> , mother of.	92
BALUA, Ar. بلوى <i>calamity</i> .	138
BILADI, Ar. بلد, <i>balad</i> , pl. بلاد, <i>bilad</i> , country.	2
BUI, <i>brother, friend</i> . Used in the Northern dialects.	67
CHAKWETEA for <i>cha kuletea</i> . <i>Kitu cha kuletea</i> , a thing to take or bring, a visiting-gift.	11
CHANGA for <i>wachanga</i> , inexperienced.	124
CHUMU = <i>kigumu</i> , hard, harsh; here implying <i>clangour</i> .	128
DHALALA = <i>dbalili</i> , Kr., abject, poor, wretched.	85
DHUKURI, from Ar. ذَكَرَ, <i>dhakara</i> , to remember, call to mind; here meaning <i>mention</i> , or <i>reply</i> .	145
EMEA = <i>lemea</i> , Mb: press forward (along a road) M.	69
ENGEZA, <i>keep awake</i> , (kuwa macho). Mb.	83
FUADI, <i>heart</i> . B. Ar. قواد	80
GHAYA, Ar. غايه <i>the utmost limit</i> .	32
HARUBU, Ar. <i>war</i> ; used here poetically instead of <i>vita</i> .	119
HELEWA = <i>buelewa</i> , is it (still) distinguishable?	163
HITIWA from Ar. <i>ibtiwa</i> , assemble; 4th form of حَوِيَ, <i>bawia</i> .	16
HULIA, Ar. حلي, <i>ornaments of dress</i> .	47
ITILIFU, <i>throw away</i> , from ائلف causative of تلف <i>perish</i> .	23
JALILA, <i>brave</i> , from جليل high, great, strong.	69
KANAMA = <i>kumbe!</i> , behold! B.	46
KATI for <i>katika</i> ; in, during, while, amidst.	2
KATITI, Kiamu for <i>kidogo</i> , small, little. Here used as, <i>the few</i> .	38
KAZENDEA, for <i>nikaziendea</i> , and I went up to them. Mb.	84

MIQDAD and MAYASA	87
KHAIMANI = <i>hemani</i> , in, into, the tent.	89
KINYA, is Kiamu for <i>kimya</i> , silent.	19
KISAKE for <i>kwisha kwake</i> , the ending of it.	1
KITWANA, in the Ms., كِتَان may be read as <i>kitana</i> , <i>kitaana</i> , or <i>kitwana</i> , (<i>w</i> is often elided in written Swahili). Mb., reads <i>kitana</i> . Hw., reads " <i>kitwana</i> , a troublesome oppo- nent, e.g. <i>ni kitwana yeye</i> , he is a troublesome customer". [See also, <i>taa</i> , n. obedience, allegiance, submission. M., and <i>kumtia taani</i> , to subdue one. Kr.]	51
KUIFIA, lit. "to die for one's-self", i.e., to abandon, surrender or give one's-self to death; with the implication that death is imminent and apprehended as inevitable.	43
KUJILALIA, <i>to-sleep-for-one's-self</i> , i.e. to give one's-self up to slumber, to be sound asleep. An applied reflexive form of <i>lala</i> conveying an intensified idea.	86
KUWA = <i>nguvu</i> , strength. Mb.	86
KWA N'NE = <i>kwa nini</i> , why? wherefore?	136
LULUMIZI, mother-of-pearl. Mb.	12
MAHASHUMU, Ar. مهشم <i>mashshum</i> , honoured; a verbal noun from هشم, to honour; [whence, also, <i>heshima</i> , honour.]	9
MARIJALI, Ar. رجال <i>rijal</i> , pl. of رجل <i>rajul</i> , man. Often used in poetry: an instance of an Arabic word with a Bantu plural prefix.	4
MBARAZA = <i>kakutana pamoja</i> , the whole assembly. Mb.	152
MBEE, for <i>mbele</i> , in front, forward ahead, &c.	40
MIDANI, Ar. <i>maidan</i> , the environs of a town.	113
MUI, <i>village, town</i> .	62
MUNIKA, <i>see</i> , repeatedly met with in poetry. cf. Herero, <i>muna</i> . [See also <i>kumunikira</i> , Nyanja, to shade one's eyes at noon to see better. Hk. The verb seems to have the sense of "to look intently" at a distant object.]	129
NABIA, Ar. نبي , <i>wanderer</i> .	43
NANA, <i>lady</i> , used in Lamu instead of the Persian <i>bibi</i> , which, formerly everywhere current as a term of respect, is now, through European misuse, somewhat discredited.	21
NDU = <i>ndugu</i> , brother.	67

- NYONO, *pumzi za mtu akilala*, the breathing of a sleeper. Mb. 75
 [cf. *nong'ona*, to whisper. Probably here used to mean "sighs of distress"]
- PASUA, commonly used in the sense to cut through, or across, 25
 a road, wood, or open country. Hw.
- PEMBEANA, *strive together*: cf. *pemba*, Kr. *pemba*, St. 50
- PETE is an old perfect of *pata*, get, obtain. 24
- POWA, is Kiamu for *pewa*, (in Mombasa, *pawa*), be given to, 54
 presented with.
- RASUWA, Ar. رسول *rasul*, messenger; (the terminal *-a* added 165
 and *l* omitted in accordance with Swahili usage.)
- SAGHALI, Ar. سفل *sagbil*, lean, small. 154
- SAGHIRI, Ar. صغير *sagbir*, small, mean, young. 136
- SAHABA, Ar. صاحب *sabib*, pl. اصحاب *ashab*, companion, 2
 friend.
- SALINENA—*Did I not say?* *Sa-* is an archaic negative past. 21
 Cf. *Salipo*, "I was not there," in an old song.¹ *Sa-* is
 the negative of the *wa* person class singular in Nyanja,
 its simple form being *si*. Hk. Sacleux records a tense
 at Zanzibar, rarely used, and only in the first person
 interrogatively, *silisema?* "Did I not say?"²
- SHABA, Ar., شاب *shab*: a young man from 16 to 30. Seldom used 41
 in Swahili. [The synonym *kijana* seems to be used here
 to mean "one in full vigour", cf. M., with *mmoya* to
 stress a unified "oneness" of youth and virility.]
- SHAFIINA, Ar. شافنا *shafina*, Our Healer. 162
- SHUYUBA, Ar. شيب *shuyub*, pl. of *sha'ib*, white-haired. 98
- SIKILIA is Kiamu for *fikilia*, to arrive at: cf. *simbo* for *fimbo*. 92
- SILI, Ar. stream. From سال *fluxit*. 155
- SITAWA, *flourishing, noble*; cf. *sitawi*, M. 47
- SUGUIKA, cf. M. *yu sugu*, he is callous, obstinate. Here used 122
 in the sense of "to become hard of heart."
- TAHA, Ar. طه A word of uncertain meaning. The title of 166
 the 20th *Sura* of the Quran, and meaning "according
 to most of the earliest commentators, O man." See

¹ Taylor: *African Aphorisms*, London, 1891.

² Père Sacleux: *Dict. francais-swahili*, 1891.

- Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.* pp. 316-7 footnote. The word is used also as an appellation of the Prophet.
- TENDEUNI = *tendegu-ni*, in between the bedstead's legs; or in the space below the bed. 74
- TO-, form of negative future, still used in Lamu [and on the Tanganyika coast.] cf. Kr. 103
- TULUBU, Ar. *طلب* *talaba*, seek. The Swahili form is from the imperfect, *yatlubu*, *يطلب* 103
- UGHARIBU, = *ughaibu*, a distant place, Kr. = *ugeni*. Mb. [here used to mean *yonder*.] 63
- UJAHILIA, Ar. *جهل*, *jabala*, ignorance. *Il jahilia* is the term used by Muslims for "the time of the Ignorance", i.e. ante-Muhammad. [Cf. Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.* p. 39, seqq. footnotes.] 8
- UKHTI, Ar. *أخت*: *ukbt*, sister. But here meaning "niece", in Arabic, *ibnat-l-ukbt*. 94
- UMBU, *sister-of-a-brother*, or *brother-of-a-sister*. Still used in Northern dialects. cf. Nyanja, *mlongo*. Hk. 123
- WA, *they*, pronoun, 3rd person plural: on the analogy of *yu mzuri*, he is (or was) good, &c. 3
- WALI is probably the historic present of *li*, "be", nearly obsolete in modern Swahili. 2
- WANA, *fight together*. Used only in poetry. 50
- WO WATATU, the trio. (?) = *wote watatu*, all three. 141
Cf. Zulu, *bobatatu*, all three: Luganda, *bombi*, both.
[cf. also *Wo wawili*, the couple. These forms seem to imply triality and duality of persons, with unity of *animus*, rather than mere numerical unison alone.]
- ZAKULA NA ZINIWA; foods and drinks. *Ziniwa* is Kiamu for *viniwa* (*vinwa*), plural of *kinwa*, (*kinoa*, Kr.), drink. Kr. revised edition gives only *kinwaji*, a beverage. 25
- ZAWIA = *furaha za harusi*, wedding festivities. Mb. 62
- ZIHI, Ar. *سبه*, *sbine*. 42
- ZINDA, *contract*, = *kaza*, (to fix, to tighten), Kr. Here used in the sense *to overcome*. 52
- ZITE, pl. of *kite*, a sob, a groan. 84

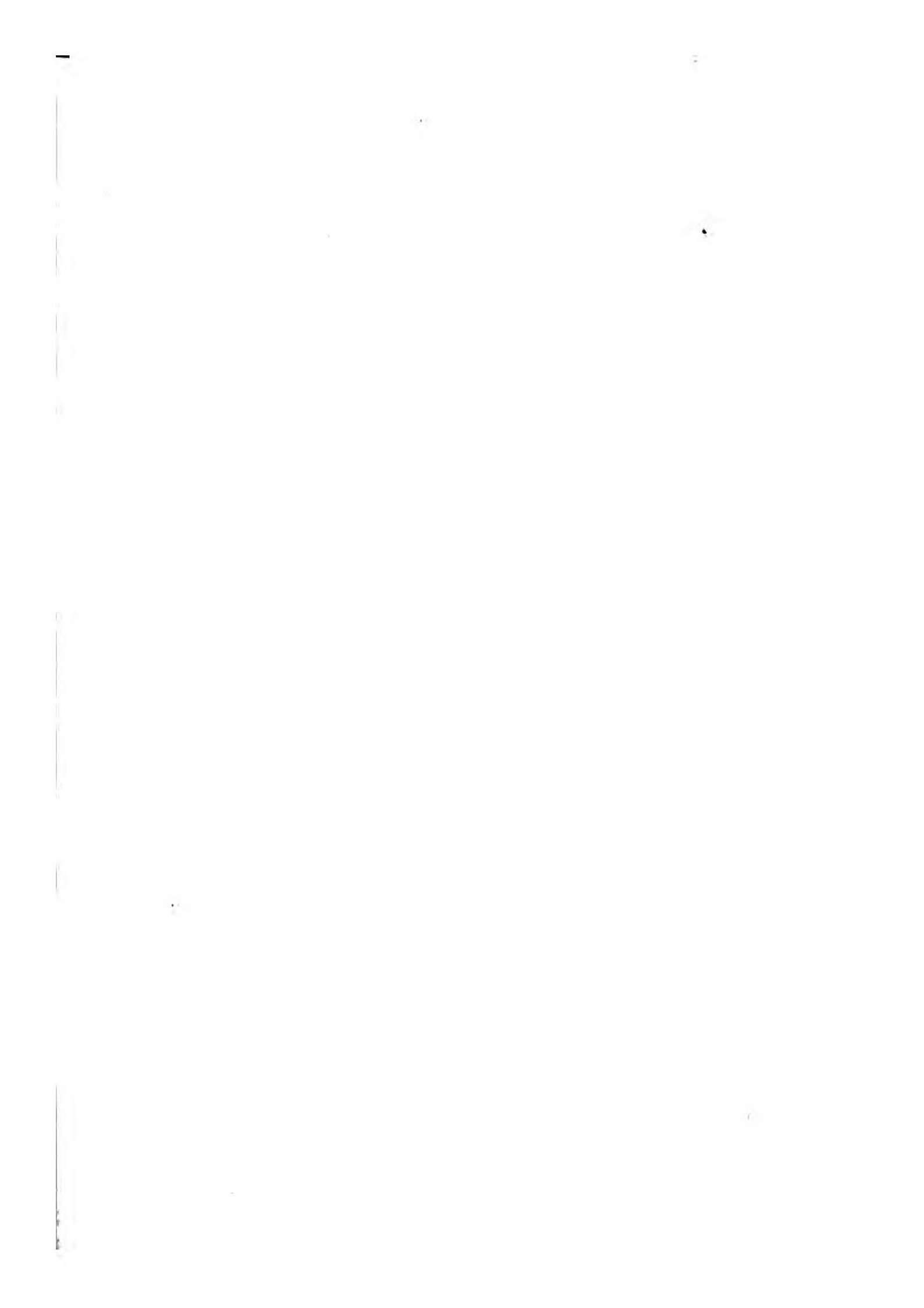


حَدِّيسٍ يَا مِقْدَادَ نَمِيسَ

نَأَادَ كَأَ أَرْحَمَنِ * لَصَلِي نَأَ أَمِينِ * كَسَكِ نِيبِينَ * زَمَانَ يَلِي تَكِيَا
 سِكْمُوِي مَحْمَدِ * صَحَبَ نَمِقْدَادِ * مَكَ نَدِ يِبَالِدِ * وَلَكْتِ كَتْمَبِيَا
 وَكَتِكِ كَتْمَبِيَا * مَفْوَاكُو شُكِيَا * وَكِنِدَ كُرْغِيَا * يَغْنِ وَكَأَاثِيَا
 كَتِكْتِ مَجْبَالِ * وَكَغِيَا مَرَجَالِ * لَمَحَدِّ رَسُولِ * اِلِ فُو كَتْمَبِيَا
 أَكِنِ مَحْمَدِ * تُبَيَّرَ مِقْدَادِ * كَنِ فُوَامَزِيدِ * تَبِي حَدْسِي مِيَا
 مِقْدَادِ أَكِنِينَ * نَكْبِيَا اِبِ بَانَ * أَبِي لَمَزَاوَنَ * أَوْ لَمَزُ سَكِيَا
 مَتَمِ أَكَدُّرِ * أَمَزَايُونَ لَخِيرِ * لِنَصَحِ يُوَزُورِ * نِنِ تَمِ هَسِكِيَا
 مِقْدَادِ كَوْمَبِيَا * زَمَانَ زَوْجَهَلِيَا * مِيسَ أَلِنَبِيَا * كَغِ وَآتِ وَمَكِيَا
 وَوَعْنِ مَحْشَمِ * وَمَزُكِي قَوْمِ * وَمِنَلِكِ كَرَامِ * نِمِ لَمُورِ حِيَا
 كَتِ لَتَكِ اِدِنِ * كِشِ نَدِ كَرَمَنِ * بِنَغِ حَتَّ اِينِ * كَتِ تِي رَجَلِيَا
 أَسِنِدِ كَمَبِيَا * حَالِ يَغِ يَكَلِيَا * سِنِ كِتِ كَتْمَبِيَا * كِسَ وَفِ اَتَلِيَا
 أَكَنْجِبِ مِيَزِ * اَلْفَاءِ لُلْ مِرِ * هَشْتِكِ كَمَفَازِ * نَمَفَاؤِ مِيَا مِيَا

The first twelve stanzas of the poem, shewing
the Swahili-Arabic of the manuscript.





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