

Methali za Kiswahili - Swahili Proverbs

Karibu Mgeni - Welcome Guest

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Albert Scheven dedicates his Swahili proverbs collection
to J.K. Nyerere, President of Tanzania, proverbial scholar and statesman.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: BACKGROUND



This website emerges from an array of contributors over many years, giving evidence to the proverb, [Mkono mmoja haubebi mtoto. “One hand alone cannot carry a baby.”](#)

The proverb collection began with the work of Albert Scheven who published his first collection of Swahili proverbs as *Swahili Proverbs: Nia zikiwa moja, kilicho mbali huja* with University Press of America, 1981. Albert Scheven continued to build on his collection of proverbs through the 1990s, demonstrating his love of words, wisdom, and his interest with the Swahili language. His proverb collection grew to 4860 entries, available under website’s [“Listing” heading](#). His list is more extensive, in fact, as many entries include related proverbs referenced entries.

Added to Albert’s listing of proverbs is cultural information and pedagogical tools for teachers and students. Dr. Peter Otiato Ojiambo brought his talents to these sections – suggesting proverbs that could be taught in the classroom and supplementing these listings with audio materials. He also authored the sections on kangas, providing the cultural context in which proverbs are commonly seen in East African countries.

As background to Albert Scheven’s work, we provide his own description of his work, as follows:

The collection of Swahili proverbs featured on this website had its origin in 1973, when Dr. Victor Uchendu, then director of African studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign saw the need to provide the ever-growing number of Swahili students at the University with an interesting selection of proverbs to enrich their language learning. He asked the three instructors then teaching Swahili to undertake this project: Mohammad I. Abasheikh, Fred Kanali, and myself; and provided a small grant to initiate the work. After a good start, and substantial contributions from all, student pressures forced the first two to withdraw, and I was left to finish what was originally conceived of as a modest undertaking. Eventually it developed to its present format: a comprehensive compilation of all Swahili proverbs found in the published sources of all languages, but directed to those who know English.

As can be seen from the list of sources, there certainly is no dearth of printed proverb collections, and one may well ask why the need for one more when so many already exist.

First, it became clear as soon as I examined more than one source, that there are fascinating differences, in form, interpretation and understanding, and it would be useful to show these versions side by side – which until now had not been done.

Also, some books are out of print (Taylor, for one); other collections have been published in specialized journals or dictionaries which are not readily available to the general public (Sacleux, e.g.). Some have been written in French or German, or entirely in Swahili. Then, even the excellent collection of Farsi is very sparse in its explanations for those whose native tongue is not Swahili.

Proverbs are one of the most precious cultural heritages of a people. In the West there have been times when the popularity of proverbs has risen – and fallen. For example, in Britain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, proverbs were so much in vogue that they were used to excess. And following this period, there was a time when the use of proverbs was considered vulgar and showing a lack of originality in thinking and expression.

Whatever the popularity of proverbs in society, it must be remembered that there is a substantial difference between the knowledge of proverbs and their use in speech. A person may be loath to utter a proverb in public, but his conduct must show that he understands it in order to follow its wisdom: “Who does not heed proverbs will not avoid mistakes.” (Turkish)

In many African societies proverbs were the main source of instruction for children and youth. They contained guidelines and principles of behavior towards God, ancestors, neighbors, and themselves. This education is still actively conducted in schools, where proverbs are studied for their linguistic and social importance. African authors almost go out of their way to use proverbs in their writings. A guide to health in Zaire includes a short section of Yombe and other proverbs related to health and its protection. John C. Messenger explains the elaborate usage of proverbs in the judicial system of the Anang (Southern Nigeria):

During a case in which a chronic thief was accused of robbery, the plaintiff aroused considerable antagonism toward the defendant early in the trial by employing the following proverb: “If a dog plucks palm fruits from a cluster, he does not fear a porcupine.” A cluster from the oil palm tree contains numerous sharp needles that make handling it extremely hazardous, therefore a dog known to pick palm fruits would be unafraid to touch a porcupine. The maxim implies that the accused is the logical suspect since he was a known thief and lived close to the person who was robbed, and many in the audience regarded the trial a mere formality. His guilt came to appear doubtful, however, in the light of evidence produced during the proceedings, and just before the Ekpe Ikpe (justices) were to retire in presented an adage that was instrumental in gaining his acquittal: “A single partridge flying through the bush leaves no path.” Partridges usually travel close to the ground in coveys and can be followed by the trail of bent and broken grass they leave behind. In using this proverb the accused likened himself to a single bird without sympathizers to lend him support, and called upon the tribunal to disregard the sentiments of those in attendance and to overlook his past misdemeanors and judge the case as objectively as possible.

And so, even today, proverbs remain a valuable means of contributing to a person's development within a particular community.

At the same time, in Tanzania (and other East African countries), with its hundred different languages, the danger of losing this cultural heritage has been especially recognized. While more and more Tanzanians are being educated in, and using, Swahili, some fear that many of the other languages may disappear. There have been some recent attempts to address this situation, particularly by translating into Swahili proverbs from a number of ethnic groups (Chagga, Kerewe, Meru, Pare, Gogo, Haya, Ganda, Gikuyu, Kwere, Fipa, Nyakyusa, Bena, Nguu, Sambia, Zigua, Ha, Sukuma, Iraqw, Masai). These publications have the admirable aim of preserving the collective wisdom of the several peoples for the whole of the nation. I sincerely hope that this is only the beginning of a major effort to collect and translate the thousands of proverbs very much alive among the different peoples of East Africa, before it is too late.

Finally, there is the objection that "Proverbial wisdom is exactly the same all over the world, differing only in rendering. Men are all made of the same paste." Thus:

Too many cooks spoil the broth. (Japanese)

Two captains sink the ship. (Persian)

Two midwives will deliver a baby with a crooked head. (Iranian)

With seven nurses, the child goes blind. (Russian)

With too many roosters crowing the sun never comes up. (Italian)

However, there remains an interesting difference in interpretation, which rests with the specific situation as well as the particular culture. For example:

[A cow is not oppressed by its hump.](#)

Interpretations:

The rich do not feel their wealth as a burden. (Giryama)

A man won't admit a failure of his own idea. (Zulu)

A man is capable of bearing his own troubles. (Xhosa)

A man is not borne down by his own responsibilities – family, money, or troubles. (Thonga)

This point is made very clear by Carolyn Anne Parker Duck:

... if one interprets a proverb that occurs cross-culturally, he may be misled... Consider for example the proverb... Iwapo nia, kuna njia, "Where there is a will, there is a way." – which also occurs in English. To assume that the proverb means the same in both cultures is frivolous... The difference between the two proverbs – the English and the Swahili (for there

are two proverbs here even though the texts may be the same in English) – is clarified by the cultural contexts. An American uses the proverb positively, to encourage anyone who seeks a goal while he is seeking it. A Swahili, on the other hand, would use the proverb after the fact to criticize a person's failure to accomplish some goal. The cultural meaning of the Swahili proverb, then, is that one fails to do something only because he does not want to: where there is a will, there is a way; where there is no will, there is no way.

What is a proverb? Many have tried to define proverbs and found it an impossible task. A familiar definition, "a common and pithy expression which embodies some moral precept or admitted truth," forced many paroemiographers to change the title of their books. More important than the linguists' definition is to see what a proverb is in the eyes of the common man. A few examples:

- A proverb is the horse of conversation. (Yoruba)
- Proverbs are the daughters of experience (Sierra Leone)
- A wise man who knows proverbs reconciles difficulties. (Yoruba)
- A proverb is the voice of God. (Spanish, Latin, Japanese)
- A proverb is to speech what salt is to food. (Arabic)
- A proverb is an ornament to language. (Persian)
- The proverb is the leaf they use to eat the word. (Ibo)
- Proverbs are the affairs of the nation. (Kongo)
- The wit of one man, the wisdom of many (English)

The more this work proceeded, the more I wanted others to enjoy this tremendous source of wisdom and information as much as I. Thus, I have given this book the subtitle "[Nia zikiwa moja, kilicho mbali huja;](#)" [When minds are one, what is far comes near.](#)

The meaning is that when people work together, difficult things become possible. But I also see its meaning extended to: Whenever people care to know about others, even far away people come close in understanding and appreciation, love and cooperation.

I sincerely hope that this new collection of proverbs will be instrumental, in some slight way, in helping towards understanding the beautiful people of East Africa, and indeed of all of Africa.

Finally, knowing all too well the many imperfections the reader will find in these pages, I welcome any criticisms and references to different versions, variations, parodies, and "new" proverbs.

-Albert Scheven

SWAHILI PROVERBS: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



This proverb collection began with the work of Albert Scheven who published his first collection of Swahili proverbs as *Swahili Proverbs: Nia zikiwa moja, kilicho mbali huja* with University Press of America, 1981. When he published this collection, he included the following acknowledgements:

The African Studies Program of the University of Illinois has borne all production costs associated with this volume. Therefore, I am particularly indebted to Dr. Victor Uchendu, who initiated this support, and to Professor C. C. Stewart, who continued it and saw the book to its completion. I am grateful for the cooperation of Fred Kanali and Mahammad Abasheikh, both graduate students at the University of Illinois, and residents of East Africa.

Notwithstanding his heavy load of doctoral studies in linguistics, Abasheikh was always ready to help me in solving difficulties I encountered. I received much help from Maryam Marshad, a native of Lamu, who fortunately was in Urbana during much of the early work on this collection. She saw all the proverbs and gave precious advice on their use, variations, etc. Her initials, MM, appear as a source on almost every page. Hassan Marshad also generously enlightened many enigmas. Professor Eyamba Bokamba of the Department of Linguistics, University of Illinois, likewise offered assistance throughout. My wife Yvette constantly discovered new sources of proverbs, and compiled the bibliography. A very special thank you to Cleota Cord, who did the photoperfect typing from a not always perfect copy. Finally, I thank my Swahili students, who not only were keen to receive any and all proverbs, but returned them to me knowingly and playfully.

Urbana, Illinois

May, 1981

Albert Scheven continued to build on his collection of proverbs through the 1990s, demonstrating his love of words, wisdoms, and his engagement with the Swahili language. His proverb collection grew to 4860 entries, available under website's "[Listing](#)" heading. His list is more extensive, in fact, as many entries include related proverbs referenced entries.

In expanding the collection, Yvette Scheven provided on-going bibliographic expertise and editorial support. She also brought to the project her insights as an African studies bibliographer and University of Illinois professor emerita of library administration. She and Albert discussed ultimately seeing the collection online for the widest use possible. After Albert passed away in 2000, she discussed seeing the collection being put online with staff at the Center for African Studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Yvette continued to provide guidance and vision in seeing Albert's proverb collection to its current

form. Approaching the tenth anniversary since Albert's passing, Yvette noted her pleasure in seeing his collection online.

In compiling this listing and this website and building further on the work of Albert Scheven, the work of several people has been fundamental. Several directors at the Center for African Studies provided advice and needed financial support for the building of the website, including Prof. Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, Prof. Jean M. Allman, and Prof. Merle L. Bowen. Dr. Peter Otiato Ojiambo, Department of Linguistics, played a key role developing additional pedagogical content to complement Albert Scheven's listing. His wealth of experience as an educator led to the inclusion of a subset of proverbs that teachers might use as well as audio materials that learners can benefit from. He also provided needed cultural context to the use of proverbs on kangas and in East African society.

Peter Muhati, Yaa Oforiwa Cuguano, Tage Biswalo and Eunhyun Kim played essential roles in building the website and sharing their ideas. Peter processed the listings that Albert and Yvette Scheven had compiled. Yaa made substantial contributions, enabling the first incarnation of this website and providing audio files and samples of kangas. Eunhyun handled much of the troubleshooting and formatting to get Albert's proverb collection online. As dedicated students and graduate assistants with the Center for African Studies, their work is much appreciated.

This website was designed by [Studio 2D](#) in Champaign, Illinois.

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Jamie McGowan

Associate Director, Programming, Outreach and Administration

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: ARRANGEMENT



This collection is not arranged in any particular order. We provide some easy to remember proverbs for beginning Swahili learners. As the site continues to grow, we will incorporate Swahili culture videos and Swahili learning lesson plans.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Abuse

1. **Achekaye kilema hata kwao kipo.** [SAM](#) 1.2; [MEM](#) 3.

One who laughs at a cripple has a family defect too. A warning to those who laugh at the deformity of another, for they will be punished in the same way. Cf. 17, 54, 68.

2. **Afadhali lawama ya wazi.** [NGU](#).

An open reproach is best. Lawama: reproach, charge, blame, reproof, guilt.

3. **Afanyae mzaha na watu humlazimu awe na saburi.** [MA](#) 19.

People who tease others must have patience for when they'll be teased in turn.

4. **Ajabu ya kondoo kucheka kioo.** [SM](#).

How amazing that a sheep mocks its image in a mirror [not knowing that it laughs at its own image]. This is said of someone who is making fun of another, while having the same imperfection or making the same mistake.

5. **Ajabu ya ngamia kuchekanundu ya ng'ombe.** [SM](#).

How amazing that a camel derides the cow for its hump. The camel has a bigger hump. Cf. 101, 3953, 3990.

6. **Akulengaye kisu hashindwi kuchoma.** [NGU](#).

The one who points a knife at you can stab you.

7. **Akutadiye nawe mtadi.** [KS](#) tadi.

Do the same to someone who arrogantly insults you.

8. **AkutuKANaye hakuchagulii tusi.** [SWHL](#) sept. 1966.

The one who insults you does not choose insults. Not mincing words and really trying to hurt you.

Atakao kukutukana hakoi matango. [MM](#).

One who wants to insult you does not lack proclamation. That person will not keep silent and there are always eager listeners. Matango for matangazo: proclamation.

9. **Akuumizaye ni mtu akujuaye.** [NGU](#).

The person who hurts you is the person who knows you.

10. **Amefurahi, meno hayaumi mkate.** [T](#) 20.

That one is happy, that person's teeth don't bite the bread. This is said when somebody in a good mood does not respond to an insult.

11. **Amekuja kwa meno ya juu.** [KS](#) jino.

That person came with upper teeth. With brute force.

12. **Atupaye tope hujichafua naye.** [EM](#) 19.30.

Those who throw mud get soiled as well.

Atupaye tope humrukia. [KA](#).

If you throw mud it will jump back to you. That abused person will get back at you.

13. **Baada ya kisa mkasa: baada ya chanzo kitendo.** [F](#) 5.2; [H](#) 18; [B](#) 3.57; [KA](#); [AL](#) 1446.

After a story, a happening: after a beginning, the action. "tit for tat" - [H](#). Every happening has a beginning - [KA](#). A counterattack is quick and precise - [AL](#). This proverb is used when people think that something happened without a cause. Cf. 3444.

14. **Baada ya kovu na jeraha ndani.** [JKP](#).

Even after it has been covered by scar tissue, the wound still hurts inside. "An insult is not easy to forget" - [JKP](#).

15. Biashara haigombi. [B](#) 3.50; [F6.7](#); [FSM](#) 25; [H](#) 22; [P](#) 230.

Trade does not quarrel. A businessman is careful in the choice of his words in order not to alienate his customers, and to attract them. This expression is used by shopkeepers when customers expostulate about the price of wares - [H](#). Cf. 136.

16. Bila mtu wa pili ugomvi hauanzi. [EM](#) 26.12.

Without a second person a quarrel cannot start.

17. Cheka kilema, uzae kilema. [EM](#) 35.9.

Laugh at a deformed person and you will bear a deformed child. A warning to stop people from laughing at others, and to show sympathy instead.

18. Cheka maiti na maiti itakucheka. [AL](#) 1181.

Mock a corpse and the corpse [in time] will laugh at you.

19. Chokoa chokoa yatia meno ubovu. [NGU](#).

All that picking makes bad teeth. A person who annoys you on purpose makes you angry [bad teeth].

20. Chungu huliita birika "mweusi". [NGU](#).

The stone pot calls the aluminum pot "black." English proverb: "the kettle calls the pot black."

21. Dhoruba ilipo, shwari ipo. [EM](#) 48.16.

Where there was a storm, there is calm. Where there is disturbance, there can be reconciliation followed by calm - [EM](#).

22. Dhoruba katika kikombe cha chai. [MEM](#) 173.

Tempest in a tea cup. (English import.) To make much of little things. About people who are afraid about little things - [MEM](#).

23. Haifai kumtukana sungura miguu mikubwa na tembo yupo palepale. [AL](#) 1369.

Don't laugh at the rabbit's big feet while the elephant is present.

24. Hamcheki mwenye mti mwenye embe. [JKP](#).

The owner of the [mango] tree must not make fun of the one who has one mango. "the rich must behave civilly towards the poor" - [JKP](#).

25. Hekaheka nyuma vita mbele. [FSM](#) 46.

After much shouting there will be a fight. Hekaheka: confusion, much noise, also shouts of encouragement, such as in a game - [J](#).

26. Hujavuka mto, simtukane mamba, al tukana.

You haven't crossed the river, so don't insult the crocodile. Cf. 213, 217.

27. Iwapo hukutana, ifanye hukusikia. [JKP](#).

If people abuse you, pretend you did not hear it.

28. Jahazi chombo kikuu hakistahimili (or hakihimili) kubisha. [JKP](#).

An old sail boat does not tolerate tacking. "An old person does not suffer being moved out or being maneuvered around" - [JKP](#). Cf. 526.

29. Jani kavu mtini linalilaumu lililo chini kwa kelele. [EM](#) J3.

A dry leaf on the tree blames the leaf on the ground for noise. It is easy to see other people's faults.

30. Jirani ndiye ndugu, usimkashifu hata kidogo. [REK](#).

A neighbor is a relative, don't slander him/her even a little. Kashifu: to slander, reveal evil.

31. Jogoo kasema usiku umekucha anikanyagae kakusudia. [FSM](#) 55.

The rooster said the day is breaking, so who steps on me does it on purpose. The fowl staying in the same house might be trod upon by a person going out early. A person doing harm often blames it on the situation. The reply to such an excuse would be this proverb.

32. Jungu humchoma mpishi na mlaji. [EM](#) j22.

A huge pot burns the cook and the eater. It becomes very hot and difficult to handle. This means that a quarrel often harms the initiator as well as the receiver.

33. Kaa alimcheka mtoto wake mwendo. [AL](#) 526.

The crab laughs at the way its young one walks.

33a. Kaa hutokotwa na maji yakwe. [SPK](#).

A crab is boiled in its own water. A defenseless person will be cruelly treated - [SPK](#).

34. Kakalia kitundu nirushe twende. [FSM](#) 62.

I am sitting in a little nest; make me fly away. This may be said by a woman who has deteriorating marriage, but is unable to leave and so is waiting for the final straw to set her free.

35. Kalimba hula samaki wadogo. [AL](#) 1609.

The big kalimba fish eats the small ones. Little people are the victims of big people.
Instead of kalimba one could use mbota (Nile perch) or chewa (rock cod) or nguru (king fish).

36. Kibuzi akafa vigongo. [AL](#) 1615; [AL](#) fa.

The kid (young goat) died from blows with a stick. It became the laughing stock, the scapegoat.

37. Kidonda kimerudi penye kovu. [NGU](#).

The wound returns to the scab. It remains in the memory. The insult is not forgotten and whatever you do it comes back to you. Cf. 50, 2021, 4284.

38. Kila dhihaka na mazowea. [NGU](#).

Every joke (insult) has its own familiarity.

39. Kila fitina hakosi kutumika. [NGU](#).

Every quarrel is used again.

40. Kila mcheka kilema naye humsikilia. [JKP](#).

Whoever mocks a lame [person], one day it will happen to him. Sikilia: listen to (for, with, at). Cf.1,17, 68.

40a. Kila mwenye choo huenda jaani. [SPK](#).

Everyone who has a need goes to the rubbish heap. All people slander. [The rubbish heap was and is also the latrine, in the middle of a group of houses, to be used collectively] - [SPK](#).

41. Kilema hamcheki mwenziwe. [NGU](#).

A cripple does not mock a companion.

42. Kilichoniuma jana nikaona uchunguwe hakinitambai tena. [MA](#) 184.

That which bit me yesterday and hurt me, does not crawl over me a second time.
I'll see to that; I'll be careful not to expose myself to insults again.

43. Kima waliotahiriwa hawatawalani. [REK](#).

Monkeys that have been circumcised [ceremonially cleansed] will not eat you.

44. Kipofu simcheke, si makosa yake. [MA](#) 186.

Don't laugh at a blind person, it is not that person's fault.

45. Kisiki unkwaze nipate sababu. [KB](#) III.

Tree stump, make me stumble, so that I have a motive. One does not act without reason. If one wants to pick on someone there generally is an aversion or a quarrel.

Kakalia kisiki nikwae. [FSM](#) 63.

I am sitting on a tree stump so that I may stumble. Said of a woman who aggravates the life of her husband by accusing him of everything wrong. Cf. 962, 2202, 2837.

46. Kitumbua changu sikitie mchanga. [JKP](#).

Don't put sand in my cake. "Do not spoil my sport, do not rob my story" - [JKP](#).

47. Kitushi ni pumba ya uwongo: ukinipa la kweli takupa la uwongo. [T](#) 159.

Calling names [lit., abuse] is a handful of mud: if you give me a true [deserved] name, I will give you a false one - [T](#). If you throw dirt at a person, some is sure to stick - [T](#).

The key word is uwongo. The first, probably with a long or open O, stands for udongo (mud); the second means a lie, an untruth - [T](#).

48. Kobe alikimbia kwa kuchekwa mwendo wake. [AL](#) 1182.

The tortoise fled because they laughed at its gait. A wise person keeps silent when ridiculed.

49. Kucheka-cheka, kutatoweka. [RSP](#) 117.

Laughing, laughing will die away. People who always laugh at others will get their due. Cf. 92.

50. Kucheka kovu, asiyefikwa na jaraha.. [B](#) 4.68; [F](#) 11.20; [KS](#) kovu.

A person who laughs at a scar has not received a wound. Laughing at peoples' misfortune shows ignorance.

Adhihakaye kovu hajaona jaraha. [SAM](#) 1.3; [MS](#) 178.

One who laughs at a scar has not yet seen a wound. Cf. 2021.

51. Kuchuachua, kuchua si kwema: mchomwa mwiba hawi mtembezi. [T](#) 200; [AL](#) 1090.

Quarreling all the time, quarreling is not good; a person with a thorn [in the foot] will not be a walker [traveler]. It is not good to provoke someone all the time - [AL](#). Cf. 2013.

52. Kulia kwa samaki, machozi (yake) huenda na maji. [AL](#) 1962.

The tears of the fish are carried away by the water. Suffering of the poor is not considered important.

53. Kunguni asema chawa anauma zaidi. [NGU](#).

The bedbug says the louse's bite is more painful. "The kettle calls the pot burnt black." Cf. 20.

54. Kutoboa-toboa ndiko kujitoboa mwenyewe. [NS](#) 23.

By continual stabbing one stabs oneself. Always insulting people and mocking them, destroys oneself.

Kuchokoachokoa ndiko kujichokoa mwenyewe. [FSM](#) 34.

By constant biting the teeth start hurting.

55. Kuwa mbali kuliana, kuwa karibu magombano. [KB](#) 134; [AL](#) 795.

There is weeping when separated, there is quarreling when together. Said of friends or relatives who always quarrel when together. Cf. 99, 103.

55a. Kwa wakaha wake nyani hufunguliwa ya ndani. [SPK](#).

By means of insolence a person of low birth (lit. baboon) succeeds in having access to the inner rooms (lit., for that person the inner doors (milango) are opened).

56. Kwetu dia hailali, si kondo. [T](#) 214.

In our house revenge sleeps not, no doubt about that. Dialect: ransom, fine for murder - J. Si kondo or bila shaka: without doubt.

57. Laana halifi. [NGU](#).

A curse does not die.

58. Lahaula, yamekufika. [NGU](#).

A blasphemy, and it has come to you already. "Kila lahaula hufuatwa na adhabu ya Mungu," every blasphemy is followed by God's punishment. Lahaula: blasphemy; as an expletive: Well I never; God forbid. An abbreviation for "There is no power nor strength but in God" - [J](#).

59. Élanivuwaza kama shazi jicho la ndugu. [T](#) 216; [Sacl](#) 1008.

It cuts me like an oyster shell: the [envious] eye of a brother. The oyster shell cuts the skin [superficially] and hurts: the evil eye of a relative also inflicts pain. This is said about family vendettas.

60. Lao huwinda pazima ili kupatia pengo. [Sacl](#) 742, 1024.

Their [occupation] is to scrutinize a sound place in order to discover a flaw.

This is said of people who pick a petty quarrel with others.

61. Lekeza kidole, uwashe ugomvi. [JKP](#).

Point a finger, start a quarrel. Lekeza, elekeza: show, point.

62. Loliondo huvia kimelea kikistawi. [EM](#) 110.

A loliondo tree withers if a parasite thrives on it. "A loliondo tree is very strong, but a parasite sucks the energy of the tree and withers it. Thus a rich person may be destroyed by parasites" - [EM](#).

63. Masengenyu bila msingi huishia hewani. [REK](#).

Slander without foundation ends up in the sky.

63a. Matukano ni pumba za udongo. [SPK](#).

Words of abuse are like lumps of clay. Easy to find and to throw.

Matushi ni pumba ya uwongo, halikai neno la uongo. [SPK](#).

Words of abuse are [like throwing] a handful of mud. A word of slander does not stay (no more than mud stays on the face). A pun on uwongo, clay and uongo, lie - [SPK](#).

64. Mazoea huleta dharau. [NESTOR](#) p.43.

Familiarity breeds contempt.

65. Mbananga chake hana kondo. [T](#) 639a.

If you spoil what is your own you have no quarrel. Bananga, haribu: to spoil - [Sacl](#).

66. Mbughudi cha nje hupata cha ndani. [TAA](#) 19.

A tale bearer who reports bad things outside, will get it inside. If you slander people, it will come back to you. Bughudha: abhorrence, hatred, slander.

67. Mchawi huloga kwa nduguye na kwake kuko shwari. [REK](#).

A wizard puts a spell on his brother, but his own place is peaceful.

68. Mcheka kilema hafi bila kumfika. [F](#) 24.34.

Mcheka kilema hafi hakijamfika. [MS](#) 44y.1; [MS](#) 108.

A person who laughs at a cripple will not die without becoming one. Cf. 1,17.

69. Mchezaji akikosea hulaumu mpiga ngoma. [EM](#) m10.

A bad dancer blames the drummer. The lesson is that there are people who do not accept their mistakes; instead, they attribute their mistakes to others - [EM](#). Cf. 4651.

70. Mchezea zuri, baya humfika. [F](#) 24.38; [AL](#) 1901.

One who ridicules the good will be overtaken by evil. A person who laughs at good works, will fall upon bad times - [A](#).

71. Mdharau biu hubiuka yeye. [F](#) 24.47.

One who ridicules a deformed person becomes deformed. Biu and biuka from umbua: deform, disfigure. Cf. 68.

72. Mdigo mkanye akirudi, usimkanye aendapo mtagombana na safari. [REK](#).

Rebuke a Mdigo when he comes back, don't rebuke him when he goes: you'll quarrel with each other the whole journey. Mdigo: a person from Digo country.

73. Mganga wa karibu usimtukane. [REK](#).

Don't insult your neighbor doctor. You might need a doctor. Cf.83, 84, 1580.

74. Mguu mmoja ukijikwaa, wa pili hucheka. [NGU](#).

If one foot stumbles, the other laughs.

75. Mheshimiwa hakosi. [EM](#) m15.

An honorable person does not err. If that person errs, the blame is put on someone else, so that person's prestige is not lowered.

76. Mhini na mhiniwa njia yao moja. [KA](#).

The teaser and the one who is teased are in the same way. None profits, both are losers.

Hini: refuse to give in. Mhini: teaser, oppressor, tyrant.

77. Miiba njiani wewe mwenye unaikanyaga. [KB](#) 163; [AL](#) 643.

It is you yourself who stepped on the thorns which are on the road. Don't accuse others of your faults and mistakes - KB. One who commits blunders must blame oneself - [AL](#). Cf. 66.

78. Mkeka ukaliwao na kila mtu. [WIKON](#) 236.

A mat on which everybody sits. Insult for a prostitute. Cf. 4594.

79. Mkono wenye kilema hauachi matata. [NGU](#).

A deformed arm gives constant trouble. So does a bad person.

80. Mkubwa akikosa amekosa, mnyonge akikosa huadhibiwa. [REK](#).

When an important person makes a mistake, well so be it, but if a poor person makes a mistake that person is punished. Mnyonge: a humble, abject, low, debased person.

81. Mkwepa ugomvi huota fimbo. [REK](#).

One who avoids a fight will sprout stick marks on the body. Some quarrels cannot be avoided, stand for your rights.

82. Mmeza ung'ongo kajiono. [T](#) 286; [SACL](#) 574; [JKP](#).

One who swallows a strip of raffia is aware of it. Even if receiving an affront calmly, that person nevertheless feels it. Ung'ongo: the hard fiber of a palm leaf, used in mat making.

Kajiono for akajiona (a play on the sound?), unless kajiono here is short for kajiona-to: and he saw himself well. The suffix to denotes good quality, well done - [T](#). "Palm frond fibers are very tough. Only elephants can swallow them. If someone undertakes a big business, he knows that he can do it" - [JKP](#). Cf. 3932.

83. Msambe ndisi wajinga, mtutumao kizungu. [SPK](#).

Do not say we are stupid, you who employ us in foreign fashion. Arabs and Europeans have employed Africans and often called them ignorant, but it is the employers who are ignorant of good manners - [SPK](#).

84. Msitukane wakunga na uzazi ungalipo. [MS](#) 45.25; [F](#) 30.106; [F](#) 49.42; [H](#) 73; [NGU](#).

Do not abuse midwives while there is a delivery going on. Do not insult people who might be of use to you one day. Msitukane as well as usitukane (plural and singular are used.)

Msitukane wakunga na uzazi haujaisha. [JK](#) 125.

Usimtukane mkunga hali (or ungali) waendelea kuzaa. [NGU](#).

Don't insult the midwives when the delivery is not yet finished.

85. Mtenda husahau, mtendwa hasahau. [NGU](#).

Mtenda husahau, siye mtendwa. [NGU](#).

The one who inflicts forgets, the one to whom it is done does not forget. Cf. 1885.

85a. Mti upijwao mawe ni mti wenye matunda. [SPK](#).

The tree that people throw stones at is the tree that bears fruit.

86. Mti usicheke gogo. [AL](#) 1177.

A tree shouldn't laugh at the fallen tree trunk.

87. Mwana-mongwe ali kwao na mchanga hangelile. [A](#) 283; [SAM](#) 18.38; [T](#) 364.

If the noble son had stayed home, he would not have eaten sand. He would not have been abused and humiliated. "Let not the cobbler go beyond his last."

Hangelile for hangalikula, and ali for yu, attest the antiquity of this proverb - [A](#).

88. Mwapiza la nje, hupata la ndani. [F](#) 34.152; [KA](#).

Apizao la nje hupata la ndani. MM.

One who curses outside gets it inside. One who curses about something not really his concern, will bring it home to himself - F.

Someone who wishes sickness upon another may fall sick himself - [MM](#).

89. Mwenye kufanya mchuzi, kiungo ni malimau. [T](#) 384.

In making the gravy, the seasoning is lemons. Lemons and limes are the best ingredients to give taste to the gravy; do not try to improve your sauce by using fancy things. Don't despise those you cannot do without. "Don't quarrel with your bread and butter" - [T](#).

90. Mwenyezi mungu atakushinda kama shinda la ufuta. [SACL](#) 839.

Almighty God will reduce you as the leftovers of simsim. (A curse.)

Shinda: the dregs of the sesame seeds after oil has been extracted from them.

91. Mzaha kwa mwanaume si mara mbili, ikawa ni mara mbili, mara tatu utakamatwa ndevu. [AL](#) 1167.

A person does not try a joke twice and if by chance it happens twice, the third time someone will grasp your beard. Cf. 92, 93.

92. Mzaha, mzaha, hutumbuka usaha. [F](#) 37.177.

Mizaha mizaha, hutoka usaha. [RSP](#) 5.

Joke, joke, discharges pus. Do not dismiss even a small scratch as if it were only a joke; it may go bad. Another probable meaning is: too much teasing causes arguments.

Mzaha mzaha huleta vita. [AL](#) mzaha.

Too much teasing brings fighting. Cf. 49.

93. Mzaha unaleta ugomvi: ugomvi wapoteza maneno. [AL](#) 1166; [KB](#) 226.

Jesting brings forth quarrels; quarrels deprive control over words. Cf. 92, 113.

94. Mzingire mwana-mbiji. [T](#) 399.

Turn the sailor to - [T](#). A double entendre, meaning either "Turn the tables upon him," or "Bind him with his hands behind his back" - [T](#).

The meaning of mwana-mbiji is not clear: An evil-disposed sailor? - [T](#). A sailor - [SACL](#). Cf. 3168.

95. Mzizi wa fitina ushakatika. [JKP](#).

The root of discord is cut. "Said when a quarrel is over" - [JKP](#).

Mzizi watoka shinani. [SPK](#).

The root comes out of the stem.

96. Na kutumiana nguvu, lema litakuwa ovu. [JKP](#).

By using violence against each other, a good thing [e.g., a marriage] will become evil.

Lema = jema: a good thing.

97. Na likukerekete! [or] na likuchome! [T](#) 402; [J](#); [KB](#) kereketa.

Let that irritate you! [or] Let that stick in you! Exclamations after a strong statement: May that stick in your gizzard, you cannot give an answer to that - J. Put that in your pipe and smoke it - [T](#).

Likukerekete [kukurika]: to be distressed, anxious. The li- refers to neno: word.

98. Ndugu wakigombana (or wakiteta), chukua jembe ukalime; wakipatana chukua kapu ukavune. [F](#) 39; [FSM](#) 169; [KS](#) patana; [MARA](#) 3; [Mulika](#) p.10.

When brothers quarrel, take a hoe and cultivate; when they make up, take a basket and harvest.

It means not to interfere when brothers quarrel, "but also that any quarrel is a loss to society and when they make it up again it is a gain" - [MM](#).

99. Nilimlilia hajaja, akisha kuja humchukiza. [MP](#) 83.14.

I cried for him when he had not yet come; when he came I hated him. When one is far apart the faults and differences seem small, but

when united, disputes reappear at once. Cf. 103.

100. Nungu kipita huacha miiba. [JKP](#).

When the porcupine passes, it leaves its prickles behind. "A prickly character causes irritation and quarreling" - [JKP](#).
Kipita, akipita: if it passes.

101. Nyani wanachekana ngoko. [AL](#) 525; [KS](#) ngoko.

Monkeys make fun of each other's red behind. Without seeing their own.
Ngoko: the very hard red spot, like red meat, on their behind. Also called mando, bato nyekundu.

Nyani acheka [hucheka] mando la mwenziwe. [NGU](#).

The baboon mocks the posterior of his companion.

102. Nyigu haumi bure, ila mtu anamchokoza. [AL](#) 479.

A hornet does not sting, except when it is made angry.

103. Nyoko nyoko kuonana, kuwa mbali kuliana. [PM](#) 84.

Together: mutual insults; far apart: crying for one another. When together they insult each other and when they are apart they cry for each other. This is said when a partner is sorry for a separation after a dispute. Cf. 99.

104. Nyoko! Nyoko! Ni shiba ya kuonana. [KS](#),nyoko ; [T](#) 442; [SACL](#) 699.

Abuses are the result of seeing one another too often.
Nyoko: a sexual insult. Cf. 915, 2224.

105. Nyumba ya wavuvi. [V](#) nyumba; [T](#) 443a.

A house of fishermen. A household with lots of quarrels and fighting - [V](#).
A house full of noise. When children are too noisy, a parent will say: Hii si nyumba ya wavuvi: this is not a house of fishermen - [T](#).

106. Osha uso ndipo ua wenje. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

Wash your face then come outside. If you have washed your face, you can laugh at the person who hasn't.
Ua wenje = utoke nje: come outside. Cf. 5.
MARA quotes a poem of Ahmed Nassir Juma Bhalo:

Shika n'nakuusia, ila za wendo silumbe
Kwani ukizingatia, hakuna safi kiumbe
Ajabu ndawe ngamia, kuteka nundu ya ng'ombe.
Please, I pray don't question the faults of your companion.
Because, bearing in mind, there is no faultless creature
It would be amazing a camel laughing at the cow's hump.

106a. Pita na zako. [SPK](#).

Go along with your things. Mind your own business - [SPK](#).

107. Salala huvunja jiwe: kefa mwanadamu? [SACL](#) 339; 791; [AL](#) 1370.

A curse breaks a stone; how would it not break a human being?
Salala, [salale]: a curse; exclamation of amazement: "May it not please God."

108. Samaha ni rahisi, mwerevu hutafuta sababu. [REK](#).

If forgiveness comes easy, a clever person asks why?

109. Shuka ya maskini ndiyo itandiwayo dagaa. [TAA](#) 22.

The dagaa will be spread out upon the loincloth of the poor. If anything bad happens, the poor and helpless are blamed. Dagaa: very tiny fish, sardines.

110. Si vema, kucheka kilema. [RSP](#) 143; [V](#) cheka.

It is not nice to laugh at a cripple. Cf. 68.

111. Siwe sababu ya bangu, mgomvi hapendi mungu. [JKP](#).

Do not be the cause of fighting, the brawler does not love God.
Siwe = usiwe or msiwe. Bangu, vita: war, fighting.

112. Tupa tupa tope jingi, baadhi litampata. [EM](#) t24.

If you throw plenty of mud, some of it will stick. Cf. 12.

113. Ubishi mwingi huvuta (or huleta) mateto. [B](#) 2.32; [J](#) bisha; [V](#) 54 huleta; [A](#) 39; [T](#) 515; [KB](#) 297.

Joking carried too far leads to quarreling.

Ubishi chanzo cha mateto. [SAM](#) 23.1.

Joking is the beginning of a quarrel.

Ubishi mwingi mwishowe hasara. [BM](#) 4.

Much quarreling ends in damage.

114. Ubishi ulivunja mji wa nyani. [REK](#).

Quarreling broke up the village of the monkeys.

115. Ukidhihaki shombo humli samaki. [NGU](#).

If you joke about fish smell, don't eat fish. If you laugh at the fishermen smelling badly, you won't get fish.

116. Ukimtukana chura upele, mtu husema: unanitukana mimi. [AL](#) 1367.

If you insult a frog for its pimples, someone will say, "You insult me." Bad insinuations addressed to someone will provoke another, thinking that you spoke about him.

117. Ukitaja nyoka, shika fimbo mkononi. [F](#) 47.13.

When you mention a snake get hold of a stick.

Ukitaja nyoka, shika kigongo. [A](#) 140; [T](#) 527; [SAM](#) 24.6; [Y](#) 137.

If you talk about a snake grasp a cudgel. "Devil is never nearer than when we are talking of him." Or rather: If you call somebody a name, be ready for a fight.

118. Umegeuka kitatange, wachungia wenzio demani? [KS](#) kitatange.

Have you become a kitatange taking care of your companion in the basket?

Huyo ni kitatange atakutosa demani. [KS](#), kitatange.

This is a kitatange, he throws you in his basket. He puts you in danger, while he escapes.

Kitatange : a person who incites others to quarrel - [J](#). A small bright-colored fish with spines, a sea porcupine - [SACL](#). Dema: a fishing basket; a fish trap. Demani: in the basket.

119. Umwonyeshaye meno, kinywani hukutia kidole. [REK](#).

The one to whom you show your teeth, puts a finger in your mouth.

120. Unamlaumu mwewe, kipanga yuwesha kuku. [F](#) 48.25; [MS](#) 96.

You are blaming the hawk, [while] the falcon is killing the chickens.

Don't blame the one who committed a minor mistake and leave the one who does big harm. Yuwesha: contraction of yu-wa-isha.

121. Ushungu mwenenda nao, shingo ujeze matama. [T](#) 550.

The poison a man bears, has filled [his] cheeks with venom. [T](#).

Treasured malice will out in bitter speeches. [T](#).

Not a common proverb. Cf. 144.

122. Usiharibu utu kwa kitu, afadhali haribu kitu kwa utu. [NGU](#).

Don't spoil your humanity with a thing; it is better to spoil a thing with your manhood.

Use things to make you a better human being.

123. Usilaumu ardhili uliyoangukia, laumu kigingi kilichokukwaza. [EM](#) u29.

Don't blame the ground you fall on, blame the obstacle that causes you to fall.

Don't blame the people where you arrive. If blame is to be given, blame those who sent you there or blame the reason why you are sent there (e.g., prison) - [EM](#)

124. Usilicheke jahazi lililorushwarushwa kwa mawimbi, huenda nduguyo yumo ndani yake. [REK](#).

Don't laugh at the sailboat that is tossed by the waves, perhaps your relative is in it.

125. Usimcheke kilema ukiwa hai. [NGU](#).

Don't laugh at a cripple while you are alive. Something worse could happen to you.

126. Usimcheke mkweo, utaota chokea [nene]. [V](#) chokea; [AL](#) chokea.

Do not laugh at your mother-in-law for you will get a sty in your eye. Common belief that evil will come to a person who mocks his/her mother-in-law. The remedy consists in rubbing the eye with a garment of the one who has been ridiculed - [AL](#).

127. Usimcheke mkwezi usikose nazi nyumbani. [REK](#).

Don't laugh at the coconut picker, you might lack coconuts at home. Cf. 83, 84, 1518, 2138.

128. Usimhamakie mpita njia. [NGU](#).

A passerby, don't make him angry. Even if that person bothers you it is only for a passing moment.

129. Usimpige mtu akiwa chini. [NGU](#).

Don't kick a person who is down. Low-minded people talk evil of a fallen opponent.

130. Usimtukane pongu miguu mirefu na kondoo yuko pale. [AL](#) 1368.

Don't insult the antelope on account of its long legs, while a sheep is present.

131. Usipende vita na ukimkuta rafiki kiteta, sichotey amua. [JKP](#).

Do not enjoy discord and if you find your friend quarreling do not stir it up, but make peace.

132. Usishindwe kulala usingizi ukasema kitanda ni kibovu. [REK](#).

Saying that the bed is bad should not stop you from sleeping. About blaming someone else.

133. Utamu wa funza kukata kidole. [NGU](#).

The delight of the chigger is to cut the toe. Pleasure to hurt. Creatures follow their nature.

134. Vinya lakini usifivinye. [REK](#).

Pinch but do not crush. Cf. 61.

135. Vita vya ndugu haviamliki. [KA](#).

Family wars [fights] do not invite. I.e., do not interfere.

136. Vitu vya biashara havigombani. [KB](#) 337.

Articles of trade do not quarrel. There is no harm in selling objects of different kinds - [KB](#).

Has probably a deeper meaning as: those who share the same fortune will not fight each other, but join hands. Cf. 15.

137. Wakati wa hari, watu hugombana kisima kimoja. [JK](#) 120.

In the dry season people quarrel over one well.

138. Wakiwa kuhuji mtu na mkewe, jahazi la saji limevunjiwa pa mawe. [JKP](#).

While the man and his wife were arguing, the great ironwood ship was broken on the rock. While they were bickering over trivialities, their seemingly solid marriage broke up - [JKP](#).

139. Wapenda samaki humbeza mvuvi. [NGU](#).

Fish lovers disdain the fisherman. Cf. 115.

140. Watu kuagua ugonjwa, hawaagui [siyo; sio] jeuri. [NGU](#).

People cure sickness but do not cure violence.

141. Waungwana hawagombani. [JK](#) 133.

Gentle folks do not quarrel.

142. Wema huzaa matusi. [KB](#) 345.

Goodness engenders abuse. Do good to an evil person and he/she will abuse you.

143. Wema kumanyoko. [AL](#) nyoko.

Goodness causes insults.

Nyoko: an old form for "your mother." Used in insults: kuma nyoko, vagina of your mother. Cf. 142.

144. Yuna uchungu na shingo. [SACL](#) 841; [T](#) 598.

That person has bitter and venomous rejoinders. Used when someone remembers with malice.

Shingo (ushingo, ushingu, uchungu): bitterness, poison. Cf. 121.

145. Yuwapi mtesi atesaye kiffululiza? [SAM](#) 27.1.

Where is the troublemaker who inflicts suffering continuously?

Understood is that trouble coming his/her way will stop that person.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Alertness

146. Abiria linda mamba. [SPK](#).

Traveller, watch out for crocodiles.

146a. Afadhali kuvunja uchumba kuliko kuvunja ndoa. [REK](#).

It's better to break an engagement than a marriage.

147. Ajaye kisimani mbele hunywa maji maenge. [MARA 2](#).

The first person coming at the well drinks clean water. Those coming afterwards will find muddied water. We should not wait for others to start doing things.

148. Akiruka, usiruke naye; mtege utamnasa. [REK](#).

When they jump, don't jump with them; set a trap and you will catch them.

149. Akutanguliaye chanoni hukuzidi tonge. [JKP](#).

The one who goes before you to the food platter will get a bigger piece than you.
Use the opportunity. Chano: a big platter.

150. Alikuwa wapi ni kujitunza. [NGU](#).

They who were there are taking care of themselves. Minding your own business. Being alert.

151. Aliyejamba, mngoje atakunya. [NGU](#).

Beware of those who break wind, they are about to defecate. This is said if something is going to happen. Someone will fall down or something will give.

152. Aliyengoja, hawezi kuja. [RSP](#) 120.

One who waits cannot come [at all]. "One of these days is none of these days."

153. Aombaye magadi awe na kigae (chake). [EM](#)13.15.

One who asks for baking powder [soda] should have a container.
One should cooperate with the help given. Cf. 824.

154. Asazacho mwizi mganga atwae. [SM](#).

What the thief has left for you, take it to the witch doctor [to put a curse on the thief].
When someone has been burgled, the person will call the diviner who will 'find' the thief, for a very big fee. Your friends may cause more damage than your enemies - [SPK](#).
Asazacho = anachokisaza (anachokibakisha: what someone left behind. Sazo, ma- : left over.

155. Asikuwahi mwomba kibuyo. [EM](#) 14.18; [KA](#).

Let not the one in need of a gourd precede you. If you are in need of something you should make your request known early upon arrival, lest somebody coming later gets it - [EM](#). First things first.

156. Asili ya kuchonga mwiko ni kuchoka kuuungua. [JKP](#).

The reason for carving a spoon [to stir the porridge] is being tired of burning [a hand]. Cf. 257.

157. Asiyena macho akaazime ya kondoo. [AL](#) 582.

One who has no eyes should borrow the eyes of a sheep.
Don't expect anything from a narrow-minded person - [AL](#). Cf. 1333, 1334.

158. Asiyejiangalia huishia "ningalijua." [KA](#).

A person who does not look out [is careless] will end up [saying] "If I had known."

159. Asiyekuwapo na lake halipo. [F](#) 4.37; [H](#) 96; [SWA](#) 66; [JKP](#); Holiday.

One who is not there, nothing of that person is there.

If you are absent you lose your share. "You have to be present at the division of an inheritance. Leave no business to others" - [JK](#).

160. Asiyepo haangukiwi. [JK](#) 135.

Those who are not there will not have anything falling on them.

Variant: **Mti hauangulii wasiopo.**

A tree drops nothing on those who are not there. The cultural reference is to the coconut plantations, of which there are many on the Swahili coast. Every morning the mkezi, the professional climber, climbs the trees and cuts down the ripe coconuts. Anyone walking underneath may get one on the head, which is unpleasant; as a result, however, that person will have a coconut, which is pleasant. So, the proverb has two applicative meanings: (1) Ambitious and greedy people will always be found in places where advantages can be got, or where high offices are to be had, so they are seen in the company of dignitaries and wealthy people; (2) Conversely, if there seems to be a danger somewhere, it is better to be absent - [SPK](#) p.116-17. Cf. 3111, 3134, 4017.

161. Atahiriwapo mtoto (or mwana)wa mtemi, na wa maskini

Atahiriwe papo hapo. [EM](#) 17.26; [KA](#) mwana.

Where the chief's son is circumcised, there the son of the poor family should also be circumcised. Opportunity given to an important person or member of the family should also be given to the less fortunate or member of another family - [EM](#). This proverb has many uses: equal opportunity, but also to be alert when there are opportunities.

162. Baada ya kifo ni tabibu. [MEM](#) 113.

After death, the doctor. When it is too late one looks for the remedy.

In the same vein: **baada ya nyama haradali.** [MEM](#) 116.

After the meat, the mustard.

163. Badiliko kwa mjukuu uanze na babu. [EM](#) 22.1.

A change needed in a grandchild has to begin with the grandfather. Start early.

164. Bahati ikibisha (or ikipiga) hodi ni sharti ufungue mlango mwenyewe. [EM](#) 23.3; [KA](#) ikipiga.

When fortune knocks at the door, you have to open the door yourself. For example: If there is a vacancy for employment, don't wait until you are called, but go after it - [EM](#).

165. Bila [kumshinda] nyuki hupati asali. [EM](#) 26.13.

Without [overcoming] bees you cannot get honey. Understood: You must confront the bees. If you want to succeed, be ready to deal with difficulties - [EM](#).

166. Bila silaha usiingie vitani. [EM](#) 27.15.

Don't join in a fight if you have no weapons. Don't start anything without making adequate preparations - [EM](#).

167. Bilauri si kopo. [AL](#) 553.

A [drinking] glass is not worth a [tin] cup. It's nicer but is easily broken. Beauty versus performance.

168. Boriti ikianguka, boriti mpya ikaze. [JKP](#).

When a roof beam falls, fix a new one. "This may refer to a widow or widower" - [JK](#). Cf. 368.

169. Bunde haviziwi kwa nyuma. [NGU](#).

An owl is not caught from behind. An owl is always looking. It is not easy to challenge a brave person. Vizia: ambush.

170. Chachu kidogo humua mkate. [NESTOR](#) p.5.

A little yeast raises the loaf. A small fire destroys a big forest. Umua: raise.

171. Chelewa-chelewa utakuta mwana si wako. [ZO](#) 33.

For always postponing you discover that the child is not yours.

172. Chura akitupwa majini hafi. [EM](#) 40.21.

If a frog is thrown into water it doesn't die. This means that a person may believe to have punished somebody while in fact one has done a favor to that person - [EM](#).

173. Chura aliapo maji yangali machache, yakijaa halii. [NGU](#).

A frog in shallow water does not cry when the water is high. The frog cries because there is something important going on, e.g., fighting in parliament about something valuable. The frog does not cry when all is well.

Chura hulilia penye maji. [NGU](#).

A frog cries in the water. Weeps for nothing.

174. Dalili ya mvua [ni] mawingu. [F](#) 7.1; [T](#) 57; [H](#) 27; [A](#) 94; [V](#) 94; [J](#) dalili; [RECH](#) 67; [CM](#) 60; [MARA](#) 13; [KB](#) 48; 2.13; [KS](#) dalili.

The sign of rain is clouds. Watch out for early warning signs. Cf. 325, 1551.

175. Dama ni ilo mkononi. [ED](#) 10.

The sailing rope is in [your] hand. The dama is the rope which holds the sail in the wind and is important to catch the wind; it works only "when in the hand." Take your own decisions -[SPK](#).

Note: Dama is also a game played on a board like chess, checkers, a kind of bao.

Therefore: "the play is what is in your hand" [stones or seeds used in the game]. Bao, the world's oldest game, has many names in the world: wari, mancala, dakon, sunca, pani, mongola, adi, giuthi, choro, etc. Same meaning as 180, 207, 285.

176. E, kengewa lolo, kipata nyakua. [JKP](#).

You swift kite, if you find [a chicken] grab it. "Make use of the opportunity when it comes" - [JKP](#).

177. Enenda kwa tasihili wala usitaghafali. [JKP](#).

Go quickly [when you are sent on an errand] and never be negligent. Taghafali: be neglectful, thoughtless, inattentive.

178. Enga kabla ya kujenga. [KA](#).

Take care before building. Think carefully about the results and possibilities of your actions. Enga= angalia: consider.

178a. Fanya fundo kwa siku ya mashaka. [SPK](#).

Make a knot for the day of distress. Swahili people used to keep their money in a knot in a corner of their garment. Provide against a rainy day - [SPK](#).

179. Fedha haiwezi kununua "kama ningejua". [NGU](#).

Money cannot buy "if only I had known." Missed opportunity.

180. Fimbo iliyo mkononi, ndiyo iuayo nyoka. [L](#) 19; [F](#) 8.2; [J](#); [B](#) 2.42.

The stick in the hand is the one that kills the snake. Often there is no time to look for a weapon, when confronted with a snake. Make the best of what you have; have your credentials with you. Cf. 181.

181. Fimbo ya mbali haiui nyoka. [B](#) 2.42; [MARA](#) 15; [KS](#) fimbo.

The stick which is far [not at hand] does not kill the snake. Cf. 207.

182. Fua chuma wakati kingali na moto. [ZAW](#) 173; [AL](#) 259.

Strike the iron while it is still hot. Cf. 318.

183. Haidhuru hudhuru. [EM](#) h3; [JKP](#).

Never mind brings harm. Carelessness is dangerous - JKP. "If something shows signs of going wrong, it should be rectified immediately so that it can bring no harm" - [EM](#).

Haidhuru, haiui lakini inadhuru. [NGU](#).

It does not matter does not kill, but it harms. Cf. 368.

184. Hajikwai mtu kwenye mlima, hujikwaa kwenye kilima cha fuko. [EM](#) h4.

People do not stumble over a mountain, they stumble over a molehill. "It's easier for a person to stumble over an insignificant matter than over a significant one" - [EM](#).

185. Hala hala - mti na macho. [NGU](#); [F](#) 9.2; [B](#) 3.67.

Watch out - a tree and eyes. A warning: Timber!

Alaala or halahala: expression of annoyance, impatience.

186. Hamadi [ni iliyo] kibindoni, silaha [ni] iliyo mkononi. [B](#) 2.32; [F](#) 9.3; [JKP](#); [KS](#) kibindo.

F. translates freely: "By the Prophet! I have some cash on me, is as good as having a weapon ready in one's hand in time of need."

"Only what you have in hand can be relied on" - [JKP](#).

Hamadi is the invocation to Mohammed for help. Kibindo: a loincloth. Money was once kept in the corner of it - [L](#); [F](#). Can also refer to greed, when someone takes things at parties, taking them home hidden in the clothing - [MM](#).

Often shorter versions are used: **Hamadi kilicho bindoni.** [V](#) hamadi.

Secure is what one carries in one's belt.

Iliyo bindoni. [SACL](#) 108.

What is tied in the knot of the loincloth [is secure].

Iliyo bindoni imo salimini. [SPK](#).

That which is in one's pocket is safe.

Hamadi kibindoni. [H](#) 98; [T](#) 15; [L](#) 22; [KS](#) hamadi.

hamadi: An exclamation in stumbling or dropping a cup or saucer - [KS](#).

Use: Chukueni chakula safarini msije piga hamadi. Take food with you on the trip, so you don't have to say 'hamadi'. Nilimfuata mke wangu nyumbani kwao hamadi mke hayupo, I followed my wife in their home, 'hamadi' (alas) she was not there.

187. Hapa si pale. [NGU](#).

Here is not there.

188. Hauchi, hauchi, unakucha. [H](#) 42, [G](#) 11.13; [L](#) 23; [SWA](#) 4.

It does not dawn! It does not dawn! ... It dawns! Certain things will happen, even if you believe they will not happen - [L](#). Time and tide wait for nobody - [H](#).

189. Hayawi, hayawi, huwa. [H](#) 42; [F](#) 11.14; [KB](#) 68.

They are not happening, they are not happening ... they happen - MM. It's no use sticking your head in the sand; you may keep on saying "There's nothing to worry about," but suddenly, there is! - [F](#). Cf. 188.

190. Hiari na kitari ni yako. [JKP](#).

The choice and preference is yours [your final decision]. In the last resort you have to decide for yourself - [JKP](#).

191. Hofia kijacho. [NGU](#).

Fear for what is coming. Prepare for the future.

192. Huisha vizuri kianzwacho vizuri. [WIKON](#) 199.

What is begun well, ends well.

193. Huyaondosha mavi yangali fukuto; yakiisha oza ni magumu. [AL](#) 263.

One clears the excrement while it is warm, it's more difficult when it is hard. A quick decision is needed before things get worse - [AL](#).

194. Iiyopita si ndwele, ganga ijayo. [F](#) 12.3; [MS](#) 94; [MARA](#) 3; [ZO](#) p.243; [SPK](#); [F](#) 52.2; [B](#) 2.6.

That which has passed is not a disease [anymore], cure what is coming. Stop meditating on past troubles, try to prevent their repetition.

195. Inafaa kusemea mgomba ungali wima. [KB](#) 78.

One must plead the case of the banana tree while it is still standing. Speaking good of people after their death is useless. Look after your business before it is too late.

196. Jambia kiunoni na bakora mkononi. [AL](#) 513; [AL](#) kiuno.

A dagger in the belt [sash] and a stick in the hand. Taking precautions.

197. Jambo kuingia sahali, kutoka ni mashughuli. [JKP](#).

It is easy to get involved in a conflict, but to get out is an embarrassment.

Sahali (-epesi): easy. Jambo: an affair, matter. Shughuli: trouble.

198. Jawabu la kesho huandaa [huandaliwa] leo. [J](#); [KB](#) jawabu; [SACL](#) 183; [NGU](#).

Tomorrow's business one gets ready today.

199. Je, haikawii. [NGU](#).

What? The answer comes quickly. And is often bad.

199a. Jenga nyumba mbele ya kuoa. [SPK](#).

Build a house before marrying.

200. Jogoo hulia: "uta wangu u kule." [F](#) 13.6; [B](#) 1.36; [CM](#) 50; [T](#) 559.

The rooster crows, "My bow is far away." This is what the rooster is supposed to say, as an excuse for not being ready to fight the hawk stealing the chicken. An onomatopoeic line based on the noise made by a crowing rooster. Cf. 838.

201. Jua la asubuhi halidumu siku nzima. [NGU](#).

The morning sun does not last the whole day. Do not delay your plans.

202. Jua likituchea, nyota zitapotea. [JKP](#).

When the sun overtakes us, the stars will be lost. Morning prayers have to be performed before sunrise. There is a right time for everything - [JKP](#). -cha: dawn.

203. Jumbe atokeapo, msalimu papo hapo. [EM](#) j20.

When the village head appears greet him there and then.

The jumbe are busy people and many look to them for help. Greet them before they leave. You may miss your chance to make your request. Cf. 195.

204. Kale hairudi. [NGU](#).

The [good] old times do not come back.

205. Kama huna saa ya mkono lazima jua likuongoze. [REK](#).

If you don't have a wristwatch look at the sun for guidance. Be inventive. Don't be stopped by one obstacle.

206. Kamata unachokiona, usingoje kijacho. [NGU](#).

Take it when you see it, don't wait for what [might] come.

207. Kamba ya mbali haifungi kuni. [MARA](#) 23; [KA](#).

A rope far away does not tie the firewood. Cf.181, 3630.

208. Kambare hapishi chambo. [AL](#) 251.

A catfish does not let the bait go by.

209. Kambare hukunjwa mbichi. [NGU](#).

The catfish is straightened when fresh.

210. Kenda fumbata, sio kumi nenda uje [kesho]. [EM](#) K5;[KS](#).

Grasp the nine, not the ten to collect later [tomorrow]. Nine things of which you are sure are better than ten you are promised. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Cf. 2493, 3481.

211. Kengele hailii bure, mpaka mtu anaichokoza. [AL](#) 1691.

A bell does not ring by itself, someone must put it in motion.

Mpaka, ila: but, until. Chokoza: tease, bully, annoy, vex.

212. Kesho si leo. [JKP](#).

Tomorrow is not today. "Said when a customer promises: 'I'll pay tomorrow'" - JK.

213. Kiatu (or viatu) siku ya mwendo. [ED](#) 17; [JK](#) 143; [SACL](#).669 viatu; 1021; [T](#) 138.

Shoe for the day of a journey.

Ndau siku ya miuya. [ED](#) 59; [SACL](#) 669; [T](#) 138.

A bailing bucket for the day of big waves.

Silaha siku ya khondo. [ED](#) 67; [JK](#) 143; [T](#) 138.

A weapon for the day of battle.

All three proverbs warn us to be ready, to be on the alert. A cordial way of greeting one's friends - JK.

214. Kima aliyetangulia hali tunda bovu. [AL](#) 1199.

The monkey that arrived first does not eat a rotten fruit.

215. Kimbia ugwe usijeona ng'ombe. [EM](#) k12.

When you see the rope, run before the bull appears. The bull is tied to the rope. This is related to the play between people and bulls on Pemba Island. Be careful and watch out for the early signs.

216. Kinga mkono upewe, kunyang'anya kuna shari. [AL](#) 1537.

Interpose your hand to obtain, taking by force is evil [not allowed]. Show that you are present, to have a chance to receive.

217. Kinolewacho hupata [hukata]. [MARA](#) 29; [SAM](#) 10.10; [KS](#) noa.

What is sharpened will become sharp [will cut]. What is repeated often enough will stay, even lies. What is cared for will remain useful.

Kupata [to get, obtain]: has a special meaning in reference to a knife. E.g., kisu hakipati means: the knife is not sharp - Sacl. pata, kukata: to cut.

218. Kipofu haoni ana maarifa. [NGU](#).

The blind do not know that they have information. Maarifa: knowledge, intelligence, information.

Kipofu haulizwi njia. [NGU](#).

A blind person is not asked the way.

Kipofu kaona mwezi. [NGU](#).

A blind one has seen the moon. Something nice happened.

219. Kisu kibutu hakichinji kuku. [SACL](#) 122.

A dull knife slaughters no chicken.

Kisu kibutu hakikati unywele. [NGU](#).

A dull knife cuts no hair. Cf. 285.

220. Kisu kilichomnyoa bundi, na kokotoro kimnyoe. [EM](#) k18.

The knife that shaved the owl should also shave the kokotoro. The measure given to one should be the same for another. Kokotoro: a kind of nightingale. Cf. 161.

221. Kitendo ni moto, majuto ni mjukuu. [KA](#).

Action is like fire, sorrow is like a grandchild [it comes afterwards]. Cf. 310.

222. Kitu cha kwanza kifanywe kwanza. [NGU](#).

The first things should be done first.

223. Kivuli cha pungu ni kile cha nderi, mafumo ya ncha ndefu. [JKP](#).

The eagle's shadow is like that of the vulture, spears have long points. Always be vigilant, dangers lurk everywhere - JK.

224. Kobe ukimtupa majini, kwake si mauti bali ni fur âaha. [REK](#).

If you throw a tortoise in the water, that brings to it not death but joy. Cf.172.

225. Kohoa upate tonge. [AL](#) 1254; [AL](#) kitonge.

Cough and you may get a mouthful. Make your presence known, so you may be served.

226. Kondoo alinyimwa ndevu. [AL](#) ndevu.

The sheep was denied a beard.

Kondoo hakufika kwenye soko la ndevu. [AL](#) 1208.

The sheep arrived too late at the beard-market. Animal story: Why the sheep has no beard.

227. Kuambiliwa kuna uwongo, wende ukajionee. [AL](#) ji.

Being told is deceitful, go and see for yourself.

See also the section "Lying."

228. Kukiwa jua, kukiwa mvua. [JKP](#).

If there be shine or rain. "In any case, at all times" - [JKP](#).

229. Kuku anaendelea kula, walimaliza shauri. [LE2](#) 303.11.

The chicken goes on eating, [while] they have decided its destiny. People do not know their own destiny. Cf. 299.

230. Kule ni kule hakuwezi kuwa hapa. [NGU](#).

There is there, it can never be here.

231 kulungu mwoga hukimbiza pembeze. [T](#) 608.

The timid bushbuck saves its horns. In spite of the tangled jungle, the long-horned antelope keeps its horns free from entanglement. Cf 257, 2005, 2006.

232. Kumaliza kiu ni kwenda mtoni. [REK](#).

In order to quench your thirst go to the river. Take appropriate means.

233. Kuni juu uchaga zacheka zilizo motoni. [KA](#); [SM](#).

Firewood in storage laughs at that in the fire. Don't laugh at people who have trouble, your turn may be near.

234. Kunyolewa kipara si mwisho wa kumea nywele. [REK](#).

Shaving your head is not the end of growing hair.

235. Kunyolewa kukiwa lazima, kuahirisha si kwema. [JKP](#).

When shaving is necessary, postponing is not good. "Pay your debt" - [JK](#).

236. Kuonja ndiko kula. [NGU](#).

Tasting is eating. Trying drugs may become addictive.

236a. Kupewa usikubali waja taka usipewe. [KA](#); [SM](#).

Don't refuse what is given; time will come when you want it, and are not given.

237. La leo lisingoje kesho. [EM](#) 14.

What should be done today should not wait for tomorrow.

238. La watoro chaka ni lile kwa lile. [T](#) 215.

The woody place of the runaways is always the very same - [T](#).

The runaway escapes by way of the nearest woods with the only purpose in mind: escape. Any port in a storm.

239. Lazima kunyosha mti unapomea (or unapoota) ukiisha kukauka haiwezekani. [KB](#) 138.

Put the tree straight while it is growing, when it has hardened it cannot be done.

Cf. 318.

240. Lazima mti uwe ndani ya maji upate kutelemka. [JGH](#) 139.

For a tree to go down with the current it must be in the water. Without help it is hard to succeed. Cf. 265, 1252, 1789.

241. Legelege pembe ya ng'ombe. [FSM](#) 89.

Shake the horn of the cow. Stay loose. Shape up, adjust for the changing conditions of life.

242. Lekeza, ufume. [JKP](#).

Aim well, so that you hit your target.

Lekeza, elekeza: point, show, aim. Fuma, hit with a spear or arrow.

243. Leo ni leo: asemaye kesho ni mwongo. [F](#) 20.4; [B](#) 4.84.

Today is today, one who says "tomorrow" is a liar. Against procrastination, but is also used when people who boasted to do something, are now asked to keep their promise - MM. Used in wedding songs. Cf. 243, 1535, 1537.

244. Lighafiliwalo ni la lusu. [JKP](#).

Neglected property is for the thief.

Lusu, mwizi: thief. Ghafiliwa: to be thoughtless, neglected.

245. Liharibikalo hufanywa. [JKP](#).

What is spoiled is mended. "Said to encourage a person to apologize" - JK.

246. Likitoka liote. [T](#) 221; [A](#) 139; [SAM](#) 13.5; [KA](#); [JKP](#).

When it [the sun] comes out, bask in it. "Make hay while the sun shines."

247. Lipunguze omo tanga, kuna kusi la hatari. [JKP](#).

Reduce sail up front, the dangerous southerly monsoon is blowing.

248. Lishalo ndilo dogo kuliko lijalo. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

What has been is smaller than what will come. We should not waste time thinking about past misfortune, but think about what is coming and prepare ourselves to stand up to it - [MARA](#). Cf. 194, 2885.

249. Lisilo mkoma hujikoma lilo. [T](#) 224; [A](#) 305; [J](#); [SAM](#) 13.7; [SACL](#) 563;

[RECH](#) hujikoma lenyewe; [KS](#) mkoma.

What has no one to end it, ends itself. If you do not guide and bring your business to an end, then it may not end to your liking.

A play on words: **lisilo na mkono, hujikonda lenyewe.** [WIKON](#) 199.

What has no hand [help] pines away.

249a. Mabadiliko bora kuliko mapumziko. [SPK](#).

Changing is better than resting.

250. Maisha hueleweka ukiyatazama kwa nyuma, lakini tunaishi tukitazama mbele. [EM](#) m2.

Life can be understood looking backwards, but we live looking forwards.

We have to look backwards in order to be able to plan the future.

250a. Majanyanga mamoya. [SPK](#).

The shallows are all the same. Everywhere along the coast, the shallow waters are dangerous.

250b. Maji maangavu male. [SPK](#).

Clear water but deep.

251. Maji ya nazi hunywewa katika (or kutoka) nazi. [NGU](#).

Milk of the coconut is drunk from the nut [to enjoy its freshness]. Cf. 4610.

252. Maji yaliyoko mbali hayakati kiu. [REK](#).

Faraway water quenches no thirst. Cf. 181.

253. Maji yangali kidogo, yafaa kuvuka. [AL](#) 254.

It is wise to cross when the water is still low.

254. Matawi yatenganishe yangali machanga. [EM](#) m5.

The branches of a tree should be separated while young. This saying means that you should build good character and relationship among children while they are young; it is difficult to do so when they are grown up - [EM](#).

255. Mbu haumi mboni ya jicho. [NGU](#).

The mosquito does not sting the apple of the eye. It does not get the chance. Provide security.

256. Mche ndiyo mti. [NGU](#).

A sprout is a tree. It becomes a tree.

257. Mchonga mwiko hukimbiza mikono yake. [F](#) 24.42; [KA](#); [MARA](#) 3; [AL](#) 184.

The carver of a wooden spoon saves one's hands. A general explanation by [MARA](#): To save her hand from burning while stirring hot

food, a wooden spoon is made. For the same reason that a person buys an umbrella to avoid getting wet, or a bicycle to spare the feet. Cf. 2005, 2006.

258. Mdharau mwiba mguu huota tende. [FSM](#) 103.

One who neglects the thorn in the foot gets elephantiasis. Said of somebody who despises small things like minor injuries; that person will be overtaken by greater evils. Cf. 368.

259. Mkalamuzi anakula [chakula] cha kwanza. [AL](#) 250.

The alert person eats first. Don't neglect favorable occasions. First come first served.

Mkalamuzi (verb, kalamuka): being alert. KS kalamazi.

259a. Mkienda sisi tumerudi. [SPK](#).

While you are still on your way, we have already come back. You have to get up early to score one - [SPK](#).

260. Mkulima hulinda shamba lake la mahindi baada ya nguruwe kuzila. [REK](#).

The farmer guards the maize after the pigs eat it.

260a. Moto wa kumvi, hudumu. [SPK](#).

A fire of chaff [under the ashes], continues. A quiet spirit remembers -[SPK](#).

261. Moto wa mbali hauunguzi. [FSM](#) 137.

A distant fire does not burn. The explanation given by FSM is that of #644:

A nearby neighbor is better [in need] than a faraway relative. Cf. 181, 4017, 4018.

262. Msafara wa maisha hauna kurudi nyuma. [FSM](#) 125.

Life's caravan never turns back.

263. Msafiri hufikiri. [RSP](#) 58.

A traveler has to think carefully.

264. Msafiri lazima atosheke. [NGU](#).

A traveler must be self-sufficient.

265. Msafiri ni aliye pwani. [MARA](#) 46; [KS](#) msafiri; [ED](#) 40.

The traveler is the one who is on the shore. Traveling by sailboat is dependent on wind and cargo; therefore there is no accurate time for departure. Only those who are present at the shore will embark.

266. Msema "sasa" hajibiwi "saa." [T](#) 312.

One who says "now," is not answered "an hour" [later]. Do not delay when urgent help is needed.

267. Msi chembe wala uta, si muwani. [JK](#) 126.

One who has neither arrow nor bow is not a warrior. "Be prepared for your task" - [JKP](#).

Without a sharp tongue, no one can become a successful politician - [JK](#).

Chembe: arrowhead or spearhead. Muwani (Lamu dialect): a fighter.

268. Msi nadhari ni punda, msi kujua endako. [JK](#) 137; [KS](#) nadhari.

One who has no common sense is like a donkey, not knowing where to go.

A donkey is not told where the master will lead it -JK. A brainless person is like a cow.

Nadhari (ji), akili nzuri: brain. Cf. 2053.

269. Mtego mmoja si kuwinda. [AL](#) 338.

With one trap [net] there is not good hunting.

270. Mtego wa panya huingia waliomo na wasiokuwamo. [KA](#).

Rats that are here or not yet here may be caught in the trap. A trap does not choose. An action may affect many people; plan carefully.

271. Mti hauangulii wasiopo. [JK](#) 135; [AL](#) 1517.

A tree drops nothing on those who are not there. Cf. 160, 4017, 4918.

272. Mtoto ni baba wa mtu mzima. [NGU](#).

The child is the father of the adult. Cf. William Wordsworth: The child is the father of the man ... [My heart leaps up; 1807.] In the child the adult is already present. Cf. 256, 325.

273. Mtu afuatao moyo kaida huijutia. [JKP](#).

If you follow your heart you will usually regret it. Kaida = kawaida: usual; afuatao = afuataye: one who follows.

274. Mtu akijikuna hufanya marugurugu ya mwili i. [NS](#) 30; [J](#) marugurugu.

If you scratch yourself you raise swellings on your body. People must bear the consequences of their acts. Cf. 2599.

275. Mtu hujikuna ajipatiapo. [F](#) 32.124; [MS](#) 52; [T](#) 339 ajipatapo; [NGU](#); [EM](#) h29.

A person scratches where the hand can reach. Do not attempt to do things beyond your means - MM.

If you have a problem, you will only solve what you can. Cf. 309, 394.

276. Mtu hukimbia wingu, hakimbii mvua. [NGU](#).

A person flees a cloud, but does not flee the rain. Flee before the rain starts.

277. Mundu usionolewa haung'ai. [NGU](#).

A sickle not sharpened does not shine. Mundu: sickle, billhook, chopper.

278. Mwana kuku lala kipanga yuwaja. [KS](#) kipanga.

The chick sleeps and the hawk is coming. Cf.120.

279. Mwazima beberu hajifungi. [REK](#).

Someone who borrows a he-goat stays alert. And has to pay attention.

Beberu: a he-goat; fig., a strong man. -jifunga: engage oneself.

280. Mwenda gizani hajikwai. [FSM](#) 153.

One who walks in the dark does not stumble. Going in the dark does not necessarily harm an intelligent person. Going in the dark means in dark time, a time of hardship - FSM. With self-knowledge and mutual understanding we should be able to carry on in a hostile world. Cf. 2777.

281. Mwenda mbele hateki maji machafu. [T](#) 623.

The first to be there draws no muddy water.

282. Mwendo kikusoza chanda, na kukupiga si kazi. [T](#) 378; [ED](#) 2.

If your companion points a finger at you, it is no greater matter [for that person] also to put it in your eye - MM.

Aliyepelika mkono kutamalaki si kazi. [T](#) 16; [SACL](#) 860; [MS](#) 9; [AL](#) 68.

One who lays a hand on something finds it easy to appropriate it.

Mkono wakisha tia na mguu watatia. [SPK](#).

Having put in their hand they will also put their foot in.

283. Mwenye haja ndiye aendaye chooni. [KA](#); [SM](#).

One who is in need goes to the toilet. One who needs something must take the means to get it.

284. Mwenye kijungu mekoni haachi kupiapia. [SACL](#) 746.

The woman who has a pot on the fire is continually uneasy.

The verse goes on:

Husema: Chaiva lini? Hapakua, hajilia.

She says: When will it be cooked? So I can serve and eat.

Someone who has a small cooking pot on the fire does not stop looking.

When you have something on your mind it surely will be known -[T](#).

MM, however, would prefer: Kulia-lia, to cry, to complain: "If somebody has only a small pot on the fire she does not stop complaining, i.e., she is not fully satisfied."

Piapia [hangaika] is hardly used except in working songs or putting a child to sleep - [SACL](#).

Instead of kupiapia also kuriyariya is used - [T](#) 397a; [SACL](#) 778; [AL](#) 53.

285. Mwenye kisu kikali ndiye atakayekula nyama. [T](#) 381; [V](#) 116; [ED](#) 56; [JK](#) 127 ndio.

The person who has the sharp knife is the one who will eat meat. The person who is ready for the occasion has the best chance to succeed.

Mwenye kisu ndiye achinjae mnyama. [B](#) 1.30.

The person with the knife slaughters the animal.

286. Mwenye kukaa ni kisuguu, mwenye kuitwa (or kwalika) hakunyima. [AL](#) 1708.

One who remains seated is like an anthill [immovable], one who is called [invited] a gift is not refused.

If there is an invitation to receive a gift, one must get up and come forward.

287. Mwenye kusafiri kwa saa ya kula, chakula kiliwe akija aleni? [JKP](#).

If you are traveling at dinner time, and the food is eaten when you arrive, what will you eat?

288. Mwenye kuwahi hakosi. [AL](#) 252.

If you arrive in time you do not miss your chance.

289. Mwenzako akinyolewa wewe tia maji. [F](#) 36.169; [B](#) 4.82; [JKP](#).

When your companion is being shaved, wash your head [make ready to be shaved too]. One person's fate is another person's lesson - [JK](#). "The common example given for an explanation of this proverb is: When you learn that the tax inspector is busy in your district "shaving" people, get your accounts in order" - [JK](#).

290. Mwenzi akitupa chakula (or ugali), wewe mwaga mchuzi (or kitoweo). [NGU](#).

If your companion throws away the food [porridge], you pour out the gravy [relish]. In Rome do as the Romans. Cf. 289.

291. Mwindaji hapigi zumari. [NGU](#).

A hunter does not blow the flute. Can also mean that hunters should not boast about their kills but should proceed silently.

Mwindaji hawezi kupumzika ila baada ya kupika. [SPK](#).

The hunter cannot rest until after the cooking (of the game). An able person does not relax before work is completely done - [SPK](#).

292. Nazi ni tui la kwanza. [JKP](#) 71; [KS](#) nazi,tui; [MS](#); [AL](#) 174.

A coconut is its first milk. The goodness of the coconut is in its first milk [juice].

Tui: the milk of a coconut; the first milk is the best; a much appreciated drink.

293. Ndege aamkaye mapema ndiye aliye wadudu. [EM](#) n2.

It is the bird that gets up early that eats the insects.

294. Ndege wa kuokota hafai kula. [EM](#) n5.

A bird picked on the ground is not suitable for eating. "The moral is that if you want to use something, you should first find out its history to avoid possible harm" - [EM](#).

295. Ndizi zitakuivia mgongoni na utashindwa kuzila. [AL](#).

The bananas will ripen on your back and you'll be unable to eat them. Of those who neglect their affairs.

296. Nduli mjue. [EM](#) n10.

Know your enemy.

297. Ng'ombe asiyepiga kebele hufia njaa. [EM](#) n12.

A cow that does not bellow starves in the pen. People will not notice its presence and they will not feed and water that animal. If you do not assert yourself you will not be paid attention to - [EM](#).

298. Ngozi ivute ili maji. [B](#) 2.63; [F](#) 39.12; [L](#) 81; [H](#) 90.

Stretch the hide while it is still wet. Ili stands for ilipo or ingalipo - [L](#). Cf. 318.

299. Nguu zilivunjika, na milima ikalala. [T](#) 423.

The peaks were destroyed and the mountains slept. While people at the top came tumbling down, the people at the lower echelon did not worry about their own fate.

Nguu: the summit of a mountain. A more common word is kebele.

For a modern application, see 3822.

300. Ni aibu kujikwaa kwenye jiwe moja mara mbili. [NGU](#).

It is a shame to hurt yourself twice at the same stone.

301. Ni sasa mambo, ni sasa. [T](#) 430a; [Y](#) 45; [AL](#) sasa; [NGU](#).

They are now the things, they are now. Now is the time to act. It's now that one has to do what must be done.

302. Njia haimwambii mtu. [AL](#) 1696.

The road does not say anything to the traveller. Our destiny is unknown - [AL](#).

303. Nyoka alipouma jirani, wewe pia umo hatarini. [RSP](#) 113.

If a snake bites your neighbor, you too are in danger. Cf. 289.

304. Nyoka humulikwa kuanzia miguuni. [EM](#) n24.

Tracing a snake should begin at your feet. Start looking nearby first, so you won't step on it. Looking for an enemy, look first in your own surroundings - [EM](#).

305. Nyoka huuma afikiapo. [B](#) 1.28.

A snake bites where it reaches. An evil person strikes where possible

Nyoka mwenye nduma mbili, huuma mara ya pili. [SPK](#).

A snake having two fangs will bite again.

306. Nyota njema huonekana alfajiri. [REK](#).

The lucky star is seen at dawn.

307. Nyumba ya jirani ikishika moto, chota maji ya kuzimia yako. [EM](#). m27.

If your neighbor's house burns, draw water for putting out the fire on yours. If you see others in trouble, help them out and prepare yourself that you may experience similar trouble - [EM](#).

308. Nyumba ya usiri ni nyumba mbaya. [SAM](#) 20.6.

A house of procrastination is a bad house.

309. Oga ukutapo maji. [EM](#) o1.

When you find water take a bath. If you get the opportunity to do something useful, do it for the opportunity may never come again.

310. Ola wendako kabla hujafika. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2.

Look where you are going before reaching the place. Think about the consequences of your action. Ola, tazama: look, observe.

311. Ole wako, kanga, uliyeacha maji, ukaloweke mchanga. [AL](#) 712.

Woe betide you, partridge, you have left the water for bathing in sand. Big changes in life should be considered carefully.

312. Ondoa dari uezeki (or uwezeke) paa. [KA](#); [SM](#).

Take away the ceiling and cover [thatch] the roof. Do not put in the ceiling before covering the house. Do first things first.

313. Ondoa maji ukiwa kwenye mtumbwi. [EM](#) o3.

If you are in a boat remove the water. Take prompt action.

314. Onyo la jumla ni kofia. [EM](#) o6.

A general warning is [like] a cap. Mind the warning when it fits you.

314a. Panapo adui yako sipite. [SPK](#).

Don't pass the place where your enemy is.

315. Pate ule, udongo unakungoja. [AL](#) 23.

Take and eat, the earth [of the grave] is waiting for you. Cf. 4496.

316. Penye papenyekapo. [EM](#) p10.

Enter where you can enter. You should attempt only that which you can accomplish - [EM](#).

317. Pigania kosa lako kama upiganiavyo urithi wako. [NGU](#).

Fight for your case as if you fight for your heritage.

317a. Pindi simba arukapo tafuta mti ukwee. [SPK](#).

When the lion jumps find a tree to climb! Prudence is the better part - [SPK](#).

318. Samaki mkunje yungali (or angali) mbichi. [RECH](#) 252; [FSM](#) 182; [MEM](#) 192.

Bend the fish while it is still fresh.

319. Samaki wakubwa huwindwa usiku. [NGU](#).

Big fish are fished at night. At the shore at night all is quiet and the big fish come to eat the small ones. At night the fishermen go after the big ones.

320. Sanda ya mbali haiziki maiti. [KA](#); [MS](#); [MARA](#) 2.

A shroud that is far away does not bury the dead. Cf.181, 207.

321. Shika kisu ule nyama. [EM](#) s5.

Grasp a knife and eat meat.

322. Shoka lisilo mpini, halichanji kuni. [F](#) 43.5.

An axe without a handle does not cut firewood. Special meaning: Used in speaking about an impotent person. Cf. 207.

323. Sikalii kuti kavu kumtaka mungu shari. [TAA](#) 23.

Don't sit on a dead branch defying God. See also the section Master.

324. Siku moja utajikunia upele katika nguzo. [AL](#) 309; [AL](#) kuna.

One day you'll scratch your scabies against a house pillar. Because you allowed the evil to grow.

325. Siku njema huonekana asubuhi. [F](#) 44.10; [H](#) 27; [KB](#) 280.

A good day becomes evident in the morning.

Instead of asubuhi [morning], alfasiri [dawn, daybreak] is used.

326. Siku ya mashaka fundo. [SACL](#) 233; [B](#) 2.32; [J](#) funda; [KS](#) fundo.

For a day of difficulties, a knot [in the loincloth]. The knot in the garment is where one keeps some money - [SPK](#). Cf. 213, 327.

327. Silaha chukua siku zote (or kila saa), sikuye itakufaa. [T](#) 486; [B](#) 1.36; [A](#) 120; [SPK](#); [F](#) 89.

Carry a weapon always, one day it will be useful to you. A weapon is only a weapon when it is handy.cf. 213.

328. Simba ambaye ni mgwizi halii. [AL](#) 499.

A killer lion does not roar. If you want to succeed keep quiet.

Mgwizi, from gwia or guia: to catch. Gwiji: courageous, expert.

329. Sistaajabu kunuka baada ya kuoza. [EM](#) s21.

You should not be surprised to smell badly if you have decayed. If you are fallen down you find your name is no longer respected - [EM](#).

330. Taa ya muwanga huzimwa ni kope. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

It's the crust on the wick that stops the light of the lamp. Something small can destroy a person.

Kope: the burnt end of the wick, the crust that develops after many hours of burning.

If it is not removed the lamp goes out. Muwanga, mwangaza: light, shine. Cf. 368.

330a. Tawala ngumi linda ulimi. [SPK](#).

Control your fist, guard your tongue.

331. Tazama ng'ambo usiyatazame maji uvukapo mto. [EM](#) t6.

Set your eyes on the other side and do not look at the water when you cross a river. Facing a project, don't get lost in details, bear in mind the end.

332. Tembelea mkongoja mtanguzi akiteleza. [EM](#) t8.

Walk with a stick when the person ahead of you slips.

333. Tenda unavyowaza. [NGU](#).

Do as you planned.

334. Tikiti baya li shambani mwako. [AL](#) 531; [KA](#).

The bad watermelon is in your garden. Dispose of it. Dispose of a bad habit.

335. Tufuate nyama kwa damu. [AL](#) 150.

Follow the trace of blood of the wounded animal. Take proper means to success.

336. Tukimbie wanapotembea. [EM](#) 22 t18.

Let's run while they walk. If you want to catch up with someone ahead. Also title of a book by William Edgett Smith : We must run while they walk: A portrait of Africa's Julius Nyerere (1971).

337. Tulie wanapofurahi. [EM](#) t20.

Let's weep while they rejoice. While enemies rejoice beware.

338. Twaishi kwa matendo si kwa miaka. [NGU](#).

We live by deeds, not by years.

339. Udongo upate uli maji. [T](#) 516; [V](#) 75; [SWA](#) 27; [AL](#) 256.

Get the clay while it is still wet. This proverb is usually quoted in child rearing. Also advice of elder women to a bride.

Upatize, upatilize: causative form of pata, to procure the clay.

Uli [ulio]: used in proverbs without a relative. Cf. 318.

340. Ufa hazamisha merikebu. [AL](#) 303.

A leak sinks even a big ship.

341. Ufanye kilalo (or ulalo) mtoto angali mzima. [AL](#) 266.

Build the bridge while the child is alive. Prevent accidents if possible.

342. Ujana ni moshi: ukenda, hauji. [JK](#) 126.

Youth is smoke: it goes and does not come -JK. "Simply refers to youth; once gone, it is gone forever" - [MM](#). Hauji = haurudi: does not return - [MM](#).

Ujana ni maji ya moto, hayakawii kupoa. [AL](#) 1638; [AL](#) ota.

Youth is like hot water, it does not delay to cool off.

343. Ujana unapita sawa na upepo. [AL](#) 1636.

Youth passes by like a breeze.

344. Ukifumba (or ukivimba) jicho, tega sikio. [NGU](#).

If your eye is swollen [closed], be sure to listen.

345. Omitted.

346. Ukilala nje yanapita. [NGU](#).

If you sleep away, things will pass you by.

347. Ukiona tembo, hutapata hasara: lakini ukiona siafu utapata. [KB](#) 303; [AL](#) 1667.

If you see an elephant you will not suffer damage, but if you see [red] ants you will. Often it is possible to avoid the great dangers, but not the small ones.

348. Ukipanda mvule, uvumilie matone yake. [AL](#) 1663.

If you plant a mvule tree, suffer its drops.

Mvule is a hardwood tree, not eaten by termites. Instead of the mvule the mlumba tree is also used - [AL](#) 1664. The bark of the mlumba tree is used to make barkcloth. It secretes glue.

Ukipanda mvumo, uvumilie jongoo. [AL](#) 1665.

If you plant the borassus palm, suffer also the centipedes [that live in the palm].

349. Ukipata, kinyakua. [JKP](#).

If you get it, grasp it. Hold what you have, take what you can - [JK](#).

350. Ukipenda karanga, upakatie kikalangio. [AL](#) kaanga; paka; [AL](#) 151.

If you love roasted peanuts, get yourself a potsherd [a plate]. Make some effort from your part, don't expect everything from others. No work no gain.

Kikalangio (Maniema dialect) [Kigae; kikaya]: an earthen pot used as a stove for charcoals - [KS](#).

351. Ukitaka kubugia unga, uwe na mate ya kutosha. [EM](#) u10.

If you want to chew flour, be sure you have enough saliva. Before starting reflect on the possibility and the tools you need.

Bugia: throw a little something in the mouth, such as groundnuts.

352. Ukitaka kumshinda panya, mnyime chakula. [NGU](#).

If you want to defeat a rat, deny it food.

353. Ukitaka kuzuia simba wasiingie mjini, fuga mbwamwitu. [NS](#) 19.

If you want to stop lions coming to town, raise jackals.

354. Omitted.

355. Ukitazama nyuma sana, unaweza kurudi nyuma. [EM](#) u14.

If you look back too much, you may return there. Don't dwell on past things.

356. Ukitembea na macho angani, utajikwaa mguu. [EM](#) u15.

If you walk with your eyes fixed in the sky, you will stumble.

357. Ukitoka alfajiri, ujue kupania. [NGU](#).

If you go out at daybreak, know to lift up your clothing. Because the grass is wet.

358. Ukivishwa kilemba na mfalme fidra vizuri. [REK](#).

If the king praises you, play your violin well.

Fidra, fidla: a fiddle, violin. Visha kilemba: to flatter.

359. Ukiwa na kichwa uwe na fikara. [NGU](#).

If you have a head, you'd better think.

360. Ukiwaona wenzako wakikimbia na wewe ukimbie. [NGU](#); [AL](#) 1625.

If you see your friends running, you too should run.

361. Umechelewa, mchana si alfajiri. [REK](#).

You are late, midday is not dawn.

362. Umwonapo jumbe, ndipo unapomwamkia. [NGU](#).

When you see the chief, that's when you start greeting.

363. Unapofikiri uko salama uko hatarini. [NGU](#).

When you think that you are safe, that's when you are in danger.

364. Ungapiga teo, mtama waliwa. [SAM](#) 24.11; [KA](#).

The millet of the person who would have used the catapult, is eaten [by birds].

Teo: a catapult [sling], used for throwing stones at birds. Cf. 2667.

365. Usiende bila kuuliza. [FSM](#) 193.

Don't go without questioning. When you are sent on an errand, you have to know why you are sent and for what. It could be a wild goose chase. Cf.1564.

366. Usikawie kuloga, usiku unaingia. [AL](#) 188.

Don't delay casting your spell, the night is coming. It should be done before someone else comes along - [AL](#).

367. Usione kwenda mbele, kurudi [nyuma] si kazi. [MS](#) 83; [JKP](#).

Don't stop going forwards, going back is easy. "Do not be proud of going ahead in society, sliding back to poverty will be all too easy" - [JK](#). Cf. 3979.

368. Usipoziba ufa, utajenga ukuta. [F](#) 49.37; [J](#) 140; [T](#) 557; [KB](#) 330; [MARA](#) 74; [SACL](#) 934; [MS](#) 113; [V](#) ufa.

Unless you fill up the crack [in your wall], you will have to build a [whole new] wall. Prevention is better than cure.

369. Usistaajabie yasiyokuwapo, stajabia yaliyopo. [NGU](#).

Don't wonder about things that did not happen; wonder about things that are here now.

370. Utauma kumi, usipate kimoja. [JKP](#).

You will bite ten [fingers] and not get one [thing].. Biting fingers signifies regret and self-reproach - [JK](#).

371. Utegemee mgomba ungali wima. [AL](#) 264; [AL](#) mgomba.

Support the banana tree while it is still standing. Take care of your business before it is too late. Cf.195.

372. Vunja dari uezeke paa. [KA](#).

Destroy the ceiling so that you can cover the roof.

373. Vunja mifupa [wakati] ungali na meno. [KB](#) 338.

Break the bones while you have teeth.

374. Vuta kikoi cha mkuu ukisahauliwa. [EM](#) v5.

Pull the loincloth of the boss, if you are forgotten. Show that you need help.

375. Wakati hauna saburi. [AL](#) 1628.

Time has no patience. Time does not stand still.

376. Wakati hujazi (or hujaza) mwenye kuwahi. [AL](#) 253.

Time favors the eager ones [early ones].

376a. Wakati wa heri sasa, sasa! Fanya mambo sasa! [SPK](#).

The very best time - now! Do things now!

377. Wakilia tutacheka. [EM](#) w8.

When they weep, we'll laugh. Cf. 337.

378. Wakutanguliao chanoni hukuzidi tonge. [KA](#).

Those who are ahead of you at the buffet have bigger mouthfuls than you. They have more on their plates than you. Chanoni: at the big serving plate.

379. Walalapo tukeshe. [EM](#) w11.

When they sleep we should be awake. Do not rest on what you have achieved.

379a. Watu wengi hukutunza, watakwamba kisa pia. [SPK](#).

Many people are watching you and they will talk about you as well.

380. Ya tanaki si ya tundwi. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

The wate in a tin is not as good as the water in a stone pot. Water in a stone pot is the symbol of a wife at home. Tanaki: a four-gallon tin, a debe. Tundwi, mtungi: waterpot.

381. Yaliyopita yamepita, yaliyosalia kitupe cha mongo. [SACL](#) 581; [SPK](#) tuyatupe.

What is passed is passed, what remains let's throw it behind us.

Mongo: abbreviation of mwongo or mgongo, back. Cf. 194.

381a. Yatakapo mkutia mwenye njaa hujutia. [SPK](#).

When need comes the hungry person will be sorry (having no provisions).

382. Zamani hairudi. [NGU](#).

The past does not come back.

383. Ziba mwanya usipite panya. [KA](#); [SM](#).

Stop the crack in the wall, so the mouse will not get through.

Mwanya, ufa: crack. Cf. 368.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Ambition

384. Afungaye kibwebwe si bure ana mchezo. [MEM](#) 17.

She who ties a [broad strip of calico as a] waistbelt does not do so for nothing, she is [intent] on playing. If somebody is getting involved with something, it is clear that that person thinks it is worthwhile.

385. Ahangaikaye sana na jua ajua. [SM](#).

One who slaves in the sun knows [what he/she is doing]. Does not work in vain. A person with an aim or purpose.

386. Akishindwa sultani, raia huweza nini? [JKP](#).

When the sultan knows no solution to a problem (lit., is defeated), what can the citizens do? Cf. 438.

387. Aliye na hamu ya kupanda juu hukeshu. [MA](#) 41.

A person who desires to rise [in society] must stay awake.

388. Aliyetangulia katangulia; afuataye akazane. [NGU](#).

The one who is ahead is ahead; the one who follows must make an effort.

389. Anayejitahidi hufaidi. [SM](#).

One who tries hard will profit. Encouragement to exert oneself.

390. Anayetaka hachoki hata akichoka (huwa) keshapata. [F](#) 3.25; [KA](#).anayetafuta.

One who craves for something does not get tired; and if tired, that person has already acquired it. Said to somebody who's giving up - [KA](#).

391. Apanda kilele, hupiga kelele. [RSP](#) 79.

One climbs to the top to make noise. Or: One who climbs to the top, usually makes noise. Boasts about it.

392. Atakaye kufuga ng'ombe aanze na kuku. [EM](#) 17.27.

One who would like to raise a cow should start with a hen. Don't despise small beginnings.

393. Atetemeshae mti wenye matunda hutaraji matunda kumwangukia. [MA](#) 78.

One who shakes a fruit tree expects some fruit to fall his/her way. Said of a dependent expecting favors - [MM](#). Cf.160.

394. Awashaye ndiye ajikunaye. [EM](#) 19.31.

One who itches, scratches. "A person should do what is possible, and not wait for other people to find a solution" - [EM](#).

395. Bahari haivukwi kwa kuogelea. [EM](#) 22.2.

You cannot cross the ocean by swimming.

396. Banda likikushinda, jenga kibanda. [EM](#) 24.8.

If you can't build a hut, build a shack.

397. Chuma hakimegwi - changarawe haitafunwi. [NGU](#).

Iron is not broken and sand is not chewed. About something that cannot be done.

398. Chungu huwinda mitungi ya asali. [MEM](#) 155.

The ant hunts the honey pots.

399. Daima mbele. [NGU](#).

Always forward.

400. Dau dogo huambaa mwambao, kubwa huenda penye kilindi. [EM](#) 46.9.

A little boat keeps near the shore, a larger vessel ventures out to the deep sea. Do not try things too big for you.

401. Fanikio huzaa fanikio. [EM](#) f3.

Success breeds success. A person successful in a certain project is encouraged to attempt another one. Nothing succeeds like success.

402. Haja ya mwenye haki ni mema. [NGU](#).

What a good person is looking for is doing good deeds.

403. Hata mzee anapanda mchikichi. [AL](#) 604.

Even an old person climbs the palm tree. Harvesting palm nuts asks for much strength and agility. The understanding is that an old person presumes himself capable of vigorous things like having a chance with a young woman - [AL](#).

404. Hukupata nguvu za kushinda njovu. [RSP](#) 73.

You do not have the strength to defeat an elephant. "Don't try the impossible" - [JK](#).
Njovu elephant (also tembo).

405. Huna mshipi, hu nangwe: kuomoa tenga na nini? [T](#) 104; [SACL](#) 683.

You have not line nor rope: with what [do you think] to land a sea-monster? Said of somebody who undertakes an impossible task. Hu nangwe is probably a contraction of huna ugwe: you have no rope - [T](#), [SACL](#). Tenga, ma-: a sea monster, a very large kind of flat fish with a long tail - [J](#).

406. Huwezi kujua ukiwezacho mpaka umejaribu. [NGU](#).

You cannot know what you can do until you have tried.

407. Ikinona sana hujikaanga yenyewe. [REK](#).

If it gets very fat it will fry itself. Said about somebody who is exaggerating, overdoing or showing off.

408. Jaribu - uone. [NGU](#).

Try and you'll see [know].

409. Jitihadi haiondoi kuduru ya mungu. [F](#) 13.5; [B](#) 4.26; [L](#) 29; [MM](#); [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2 haiondoshi; [MEM](#) 260; [FSM](#) 58.

Effort does not annul the power of God.

Jitihadi haiondoi amri ya mungu. [T](#) 115; [A](#) 72; [WIKON](#) 49; [SACL](#) 190; [KB](#) 84 jitahidi.

All man's effort can do nothing against the will of God - [SACL](#).

Jitahadi na bidii hazondoi makadari. [T](#) 116; [SACL](#) 494 kandara

Diligence and zeal do not annul what is appointed by God. Muslims believe that everything is ordained from birth to death by God. A person's means of subsistence, day and time of death are fixed. Those things a person cannot change, how much one tries. This should help a person to accept failure. One cannot change one's destiny, so don't be upset. Also in great difficulties leave the outcome in the hands of God - [MARA](#). Cf.1949, 1950, 1973.

410. Juhudi si pato. [J](#) jitahadi; [KB](#) 26.

Trying is not the same as succeeding - [J](#). Notwithstanding the effort, one does not always get what one aimed for.

411. Kaa na kula utakula kilima. [NGU](#).

Sit and eat, you'll eat a hill. Stand up and work to get more and you can eat a mountain.

412. Kagupema ni utanguzi. [EM](#) k1.

Early rising is being ahead. "The early bird catches the worm."

413. Kama kuna muhogo, kivunde hakiliki. [AL](#) 39.

When [sweet] cassava is available, cassava in fermentation is not eaten. It would be foolish to abstain from what is better. Kivunde: cassava which has been steeped until fermentation has begun.

414. Kama u mbaya, jifunze kuimba. [NGU](#).

If you [feel] bad, learn to sing. Do better, do something new, something positive to lift your spirits.

415. Kelele za chura hazimkatazi ng'ombe kunywa maji. [KA](#).

The noise of the frog does not stop the cow from drinking water.

416. Kelele za mlango haziniwasi hekima. [NGU](#).

The creaking of the door does not deprive me of respect. Does not take away my good name.

417. Kelele za mlango haziniwasi usingizi.

[F](#) 14.8; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) kelele; [AL](#) 1857.

The creaking of the door deprives me of no sleep. Do not care about words of complaint of other people, because you know that they cannot harm you - [MARA](#).

Haziniwasi = hazinikoseshi: they do not deprive me.

Kelele za mlango hazimwudhi mwenye nyumba. [MS](#) 131.

The creaking of the door doesn't bother the owner of the house. One gets used to those things and doesn't notice even what is wrong.

418. Kelele za mpagaji hazimuasi mwenye nyumba kulala. [MARA](#) 3.

The noise of the tenant does not deprive the homeowner of sleep.

But also: **Kelele za mwenye nyumba hazimkatazi (or hazimuudhi) mgeni kulala.** [KA](#); [SM](#).

The noise of the owner of the house does not stop the guest from sleeping. One in need accepts inconveniences.

419. Kijana mzima hupanda milima. [RSP](#) 25.

A healthy young person climbs mountains. Youth can do anything - [JK](#).

420. Kila chombo kwa (or na) wimbile. [CM](#) 60; [H](#) 51; [F](#) 15.15; [B](#) 3.43;

[FSM](#) 67; vchombo [kwa=na]; [KS](#) wimbi; [KA](#).

Every ship [will be wrecked] on its own wave. Said of someone who is too ambitious and wants things above his reach. Cut your coat according to your cloth - [MM](#). Every person has his/her own fate - [SPK](#). Cf.400, 423.

421. Kila mtu hutengeneza ulimwengu wake. [AL](#) ulimwengu.

Every one arranges his/her way of life.

422. Kila mwanzo ni mzito. [KB](#) 102.

All beginning is difficult.

Kila mwanzo ngumu. [AL](#) 134.

423. Kila ndege huruka kwa bawa lake. [KB](#) 99; [F](#) 15.19; [H](#) 51 and [SWA](#) 9: kwa ubawa wake; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) ruka.

Every bird flies with its own wings. Each bird flies according to the power of its wings - [MARA](#).

Kila ndege ana ubawa wake. [FSM](#) 65.

Every bird has its own wing. Every person has his own endowment; one must not go beyond one's possibilities.

Kila ndege na mlo wake. [AL](#) 661.

Every bird has its own food. There's no accounting for tastes. Cf. 420.

424. Kila tawangu lina kifuniko (or mfiniko wake) chake. [JKP](#).

Every casket has its lid. Every girl will find a husband - [JK](#).

Tawangu : a jewelry casket [with lid] made of silver, copper or wood.

425. Kila ufanyacho kifanye vema. [NGU](#).

Whatever you do, do it well.

426. Kiwambazi kilikushinda, miye nitawezaje! [AL](#) 455.

The mud wall was too much for you [to build], how then will I be able to do it!

427. Kizuri usichoweza kukifanya usikithamini. [NGU](#).

Don't hold dear the nice thing that you cannot achieve.

428. Kobe atakufa asipojikuna nyumaye mwenyewe. [JKP](#).

The tortoise will die without ever having scratched his own back. "Many people have never achieved a high purpose in their lives" - [JK](#).

429. Kuishi ni dhamiri. [SAM](#) 10.15.

Living is the intention. What makes a life worthwhile is having a purpose, an aim.

430. Kujidai ni maji ya maharagwe. [REK](#).

Claiming something falsely is like the water beans are cooked in. It is lacking substance.

Alijidai usultani: he claimed a sultanship, without having a right to it. False pretence.

431. Kulenga si kufuma. [F](#) 18.54; [A](#) 124 has kulekeza.

Aiming is not the same as hitting.

Kwekeza siko kufuma. [JKP](#).

Aiming is not the same as hitting.

An extension of the proverb: **Kulekeza si kufuma, ndiyo yaliyo, mwandani.** [T](#) 176; [KB](#) elekeza; [SACL](#) 202, 229.

Aiming is not hitting, that is the case, my friend.

Kuelekeza si kufuma, na kuchumbia si kuo. [MM](#).

Aiming is not the same as hitting and wooing is not the same as marrying.

Used of people who make many plans after which they are content to sit back as though they had attained their aspirations.

Mwenye kulekeza hajafuma. [SPK](#).

The one who has aimed has not hit yet. Do not cry victory too soon - [SPK](#). Cf. 2759.

432. Kuni zikikosa, moto huzimika. [KB](#) 130.

If firewood is lacking, the fire dies. An organisation without a leader cannot survive.

But also: Without input no organisation will survive.

433. Kwenda mbele (or kutangulia mbele) siyo kufika. [KA](#).

Going in front does not mean arriving at the destination.

434. Langu halijesha, lako limekwisha. [JKP](#).

My word is not finished yet, yours is finished. "I have more and better arguments" - [JK](#).

Halijesha = hali-ja-isha:: it is not finished.

435. Mama wee! Niulaga nunda mla watu. [SACL](#) 949.

Eh, mother! I'll kill that man-eating monster. A children's boast/hunter's song (Nights of Zanzibar).

N.B.: Ulaga (Nyika dialect) or ua: kill.

436. Mbwa kufukuza tembo ni kuchokoza bure. [AL](#) 699.

A dog chasing away an elephant is a useless effort. A pretentious person is open to ridicule.

437. Mchinjaji hataki kumwona mwingine akichinja. Swahili March 1967, p.106.

A butcher does not want to see somebody else slaughtering. Professional jealousy.

438. Mfupa uliomshinda fisi, mbwa atauweza? Swahili March 1968.

Can a dog crush the bone that defeated a hyena?

Mfupa ulishinda fisi, binadamu hawezi [kuuvunja]. [KB](#) 178.

The bone got the better of the hyena, how then can a person? This is said of a stubborn child, who does not listen to advice - [KB](#).

439. Mimi chigi, kimara migunda, mganamba ni mdogo. [KB](#) p.467.

I am chigi, I finish harvests, although you call me small. Chigi: name of a small yellow bird, which comes in flocks to lay waste whole grain fields.

440. Miye mtoto wa mama kisamvu-kichacha: muhogo hauivishi ndizi mbivu. Maniema dialect. [AL](#) 131.

I am a child of mother "bitter cassava leaves." Everybody has his/her own limitations - [AL](#).

440a. Mpango si matumizi. [SPK](#).

A plan [alone] is no use. It is the implementation of the plan that makes it useful - [SPK](#)

441. Mpe mwana jina akue. [REK](#).

Give the child a name to grow up to. Name is important. A child tries to imitate its namesake.

442. Msafiri hula usafiri wake. [NGU](#).

A traveler has a hard time.

Kula as an idiom changes meaning according to the accompanying noun:

kula hasara: eat damage, loss, lose.

kula kiapo: eat an oath, swear.

kula mate: to eat sputum, having no food.

kula matu: to go extremely fast. Cf. 454.

443. Msafiri mbali, hupita jabali. [RSP](#) 128.

The traveller [who is determined to go] far, will pass the mountain. Cf. 1094.

444. Msasi haogopi miiba. [F](#) 30.101; [B](#) 1.70.

A hunter is not afraid of thorns. Someone who wants to succeed must not be afraid of difficulties.

445. Mshale usio nyoya hauendi mbali. [L](#) 58; [Y](#) mshare usiwo.

An arrow without a feather will not go far. Certain things are necessary for success, though seemingly unimportant - [L](#).

Mvi usiopambwa vema huyua. [SACL](#) 1032.

An arrow ill-feathered goes askew. Cf. 859.

446. Mshoni hachagui nguo. [F](#) 30.104; [MARA](#) 3.

A tailor does not choose the cloth. One must do with what one has. A teacher does not choose students.

447. Msinji ukiinama hauna nguvu; usiustaki ukuta ukianguka. [AL](#) 301.

A foundation that is not level is not strong; don't blame the wall if it falls down.

448. Mtaka cha mvunguni huinama. [F](#) 30.108; [L](#) 60; [T](#) 316; [V](#) 65; [KA](#).

The one who wants what is under the bed must stoop for it. Good things are not easily obtained, one must strive to get them.

Mvungu: "The people [of Zanzibar] make use of the place beneath the bed as a place of storage for such articles as cooking utensils, provisions, etc." - [F](#). "Stoop to conquer" - [SWA](#). If you want something, work for it - [SPK](#).

Mtaka cha mvunguni sharti ainame. [B](#) 2.22; [H](#) 76; [JK](#) 121; [AL](#) 362; [KS](#) mvungu; [SWA](#) 43; [RECH](#) 378, mpenda cha; [MARA](#) 68, ukipenda cha... uiname.

A special application: If you are interested in other peoples' dirty laundry, you will have to debase yourself - [JK](#). If one wants to enjoy the advantages of a situation, one must be willing to compromise - [AL](#). Cf. 449.

449. Mtaka kilicho mbali hukitembelea. [MA](#) 352.

One who wants what is far away walks to it. One has to make all possible efforts to succeed.

450. Mtaka mbele mpishe. [SAM](#) 16.22.

Let a person who wants to go ahead, pass. If you don't you'll have a fight on your hands. Cf. 4084.

451. Mtashi asio kitu nakae akitamani. [T](#) 319a; [SACL](#). 608.

Let a person who desires, but has nothing, stay a-wanting. Said of someone who has no ambition, but envies others - MM.

452. Mtashi haoni haya. [T](#) 319c; [L](#) 112; [SACL](#) 608.

A person who has a great need has no shame. A beggar has no fear of what people may say - Sacl.

453. Mtazama mbele haoni nyuma. [NGU](#).

One who looks forward does not see what is behind.

454. Mtembezi hula miguu (or maguu) yake. [F](#) 31.113; [T](#) 322; [CM](#) 53; [B](#) 1.72; [MS](#) 49; [V](#) mtembezi; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) mtembezi; [SPK](#).

An [aimless] wanderer wears [lit., eats] away his/her feet. Lives off his/her feet - [J](#) tembea.

A loafer uses up all his energy for nothing. Said to a child who is late for a meal.

However the Sukuma proverb: **Nyeji akulyaga magulu gakwe**, is translated: the walker eats on foot. The man who moves around is never hungry.

Mtembea saa ya chakula akifika watu wamekila. [SPK](#).

The traveller at mealtime, when he/she arrives, people have eaten - [SPK](#). Cf. 2772.

455. Mtendee kafiri upate mradi wako. [FSM](#) 132.

Work for the unbeliever to obtain your goal. Overcome your antipathy towards a task or person in order to get the thing you need or want.

Kafiri: an unbeliever. In this case, someone you do not like.

456. Mtu huwa atakavyokuwa. [MA](#) 381.

A person becomes what he wants to become.

457. Mtumikie kafiri ili upate mradi wake. [REK](#); F 32.128.

Serve [even] an unbeliever to attain your own ends. Mradi: project. Cf. 455.

458. Mwanzo mateso, mwisho furaha. [AL](#) 130.

A beginning is painful, the end is enjoyable. A happy ending comes after a painful effort.

459. Mwenye kuamka mbele anamtukana mwenzake utongo. [AL](#) 138.

The one who rises first in the morning laughs at a bleary-eyed companion. Activity is better than laziness. Utongo: discharge from the eyes.

459a. Mwenye kujitahidi hufula. [SPK](#).

The one who makes an effort will succeed.

460. Mwenye meno makali ndiye mmaliza nyama. [NGU](#).

The person with sharp teeth is the one who finishes the meat.

461. Mwisho wa malisho ni kamba. [EM](#) m36.

The limit of the meadow is the rope. A cow tied with a rope can only feed on the grass up to the point where the stretched rope reaches - [EM](#). The goat must browse where it is tied.

462. Mzoweza kwenda mbio, harudi kungwa kule. [JKP](#).

One who is used to running does not turn back even if it is still far [to go]. An active character achieves his goal - [JK](#).

463. Nachezea chini, sichezei juu. [AL](#) 27.

I play for here below, I don't play for high-up. Present life takes precedence over the unobtainable.

Nachezea udongo, sichezei mbingu. [AL](#) 28.

I play for the earth, I don't play for heaven.

464. Ndovu ni mnyama mkubwa lakini hazai mapacha. [REK](#).

The elephant is a big animal but she does not give birth to twins.

465. Omitted.

466. Pata awezaye kukishua chombo. [JKP](#).

Get someone who can push the boat down [into the water]. "Choose a strong and able man to help you. Advice to young girls to get themselves husbands who can perform successfully" - [JK](#).

467. Pata wewe. [NGU](#).

You get it. You do it. If you cannot compete you say: "You get it."

468 pemba akipata gogo hanyi chini. [AL](#) 40.

The inhabitant of Pemba Island does not relieve himself on the ground if he finds a tree trunk to sit on.

469. Samaki mfu hufuata mkondo, samaki hai huenda kinyume cha mk. [EM](#) s1.

A dead fish floats down stream; a live one goes up stream. Cf. 1050.

470. Sifa humfanya mwema mwema zaidi, mbaya mbaya zaidi. [NGU](#).

Honor makes a good person better and a bad person worse.

471. Sifa kama mtu huwa nyeupe kadiri inavyozeeka. [NGU](#).

Honor is like a person getting white hair when getting older.

472. Sifanye mashindano na mtu. [T](#) 483; [A](#) 120.

Do not make strivings with a person. Never match thyself with [any] person. Cooperation, not competition.

Sishindane na akushindao. [MM](#).

Do not compete with one who is more powerful than you.

473. Tumaini hadi mwisho. [NGU](#).

Keep hoping until the end. Be confident.

474. Ukibomoa tofali, jenga kwa mawe. [NGU](#).

If you destroy [your house of] bricks, build with stones.

475. Ukicha kutajwa (or kusemwa), hutatenda jambo. [JK](#) 131. [KS](#) cha.

If you are afraid to be talked about, you will not do anything. Cf. 2015.

476. Ukichungua alacho kuku hutamla. [L](#) 98; [KB](#) chungua; [SACL](#) 156; [V](#) kuku; [AL](#) 922-23.

If you observe what a chicken eats, you will not eat the chicken. If one knew all the difficulties involved in a project, one might not have started it. "Do not ask too many questions" - [MM](#).

"If you spy on your wife, she'll escape you" - [SACL](#), [KB](#).

Kuku ukimchungua, nunu hutamla kuku. From a poem by K.H.A Akilimali.

If you see what a chicken eats, mama you would not eat the chicken.

Nunu, The twenty-fifth letter of the Swahili-Arab alphabet - Sacl. A polite way of calling someone Kiswahili sanifu..

Variations: **Ukimchungua bata humlii.** [KB](#) 312.

If you watch a goose, you will not eat it.

Ungalijua alacho nyuki usingalionja asali. [F](#) 4 26; [KB](#) 320 hungalionja.

Had you known what bees eat, you would not have tasted honey. Ignorance is sometimes better than knowledge - [KB](#). Cf 477.

477. Ukila kuku - sitazame (or usiulize) chakula chake. [NGU](#).

If you eat chicken - don't look [don't ask] what it eats. Cf. 478

478. Ukila na timsaha, hutapata nyingi raha. [RSP](#) 95.

If you want to eat with the crocodile, you will not have much pleasure - [JK](#).

Do not be too ambitious; stay with your own people.

Timsaha [dialect], mamba, ngwena: crocodile.

479. Ukilima-lima uinuke, ni vitu vya walaji wengi. [AL](#) 298.

If you work hard on your farm, look up [you are preparing] food for many mouths. Greater activity profits others - [AL](#).

480. Ukioka samaki, huwezi kuondoa manyoya ya kuku. [KB](#) 305.

If you bake fish, you cannot pluck a chicken at the same time. One must not have too many irons in the fire. Do one thing at a time.

481. Ukipenda ghafi utaona safi. [NGU](#).

If you like dirt, you'll become clean. To obtain good things one must go through hardship.

482. Ukitaka kujenga usione taabu kubomoa. [SAM](#) 24.7.

If you want to build you must be willing to destroy.

483. Unyoshe miguu kadiri ya kitanda. [AL](#) 290.

Stretch your legs according to the length of your bed. Spend according to your means.

Common sayings: Stretch your arm no further than your sleeve will reach; Everyone stretches his legs according to the length of the coverlet.

484. Upepo huchukua vingi na kufikisha kidogo. [KB](#) 322.

The wind removes much but brings very little. It doesn't take you to your destination.

485. Usibabue kima wawili motoni, mmoja ataungua mkia. [PM](#) 84; [AL](#) 275; [AL](#) babua.

Do not skin two monkeys over fire [at the same time], one will have a burned tail.

Cf. 480, 1543, 1546, 1547.

486. Usidhani. [NGU](#).

Don't guess.

487. Usijaze kitungo chako kwa chikichi zisizofaa. [KB](#) 329; [AL](#) 292.

Don't fill your basket with useless nutshells. Look for the useful only.

Kitungo: a small round flat basket used for sifting husks from grains by tossing.

488. Usile yungu, ukashindwa na kiyembo. [ED](#) 80.

Don't eat the gourd, otherwise you may be overcome by the stem. Do not start things too big for you.

Kiyembo (Lamu dialect): stem of the fruit.

489. Usinywe kama tembo, utapasuka tumbo (or usifuate tembo kunywa, utapasuka tumbo). [PM](#) 82.1.

Do not try to drink as an elephant, you will rend your stomach - [PM](#): Fables of La Fontaine.

Ukimwiga tembo kunya utapasula mkundu. [KA](#); Vtembo.

If you want to match the heap left behind by the elephant, something will give. Don't try to do things too big for you, such as living beyond your means. Cf. 82.

490. Usipokubali kutia mguu majini hutavuka kijito. [NGU](#).

If you don't want to put your foot in the water, you'll not cross the brook. Take the right means.

491. Usitafuta ugumu pasipo ugumu. [AL](#) tafuta.

Don't look for something difficult that has no hardship.

492. Usitake makubwa kabla madogo hujayaweza. [NGU](#).

Don't desire to do big things before you have accomplished small ones.

493. Usiufuate mguu unakokwenda. [NGU](#).

Don't follow your foot where it is going. Know where you are going and what you are doing. Have a purpose in life.

494. Usotongelewa haudungi [hautungi]. [KA](#); [SM](#).

What is not sharp pointed does not penetrate.

Usotongelewa, [usiochongelewa]: what is not sharpened. Haudungi [hauchomi]: does not pierce. Hautungi : does not put together; e.g., put pieces of meat on a skewer. Cf. 445.

495. Uta wangu haufumi shore ila ngurama (or uta wangu kaufuma shore ela ngurama). [T](#) 560; [SACL](#) 681.

My bow does not kill swallows, but only big birds. I am after bigger and better game.

Ngurama: a big bird.

496. Utakwenda utarudi. [JK](#) 123; [AL](#) 1551.

You will go, you will return. Do not be too ambitious.

497. Utumainie mmea ulioisha panda. [AL](#) 146.

Put your hope on the plant you have planted. Work has promise for the future.

498. Vyanzo vyote vigumu. [AL](#) anza.

All beginnings are difficult. Cf. 422.

499. Wa mbele hakai nyuma. [V](#) mbele.

One who is in front does not stay back [stay behind].

Wa nyuma mbele hafiki. [JK](#) 129.

The one who is behind does not arrive in front.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Anger

500. Asojua kusamehe nasitumai kusamehewa. [MA](#) 75.

One who does not know to forgive, should not expect to be forgiven.

501. Chungu kidogo huchemka upesi. [EM](#) 39.19; [MEM](#) 156.

A small pot boils quickly. It takes very little to anger a small mind - [EM](#).

A little help now is better than complete help later - [MEM](#). MEM puts this proverb in the category of hamadi kibindoni, 186.

502. Dawa kubwa ya hasira ni kuchelea. [EM](#) 46.10.

The greatest remedy for anger is delay.

502a. Dia hailali. [SPK](#).

Revenge does not sleep.

503. Ghadabu ni kali, hasira ni gharika. [NGU](#).

Anger is fierce, but wrath is like a flood.

Ghadabu and hasira : hate. Ghadabu is short; hasira is more personal; resentment.

504. Hasara - mwana wa hasira. [NGU](#).

Damage [loss] is the child of anger. Cf. 505.

505. Hasira [ni] hasara. [E](#) 11.12; [SWA](#) 23; [H](#) 40; 1 22; [MARA](#) 20; [KB](#) 66.

Anger is loss. Anger damages and is a wasted effort. Said of people who display much emotion.

506. Hasira huinua mikuki; uvumilivu huinua madafu. [EM](#) H.20.

Anger lifts spears, forbearance draws coconuts. "a patient person invites the provoker to join for a drink of coconut juice" - EM.

Coconut juice is a refreshing drink given to visitors.

507. Hasira hupoozesha urafiki. [EM](#) H18.

Hot tempers cool friendship. Especially if the reason for anger is not explained - [EM](#). Cf. 505.

508. Hasira ni anasa ghali. [EM](#) H19.

Anger is a costly luxury. Especially when a valuable article or relationship is destroyed - [EM](#). Cf. 520.

509. Hasira ni ukichaa mfupi. [NGU](#).

Anger is a short madness. Kichaa: madness.

510. Hasira utumwa. [EM](#) H25.

Anger is slavery. "if anger is not controlled, it controls" - [EM](#). Cf. 528.

511. Hasira ya mkizi furaha ya mvuvi. [H](#) 96; [B](#) 3.57; [FSM](#) 45; [KS](#) mkizi.

The anger of the cuttlefish is the joy of the fisherman. An angry person hurts himself most often. Folklore tells us that the angry cuttlefish, when caught on the line, will jump out of the water into the boat of the fisherman.

Hasira za mkizi tijara ya mvuvi. [ED](#) 15; [MARA](#) 21; [KA](#).

The anger of the cuttlefish fish is the profit of the fisherman.

Hasira za mkizi furaha [tijara] ya mwenye wando. [KS](#); [JKP](#).

The anger of the 'eel' is the joy [profit] of the one who has the net - [JKP](#).

Wando or tando: net. **Tando la buibui**: spider's web. **Kuvua kwa tando**: women fishing with their wraparound. Wando: a stone barrier for catching fish in a river - Sacl. Mkizi : cuttlefish fish, octopus.

512. Ijapo ghadhabu huja aibu. [NGU](#).

Where anger arrives shame will come too. Shame, regrets follow anger.

513. Jibu la haki halihitaji hasira. [EM](#) j8.

A sound reply does not require one to say it in anger. A person may not be obliged to answer a question, but if he does, he should do so without anger - [EM](#).

514. Jibu la upole hupunguza hasira. [NGU](#).

A kind answer reduces anger.

515. Kukasirika, kughururika. [RSP](#) 78.

To lose one's temper is to go astray - [RSP](#).

516. Maji ya mfereji hayakawii kupita. [AL](#) 814.

Water of a freshet [mountain stream] passes quickly.

517. Maji yenye kutokota hayakawii kupoa. [AL](#) 813.

Boiling water does not linger to cool off. Cf. 2838, 2886, 3083.

518. Mimi ni nguva, sihimili jeraha. [SACL](#) 682; [KS](#) nguva..

I am like a dugong, i die of the least wound. Do not anger me more, that could have evil consequences.

Nguva:: dugong, large herbivorous mammal of indian seas, similar to a manatee. Cf. 526.

518a. Mnyonge hana hasira. [SPK](#).

A poor person is never angry. The poor are always patient and humble, knowing that they are losers. Indeed being too soft. It might help to show anger from time to time - [SPK](#).

519. Moto hauzai moto. [F](#) 29,91.

Fire does not beget fire.

Moto hauzai moto, huzaa majivu. [MARA](#) 43.

Fire does not give birth to fire, but to ashes. Could also be used to say that bright and honest parents do not necessarily have bright and honest children - [MM](#). Cf. 509.

520. Mpiga ngumi (or konde) ukutani [ni] huumiza mkonowe.

[F](#) 29.97; [B](#) 2.36; [KB](#) 197; 1 56; [MARA](#) 45; [MS](#) 166 huumia; [T](#) 308; [A](#) 292.

He who strikes the wall with his fist hurts his hand. Do not fight those stronger than you.

521. Mto ukivuma chini mna mawe. [AL](#) 815.

If the river thunders, there are stones in its bed. Even if the river grumbles, its bed reposes on stones. People in authority must accept their subjects, anger does not change anything - [AL](#).

522. Mwenye ghadhabu mbele yake husimama shetani. [V](#) 31.

The devil stands in front of an angry person. Cf. 528.

523. Mwenye hasira anachelewa. [AL](#) 810.

An angry person arrives too late. Anger makes a person miss his chance.

524. Mwenye hasira hawezi kulima mpunga. [AL](#) 811.

A person who is coleric is incapable of farming rice. That person is irresponsible, lacks patience.

525. Mwenye hasira hawezi kuongoza mbuzi njiani. [AL](#) 454.

An irascible person cannot lead goats on the way. Anger is the cause of bad treatment. This is said of a caretaker of a widow's children and not fit to be a tutor.

525a. Mwili una vifundo vifundo. [SPK](#).

The body is full of knots [meaning bones that stick out]. A person is full of hidden rancor and grudges.

526. Nyumba ya udongo haihimili vishindo. [F](#) 40.24; [KS](#) himili.; [SPK](#) hailindi..

A mud hut cannot withstand great shocks. Said of a quick-tempered person who cannot bear to be put out. Only rich people with big masoned houses can afford to quarrel in private.

Kifua chake nyumba ya udongo, haihimili vishindo. [J](#) kifua; [AL](#) 683.

His chest is like a mud-house, it cannot withstand shocks. Cf. 518, 3957.

527. Piga magoti hauawi. [EM](#) p21.

One who kneels is not killed. A person who surrenders is not killed. One who asks for pardon is not punished - [EM](#).

528. Ukiwamo ghadhabuni, atakunyata shetani. [RSP](#) 53.

It is when you are in anger that the devil will get hold of you. Cf. 522.

529. Usafishapo uso unamaliza penye kidevu. [EM](#) u24.

When you wash your face, you finish at the chin. This means that if you want to end a dispute, you discuss its causes and then end by an apology - [EM](#).

530. Usiniue kwa majuto kama kasuku. [KA](#).

Don't kill me as the crow and be sorry afterwards. The person killed the crow for a misdeed the crow had not committed.

531. Usinywe jasho; maji yako mbele. [KB](#) 328.

Don't drink your sweat, there is water ahead of you. Don't get angry; after the rain there is sunshine.

532. Usipoteze hasira yako, wengine watafurahi sana kuiona. [NGU](#).

Don't waste your anger, many will be very happy to see you angry.

533. Utakufa na laiti na chanda kili kinywani. [A](#) 95; [T](#) 562. You will die with an alas [i'm sorry] and your finger still at your lips.

Said of people who are not serious in their pursuit of better things. Finger at the lips (mouth) is a gesture of vexation. "said when someone is about to do something and regret it later" -[JKP](#).

534. Wagombanao ndio wapatanao. [F](#) 51.2; [B](#) 2.47; [KB](#) 340; [MARA](#) 3.

Those who quarrel are those who make it up. One must not quarrel all the time: man is made for reconciliation - [KB](#).

Watetao hupatana. [JK](#) 118.

Quarrelers usually reconcile.

535. Waja uma kumi usipate hata kimoja. [KA](#); [SM](#).

You come and bite ten [fingers], but don't get even one. Said if someone quarrels with many, but does not listen and gets nothing out of it. Better to listen to the views of others.

536. Watetea ndizi mgomba si wao. [KA](#).

They quarrel about bananas, but the tree is not theirs. Do not quarrel about things that don't belong to you.

537. Zimwi likujualo, halikuli likakuisha. [F](#) 52.1; [SACL](#) 1044; [B](#) 2.13; [H](#) 112; [RECH](#) 636; [MS](#) 174; [MARA](#) 2.

A demon who knows you will not eat you completely. A father, no matter how angry, does not kill his child. A husband may beat his wife, but he does not go as far as to kill her. A person you are acquainted with will not cause you extreme harm. He must bear in mind your kindness. And you should have the same attitude towards him - [MARA](#).

538. Zinga mikono hapigwi. [EM](#) z2.

One holding his hands together above his forehead is not beaten. That person surrenders, asking for pardon. Cf. 527.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Appearance-beauty

539. Chikichi ni tunda zuri, ila hamna mnofu ndani yake. [AL](#) 540.

The palm nut is a nice fruit, but there is no meat inside.

540. Chui kuficha kucha hawi paka. [NGU](#).

A leopard hiding its claws does not become a kitten.

541. Dosari hakuna ndogo. [BM](#) 13.

There is no small blemish. One rotten fruit spoils the whole basket. A bad member of the family or neighborhood spoils all members.

Dosari: blemish, defect, kink. Cf. 758.

542. Gimba lisilo akili ni gogo. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

A brainless giant is like a tree log. Don't give an important job to such a person, however big, fearsome or beautiful that person may be. Gimba or kimba: a giant.

543. Halifai la kupambaza. [NGU](#).

It's useless to beautify. A good person does not need to add other things.

544. Inzi hawana ugomvi na chungu. [EM](#) i12.

Flies have no quarrel with the pot. The many flies around the pot seem to be angry, but they are looking for food. Sometimes the first impressions are wrong.

545. Jamala mtuni utu, sifa ya ndege si mabawa. [JKP](#).

The beauty of a person is mainly his/her good character; the bird is not praised for its wings. A bird is praised for its songs or meat.

Jamala: beauty, goodness, kindness.

546. Kambare mzuri kwa mwili, ndani machafu. [AL](#) 535.

A catfish has a nice body, but it is full of dirt. A catfish, also called mudfish, often has a bad smell.

547. Kata pua uunge wajihi. [F](#) 14.4; [B](#) 2.15; [H](#) 47; [MS](#) 176.

Cut off your nose to mend your face. Used, e.g., of a person going into debt to keep up appearances. Does not have the same meaning as the english proverb, "to cut off one's nose to spite one's face," which is said of one who, to be revenged of his neighbor, has materially injured himself.

548. Kiingiacho mjini si haramu. [F](#) 14.13; [AL](#) 411; [KS](#) ingia.

What enters town is not prohibited. That which is fashionable in town is never prohibited - [E](#).

If something is done by everybody it becomes accepted. Cf. 1326.

549. Kikombe kizuri hakina maisha [marefu]. [NGU](#).

A beautiful cup [bowl] has no [long] life. Beauty does not last long.

550. Kila ajaye na shoka hapo hawi msaramALA. [JKP](#).

Whoever comes with an axe is not necessarily a carpenter.

551. Kila mwenye kucha si lazima awe simba. [NGU](#).

Not everyone with nails has to be a lion.

552. Kilemba hakimfanyi mstaarabu mtu. [MA](#) 180.

A turban does not make a man civilized.

553. Kondoo mnono mtazame mkia. [NGU](#).

For a fat sheep, just look at its tail. A sheep stores its fat in its tail.

554. Kujiremba siyo kurembeka. [NGU](#).

To adorn oneself is not the same as becoming adorable.

555. Kulima na koya, mwenye mwana hana goya. [T](#) 177; [SACL](#) goya.

Hoeing and resting, a parent has no (time for) his/her toilette. During cultivation time one has intervals of rest, but there is no rest in rearing children.

Goya, made to rhyme with koya (rest): coquettish - [SACL](#).

556. Kwamba (or kama) uzuri waliwa kapike ule (or ale) mwenyewe. [T](#) 208; [MM](#) ale.

If beauty can be eaten, go and cook it and eat it.

557. Macho makavu, midomo miteke. [AL](#) 788.

Fierce eyes, but soft mouth. Lacking courage when it's time to speak up.

558. Manyani hayachekani sura. [NGU](#).

Apes don't laugh at each other's looks.

559. Matege si kitu, bora mwendo. [NGU](#).

Bow legs don't matter, the going is important.

559a. Matunda si mazu, mazu ni mekundu. [SPK](#).

The fruits are not ripe, the ripe ones are red. Said when it is evident that something is not right.

560. Mbawa nzuri ni alama ya ndege mwema. [REK](#).

Beautiful feathers are a sign of a good fowl. Being in good condition.

561. Mgomba haushindwi na mkunguwe. [KA](#).

A banana tree is not overly bothered by its cluster of fruit. A parent is not overly bothered by a misbehaving child. Cf. 569.

562. Mkwara hauhitaji mafuta. [KS](#) mkwara; [AL](#) 677.

The mkwara does not need ointment. A good looking person does not need adornment. Wood of the mkwara tree (much used for firewood) does not need oil [to burn] - [AL](#). An honest person does not need stratagems in order to be respected.

563. Mnyonyore haunuki, hupendeza mauaye. [SAM](#) 15.15; [A](#) 308; [KS](#) mnyonyore; [T](#) 299; [V](#) 149 maua yake; [SACL](#) 579 wapeneza; [AL](#) 659.

The mnyonyore shrub has no scent, [and yet] its flowers are pleasing. Said of people who do good without boasting.

564. Msichana mzuri kumbe funza. [REK](#).

A beautiful girl but just like a statue [lit., an insect].

Funza: insect, jigger; a carving, statue, figure (mbombwe). Kumbe: lo behold (amazement).

565. Mwanya sio pengo. [NGU](#).

A gap between teeth is not the same as the gap of a lost tooth.

Mwanya: the little space between front teeth; a sign of beauty.

566. Mwenye shurubu hakukosa wembe. [NGU](#).

A person with whiskers did not lack a razor. He wanted to grow a beard.

567. Mzuri hakosi kilema. [NGU](#).

A beautiful person is not without a blemish.

568. Ndege mdogo kwa watu, kwao ndege mkubwa. [AL](#) 561.

A bird is small for people, but big among birds. Opinions differ according to people, places and customs - [AL](#).

569. Ng'ombe haelemwi na nunduye. [F](#) 40.20; [B](#) 4.83; [EM](#) n13; [MARA](#) 3.

A cow is not oppressed by its hump. The zebu, common in tanzania, has a big hump on its shoulders. The hump is a storing place of fat during abundance of good pastures.

Do not complain about your burdens and responsibilities - [MM](#). A bulging money belt does not oppress the bearer.

"a parent does not feel the weight of its child" - [EM](#).

Tembo haishindwi hubeba mkonga wake. [KB](#) 293; [EM](#) t19.

Ndovu hashindwi na mkongawe. [KA](#).

Ndovu hashindwi na pembeze. Sm.

An elephant is not encumbered by its trunk. Nature does all wisely - [KB](#). A family is not a burden for the parents, they are proud of it. - [SPK](#)

570. Ngozi ya chui uzuri kwa macho, ndani adui. [AL](#) 552.

A leopard skin is beautiful to see, but inside there is an enemy. Beauty often hides a cruel heart - [AL](#).

571. Njewe zilikuwa za enzi yake. [NGU](#).

Big ear decorations have had their fashion. Njewe, ndewe: a pierced hole in the ear lobe.

572. Nyuki hauliwi na utamu wa asali yake. [REK](#).

The bee is not killed by the sweetness of its honey. Cf. 569.

573. Nyumba njema si mlango, fungua uigie ndani. [MARA](#) 2; sm.

A good home is not only the door; open it and enter. It's impossible to know a welcoming family by looking at the door. It is not until you enter that you will know. You cannot know a good person until you get acquainted - MARA.

574. Nyuso za tumbili ni moja. [NGU](#).

The faces of the monkeys are all the same.

574a. Nzima haikai ila kwa mbovu. [SPK](#).

A new garment does not stay (new and shiny) except with the old one (lit., rotten). Don't wear your new clothes every day - [SPK](#).

575. Penye urembo, ndipo (or penye) urimbo. [F](#) 42.16; [J](#) enye; [SACL](#) 950; [B](#) 4.79; [RECH](#) 435.

Where there is finery, there lies the snare - [E](#). Finery is the instrument of seduction - [Sacl](#). Urimbo or ulimbo: bird lime to ensnare birds.

576. Tabia haina tiba. (on a khangaa.)

Character has no cure. Tiba: medicine.

577. Tabia siyo nguo, haibadiliki kwa urahisi. [NGU](#).

Character is not like clothing, it is not easily changed.

578. Ukikaribia mjini, jipukute vumbi. [EM](#).

If you approach a city dust yourself.

Ukikaribia mjini, badilisha mavazi. [EM](#) u8.

If you approach a city, change your clothing. Show respect to others.

579. Ukimkuta mtu mfupi penye njiapanda, hutamkuta mtoto. [AL](#) 551.

If you meet a short person at the crossroad, don't take him/her for a child. Lit., you will not meet a child.

When the sukuma meet a short person [a pygmy], the pygmy will ask where did you see me [wanibonerahe?], and the sukuma will say: "i saw you from very very far", in order not to anger the pygmy. They call pygmies: wanibonerahe.

580. Ukitaka uzuri sharti udhulike. [F](#) 47.15; [B](#) 2.51; [MM](#) udhulike; [KA](#) nzuri; [AL](#) 159.

If you want beauty, you must suffer pain. To achieve greatness one must work hard. Whatever good thing you want, you'll have to pay for it - [KA](#). Luxury is costly - [AL](#).

Udhulike from udhi; give pain; grammatically should be uadhulike. But udhulike from dhila, to abase, does not require a double u and the proverb could be translated: if you want beauty, you will be debased.

581. Unga unaodharau utakufikisha kisimani. [KB](#) 319.

The flour which you underrated will lead to the well. Will make you successful. Don't judge appearances only. Cf. 89.

582. Urefu siyo akili na ufupi si umaskini. [KB](#) 324.

Length is not intelligence and being short [of stature] does not mean being poor.

583. Usawa wa binadamu umeachana kama ngozi ya pundamilia. [REK](#).

The similarity of people is as different as the hide of a zebra. All people are different from each other.

584. Usifie manyoya ya kanga. [AL](#) 549.

Don't kill yourself for the feathers of the guinea-fowl. To harm oneself for appearance's sake is deceiving - [AL](#).

585. Usihadaike kwa rangi, utamu wa chai sukari. [NGU](#).

Don't be deceived by the color; the delight of tea is the sugar. Look for what is essential.

586. Usimfie mtu mwembamba. [AL](#) 550.

Don't kill yourself for a tall, slim person. A person's worth does not depend on shape - [AL](#).

587. Usione wembamba wa reli gari moshi linapita. [KS](#) reli; [AL](#) 606.

Do not see [only] the narrowness of the railway, when the train passes by - [AL](#).

Don't go for the trivial.

588. Uzuri kiburi, huenda kaburi. [RSP](#) 124.

Beauty and pride go to the grave.

589. Uzuri wa kaburi nje, ndani hujaa uvundo. [AL](#) 557.

A tomb may be nice outside, but inside there is an evil smell.

590. Uzuri wa kanga kuvaa nguo si kusilimika. [AL](#) 544; [AL](#) silimu.

The guinea fowl has beautiful plumage; [however] wearing [beautiful] clothes is not the same as being civilized.

591. Uzuri wa kuyu ndani mabuu. [KA](#).

The mulberry tree is beautiful, however inside it's full of grubs.

592. Uzuri wa makaa, ndani kipande cha miti. [REK](#).

The charcoal is beautiful but inside there is only wood.

593. Uzuri wa mkakasi ndani kipande cha mti. [E](#) 50.56; [T](#) 567; [MS](#) 85; [KS](#) mkakasi.

The beauty of a round casket, inside there is only wood. However beautiful a vanity box on the outside, the inside is wood. Often used to describe a beautiful person with an evil character. But also used to describe things.

Uzuri wa godoro uzuri wa nje tu, kwa ndani mna pamba. [JK](#) 131; [SACL](#) 250. The beauty of a mattress is on the outside, inside there is cotton.

594. Uzuri wa mkakasi, ukipata maji basi. [SACL](#) 557; [KS](#) mkakasi.

What regards the beauty or perfume of the little box, it gets wet and that is the end of it. Mkakasi: a small varnished wooden box imported from india. Uzuri [beauty], a variation of uturi [perfume] - j.

595. Uzuri wa papai, ndani hamna kitu. [AL](#) 538.

A pawpaw looks nice, but inside it's empty. There is no wood.

Papai, the fruit; mpapai, the tree. The inside of the papai tree is good for nothing.

596. Uzuri wa suke la muhindi unaonekana ndani tu. [KB](#) 334.

The beauty of the corn cob is apparent in the inside only. In order to see the condition of the corn [ðseeds], one has to take off the bracts [overleaves]. Don't let appearances fool you.

597. Uzuri wategemea mtazamaji. [NGU](#).

Beauty depends on the one who looks. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

598. Vidole havilingani. [NGU](#).

Toes and fingers are not all the same. So with people.

599. Vipambo na nguo, hazishindi vyuo. [RSP](#) 139.

Ornaments and clothes are not worth more than books or education.

600. Vumilia shida kwa ajili ya panja. [MEM](#) 150.

Suffer hardship for a clear temple. This proverb refers to somebody who gets a haircut, which is not always painless. The one who gets a haircut turns his head here and there as the barber tells him. It is understood that the barber's knife or razor blade was not always honed.

601. Waridi huzungukwa na miiba. [EM](#) w16.

A rose is surrounded by thorns. Nothing beautiful, perfect or good is without problems.

602. Wazuri wa mwanzi uharibiwa tundu lake. [NGU](#).

The beauty of the flute is spoiled by the hole. Mwanzi: bamboo, reed, pipe, tube, musical pipe, flute.

603. Wembamba wa karanga, ndani ngumu. [AL](#) 534.

The thinness of the peanut shell covers a solid [nut]. The outside is deceitful.

604. Zigo la kuliwa halilemei. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2.

The weight of food one eats, does not inconvenience. The load of food someone carries does not hamper the carrier. Because it's to the carrier's advantage. Hard work that is profitable is not heavy. Cf. 569.

605. Zimeondoka nywele kichwa bado kipo. [NGU](#).

The hair is done, but the head is still there.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Association

606. Afukuzwaye hukimbilia agoni. [KS](#) ago.

One who is expelled runs to a refuge. Ago: a camp. Cf. 638, 2022, 2630.

607. Ajikunaye ni awashwaye. [NGU](#).

The one who scratches oneself has an itch. Cf. 735.

608. Akaaye karibu na moto huandaliwa mwanzo. [JKP](#).

The one who sits near the fire is served first. One must have friends at court - [SPK](#).

Mwanzo: kwanza, first. Cf. 697, 711.

609. Akili kubwa-kubwa hufikiri mamoja. [NGU](#).

The great intellects usually think alike.

610. Akina kuku mtegemeo wao mmoja. [AL](#) 847; [AL](#) tegemea.

Chickens and their kind use an identical support. They have the same behaviorism like standing on one leg. People of the same rank, country or status can be recognized.

Mtegemeo: prop, support, also trust. Cf. 786.

611. Alaye maiti, na yake italiwa. [REK](#).

One who eats a corpse will have his/her eaten.

612. Amfuataye mwivi huogopewa kuwa mwivi. [MA](#) 35.

One who follows a thief is feared to become a thief.

613. Amletae nyoka nyumbani akili zake hazimo kichwani. [MA](#) 35.

One who brings a snake home has a head without brains.

614. Anayekataa shangwe ni mchawi. [NGU](#).

The person who refuses rejoicing is a witch. Cf. 615.

615. Anayekataa wengi ni mchawi. [B](#) 4.4; [F](#) 3.22.

A person who dislikes company is a wizard. East Africans especially dislike loners.

Mchawi: a person of either sex who practices magic.

616. Anayekunyoa vibaya ndiye wako. [REK](#).

The person who shaves you badly is your own person [servant, member of family, son or daughter]. Cf. 1651.

617. Apendaye upweke ni mchawi. [REK](#).

A person who lives alone [keeps to self] is a wizard.

617a. Asali na shurubati hayana moja ladhati. [SPK](#).

Honey and syrup are not the same in taste. Not all sweet girls are the same. Honey has a natural sweetness, whereas shurubati, 'sorbet' is a sophisticated combination of delicious flavours - [SPK](#).

618. Asiyе mwamana (or amini) haaminiwi. [J](#) amana.; [MM](#).

One who does not trust others, cannot be trusted.

619. Asiyekujua hakuthamini. [F](#) 4.35; [H](#) 96; [Mulika](#) no.4, p.6; [SWA](#) 67; [MS](#) 104; [FSM](#) 16; [KS](#) thamini; [SPK](#).

One who does not know you, does not value you. This proverb nowadays has a special meaning: age status is not respected automatically. Now if you meet even an older person who could be your father or mother, you might not give them the same respect as you would do in the olden days. A person now wants to know that person before paying respect - [FSM](#).

620. Asiyenijua haifai nimjue. [MA](#) 69.

It is useless for me to recognize a person who does not recognize me.

621. Baa hukutia mtu wako. [T](#) 327.

Disaster is brought upon you by your own people.

622. Baba na mtoto mwanauume: mama na mtoto mwanamke. [KB](#) 31.

The father and his son, the mother and her daughter.

623. Bora kujenga madaraja kuliko kuta. [EM](#) 28.17.

It is better to build bridges than walls. "It is better to unite than separate people" - [EM](#).

624. [kila] boriti ina mwandamizi wake. [T](#) 47; [SACL](#) 641; [KS](#) boriti.

[Every] beam has its companion - [T](#); [SACL](#). Beams are never alone. When a beam falls, another is sure to follow. Mwandamizi: successor, companion.

625. Cha kichwa kitamu, na cha mkia kitamu. [A](#) 95; [T](#) 48; [SAM](#) 5.1; [V](#) 108.

If the head is tasty the tail also is tasty. If the head is good eating, the tail is even better. The tail of an East African sheep is a delicacy. "One cannot accept one and reject the other person" - [MM](#). "As the head so are the members" - [V](#) 108.

626. Chema changu kiwi chako. [JKP](#).

My good thing is your bad thing. What is good for me is not good for you. This proverb refers to the story of the fool who stole the butcher's knife and killed a man with it. He was hanged. Yet the butcher kills every day with the same knife and remains a respected citizen - [JKP](#). Cf. 1671.

627. Chetu si changu, usitumaini cha mwenzako. [NGU](#); [SWA](#) 45.

Ours is not mine, don't rely on what is your companion's. You cannot claim what is ours as yours alone.

628. Dalili mbaya hukupeleka pabaya. [MA](#) 102.

A bad sign [guide] brings you to a bad place.

629. Dawa hufuata kidonda. [NGU](#).

Medicine follows the sore. Medicine is applied according to the kind of sore.

630. Doa usoni huonekana kwa kioo. [EM](#) 50.20.

You need a mirror to see a blot on the face. To know one's weakness, one needs help.

631. Epuka maovu nayo yakwepuka. [KA](#).

Avoid evil and evil will avoid you. Cf. 4017.

632. Fuata kondo! Fuata kondo! Dunia haifuatiki. [AL](#) 322.

Follow the flow! Follow the flow! It's impossible to follow the world. To follow the life-styles of other people. Kondo (Maniema dialect), mkondo: flow of a river, track of passage. Cf. 633.

633. Fuata maji yaendako. [J](#).

Follow where the water goes. Swim with the stream. Cf. 1326.

634. Fuata mto uone bahari. [EM](#) f7.

Follow the river to find the sea. If you follow the river you will eventually see the sea or the lake - [EM](#). Following a lead is what police officers and scientist do to find solutions. Cf. 633, 634, 698.

635. Fuata nyuki ule asali. [H](#) 98; [F](#) 8.3; [SWA](#) 40; [FSM](#) 39; [RECH](#) 15; [F](#) 25.52.

Follow the bee so that you may eat honey. Associate with the right people. Cf. 698.

636. Furaha hukolea mkiwa wengi. [EM](#) f9.

Joy has flavor when you are many. Happiness is perfect when it is shared. A related story is of the Sunday fisherman who was always laughed at because he never caught anything to show. But on the day he had a master catch, nobody was there to see him coming home.

637. Gome la udi si la mnukauvundo. [MARA](#) 2.

The sweet smelling bark is not the same as the [evil smelling] bark [of the *Cassia occidentalis*].

To live with civilized, friendly people is not comparable to living with people who have bad manners - [MARA](#).

Gome: bark of a tree. Udi: a pleasant smell when burned. Mnukauvundo: lit., evil smell, is a shrubby herb with a bad smell when rubbed; *Cassia occidentalis*; used for making medicine in which to bathe young children.

638. Gurudumu chuma - reli chuma. [NGU](#).

The wheels are iron, the rails are iron. Like father, like son.

639. Haifai kutia embe lenye kuoza katika maembe mazuri. [AL](#) 1134.

It's not good to put a rotten mango among good ones.

640. Hakuna chawi aliyekiri kuwa mi chawi. [KER](#).

There is no wizard who believes to be a wizard.

641. Hakuna lisilo nduguye ni kama ngozi na mfupa. [JKP](#).

There is nothing without its sibling, like skin and bone. "Every man can find a wife, The skin always covers the bone until death part them" - [JKP](#).

Hakuna kisilo nduye. [SPK](#).

Every [pot] has its brother (i.e., a lid).

642. Hata katika kundi mtu anaweza kuwa peke yake. [NGU](#).

Even in a crowd a person can be alone.

643. Hawaachani kijibwa na mtwawe. [KS](#) mtwa; [AL](#) 846.

They don't leave each other, they are like the little dog and its caretaker. Common interest. Mtwa: a benefactor - [KS](#). Mtwa: pygmy - [AL](#).

644. Heri jirani karibu kuliko ndugu mbali. [J](#) jirani; [RECH](#) 155; [KB](#) 69; [SPK](#); [J](#) si; [SACL](#) 801.

A neighbor nearby is better than a relative far away.

Alla, alla, jirani kama ndugu mli kule. [T](#) 17; [L](#) p.236.

By God, it is from the neighbor [that help is expected] when your relative is away - [L](#).

645. Hujui ginsi anavyokula mtu, je utampa chakula katika jani? [AL](#) 318.

You don't know how a person eats, so, will you serve food on a banana leaf?

646. Ila ya kikwapa kunuka pasipo kidonda. [FSM](#) 53.

The evil-smelling armpit is like a woundless defect. Used when somebody does not try to correct minor mistakes.

647. Jana hufufuka leo wakati mwingine. [REK](#).

Yesterday is today risen at another time.

648. Jasho ya mbwa haipiti manyoya yake. [KB](#) 81.

The sweat of a dog does not go beyond its coat. You must not inconvenience others with your difficulties.

649. Jicho haliwezi kuangalia, pua inalia. [AL](#) 844.

[If] the eye is unable to see, the nose weeps. Cf. 650.

649a. Jicho haliwezi kujiona. [SPK](#).

The eye cannot see itself.

650. Jicho likiugua, pua inaugua. [AL](#) 843; [AL](#) ugua.

If the eye is sick, so is the nose. If one part of your body hurts, your whole body suffers. Near relatives feel and suffer for each other - [AL](#). Cf. 649, 655.

651. Jirani mwema ni bora kuliko rafiki. [EM](#) j13.

A good neighbor is better than a friend. We can live without friends but not without neighbors. Cf. 644.

652. Kaa na mwenye tabia njema, utashiriki ya heshima. [NGU](#).

Stay with a person of good character and you'll share in that person's good name.

653. Kafiri akufaaye si isilamu asiyekufaa. [F](#) 13.1; [A](#) 114 and 202; [T](#) 123; [MS](#) 32; [MARA](#) 3.

An infidel who is of use to you is better than a Muslim who is of no use to you - [A,T](#). An infidel who does you a good turn is not [like] a Muslim who does not - [E](#). But depending on the context, it could also mean: However unhelpful [bad] a Muslim is he will always be better in many respects than an unbeliever who may be of use to you; i.e., do not trade a Muslim for an unbeliever, you will always lose.

A Muslim is instructed in his religion that any Muslim is a brother or sister, and that help should be given in any way in whatever circumstance. Now if a pagan does what a believer is supposed to do, and helps a Muslim in need, then that pagan is better for him/her than a believer - [MARA](#).

Si or wala in proverbs often express a preference; e.g., is better than. Cf. 703.

654. Kapinga mwenda peke. [AL](#) 1584.

The opponent has returned to solitude. One who does not conform or listen to advice is cut out.

655. Kidole kimoja kikiumia, vingine vyatoa damu. [KB](#) 93; [AL](#) 892, 893.

If one finger hurts, the other fingers are bleeding. The pain of one harms the whole community.

656. Kifaa kufanana tui na maziwa. [SACL](#) 214.

It is as alike as milk and coconut milk. A riddle: Q. Two useful things very alike? A. Coconut juice and milk - Ingrams p.346.

657. Kijumba cha shetani hakikaribiwi. [MA](#) 177.

A devil's house is not accosted. Keep away from evil people.

658. Kila chombo na faida yake. [AL](#) 482.

Every tool has its use. Nothing is done or made without a reason.

659. Kila kitu chageuka isipoku wa kitu kimoja tu. [P](#) 230.

Everything is subject to change except one thing. The leopard cannot change its spots.

660. Kila msafara na kiongozi. [NGU](#).

Every caravan [expedition] has a leader.

661. Kila mtoto ana koja lake. [F](#) 15.17; [B](#) 4.73.

To every child its own necklace. There is no accounting for taste.

Kila kiboko na kivuko chake. [KB](#) 100; [AL](#) kivuko.

Every hippopotamus has its own ford.

662. Kila mwamba ngoma, ngozi huivutia kwake. [F](#) 15.18; [B](#) 3.72; [FSM](#) 145; [MARA](#) 3.

Everyone who stretches a skin on a drum, pulls the skin to his/her own side. In any competition everyone tries to exceed the others. The proverb is used by elders who must reconcile the quarrels of the youngsters and must listen to both sides of the story.

663. Kilima uzuri mbali, karibu kina majuto. [KB](#) 105.

A mountain far away is beautiful, but nearby it causes regrets. Living in a close relationship with somebody may be a hardship.

664. Kiliomo (or kichimo) mtamani ni mtama. [ED](#) 18; [JKP](#).

What is in the millet [sorghum] is millet. Weevils and things in the millet, go the way of millet: are ground and eaten. "The examples given were: a hungry man will eat anything, whether good or bad; or, an enemy conquering a village will take all the women, old or young, pregnant or not - [JKP](#).

665. Kinachonukia kimeungwa. [NGU](#).

Whatever smells well has been skillfully mixed.

Kila kinachong'ara kime suguliwa. [NGU](#).

Whatever shines has been rubbed.

666. Kipofu hasahau fimbo yake (or gongole). [JKP](#).

A blind person does not forget the stick "We forget many things, but not the one thing without which we cannot live" - [JKP](#).

667. Kizuri cha mtu kuonana na wake. [AL](#) zuri.

The quality of a good person is meeting with fellow humans. Respect in community.

668. Kizuri kwako, kibaya kwa mwenzako. [SWHL](#) Sept. 1966.

What is good for you, [may be] bad for your friend.

669. Kukichwa, vichaka hufunga mimba. [NGU](#).

After sunset the bushes are pregnant.

670. Kuku alae mtama, atakuwaye na nyama. [RSP](#) II.

The chicken that eats millet, will have [good] flesh. Associate with the right people. Cf. 634.

671. Kuku wa mwewe haachi kiwewe. [MEM](#) 263.

Hawk's brood will always be hawkish.

672. Kuku wakilalamika nyumbani mwao kitu kinaingia. [AL](#) 473.

If the chickens squeal then something entered their henhouse. Cf. 753.

673. Kumla nguru si kazi, kazi kumwosha. [F](#) 18.55; [KA](#).

To eat the nguru (kingfish) is easy, the trouble is cleaning it. Preparing is often the more difficult part of a job. The nguru of the Sciaenae family has a very strong smell.

Kuvua numbi si kazi: kazi kuu ni magawioni. [T](#) 202; [SACL](#) 691.

To catch a haul of fish with a net is easy; the difficulty is how to divide them. How to divide the catch, giving a just share, without complaints, when there are individual preferences and difference of status and involvement, can be a problem. Pulling the ropes of a dragnet is work involving many people. Numbi: a draught of fishes.

674. Kuvua, vua na mvuvi, penda samaki atwae. [ED](#) 23; [KSM](#).

What concerns fishing, fish with the expert, allow that his or her share be taken. Work with those who have the know-how, even if you have to pay for their expertise.

675. Kwa mwari kwaliwa, na kwa kungwi nako huliwa. [MS](#); [AL](#) 1076; [KS](#) mwari.

There is eating at the mwari and also at the kungwi.

Mwari: seven days after the wedding the bride and groom celebrate. A meal offered by the young married and also by the initiated - [AL](#). Kungwi: a teacher who instructs adolescents about secrets of the home.

676. Kwa mwendawazima kumeingia mlevi. [KA](#).

A drunkard has entered the home of a fool. Both are irresponsible people. This is said when people make a lot of noise about nothing.

677. Kwa sultani chakula hakikosekani. [MA](#) 247.

At a king's place food does not lack. If you are interested in acquiring anything, you should associate with those who can provide it.

678. Kwale hutetemekea majanini. [FSM](#) 87.

The partridge shivers in the grass. If you want to hunt a partridge go to the grasslands.

679. Kwani kupenda ukowa, usipende kilichomo ukowani? [SACL](#) 946; [AL](#) 605.

Why appreciate only the lamp glass without appreciating the light which is inside the glass? - [SACL](#).

A fool lacks common sense, neglecting the essential and going to trivia - [AL](#).

Kowa (ukoa, ukova) (Lamu dialect): glass - [SACL](#). Cf.3117, 3118.

680. Leo kwako, kesho mwenzio. [SAM](#) 12.3.

Today yours, tomorrow your friend's. What happens to me today might happen to you tomorrow.

681. Leo mimi, kesho wewe. [JKP](#).

I today, you tomorrow. Your time will come. Cf. 1270.

682. Leo ni yako, kesho sio. [MA](#) 254.

Today is yours, not tomorrow.

683. Macho ya wengi ni dawa. [REK](#).

The eyes of many are a medicine. The interest of many is like a cure. It softens misfortune. A lot of sports fans make the players play harder.

684. Maji hayakawi ila mtoni. [T](#) 228.

Water does not stay except in the river. Said of people who like to be with their family, in country, etc. - [MM](#). Women grumble at the slowness of the supply of water in the river-bed, where wells are dug during the dry season, but it is there alone that water is to be had. The moral is, Don't quarrel with your bread and butter - [T](#). Cf. 4195.

685. Maji ya nyangwa mamoja. [ED](#) 26.

The waters of the tidal flats are even. When the tide comes in, the water covers all unevenness. The water level is the same all over. Used to express equality of all men.

686. Maji ya pwani yapatikana pwani. [MA](#) 267.

Sea water is obtained only on the shore. Look for things where they are usually found.

687. Maji yakikauka samaki wote wakaa katika ziwa moja. [AL](#) 842.

When the waters are drying up all of the fish gather in the same lake. In dangerous times people come together.

688. Masikilizano ya wanaume ni mikuki na mishale. [WIKON](#) 213.

Understanding among men is spears and arrows. Men should not talk too much but show themselves through actions - [MM](#).

689. Mazingira ni chanzo cha kufuzu. [SAM](#) 14.6; [KA](#).

The environment is the beginning of success. Difficulties are the beginning of succeeding - [KA](#). Kufuzu or kufaulu: succeed.

690. Mbali mbali si kiapio. [SACL](#) 344.

When one is far from another, there is no rejoicing possible.

Kiapio (Pemba dialect): shouts of joy at a dance. Wiu wiu or iu iu of the men, which corresponds to the shouts of vigele-gele of the women - [SACL](#) kiapio.

690a. Mbega hana mazoea. [SPK](#).

A Colobus monkey is not sociable. Monkeys are supposed to be uncouth characters. Don't be surprised at the behavior of a low-class individual - [SPK](#).

691. Mbio yenye kumfukuza swala, nyama wote wanajitayarisha mbio. [AL](#) 502.

The speedy flight of the Grant's gazelle alerts all other animals. In case of imminent danger everyone takes care.

692. Mbwa wa msasi mkali ni mkali pia. [KS](#) msasi; [AL](#) 856.

The dog of a courageous hunter is also fierce. Cf. 714.

693. Mbwa wakubwa hawaumani. [EM](#) m8.

Big dogs do not bite each other. But if a small dog appears or barks at a big one, it will be bitten by one of them or both. This means that big people or nations do not harm each other, they harm the small ones - EM. Cf. 881.

694. Mchuma janga hula na wakwao. [F](#) 24.44; [L](#) 47; [MARA](#) 3.

They who earn calamity, eat it with their family. One who is in trouble brings suffering on the family - [F](#). Cf. 4482.

695. Mchuna ngozi huvutia kwake. [KS](#) ngozi.

Skinner pull the skin to their side. Cf. 662.

696. Omitted.

697. Mfuatana na mmanga hunukato. [ED](#) 32.

One who follows an Arab smells well. Cf. 635, 711

697a. Mfuatana na mwenye elimu hunukato. [SPK](#).

Someone who keeps the company of a scholar will smell nicely. Smell is here used figuratively for learning, erudition and good manners - [SPK](#).

698. Mfukuz wa kwao hana pa kwenda. [F](#) 25.52; [CM](#) 51.

One who is expelled from home has nowhere to go. If one is ostracized or boycotted, where can that person go? This is the most severe punishment a member of the family or community can receive. That person will become a total outcast.

Mpigwa nje huenda kwao, mpigwa kwao endepi? [T](#) 309; [MS](#) 48 endapi.

Someone who is beaten abroad goes home, [but] if beaten at home, where does that person go? - [SPK](#).

Asotakwa kwao akalale wapi? - [JKP](#).

If you are not wanted at home, where will you go and sleep? "This refers to marriage proposals. A young man should first look for a bride among his own cousins" - [JKP](#). Cf. 606, 2630.

699. Mfunda afunda wake. [NGU](#).

A craftsman creates his stuff. The grain crusher crushes her own flour.

Funda has many different meanings: to pound, crush, pulverise; instruct, teach, educate; make a knot, tie. Cf. 662.

700. Mjane hana sheria. [AL](#) 1029.

An unmarried person has no law [to keep]. A person with no relationship stands alone. The proverb can also mean that a person, having no relations, and no support, will lose the case in court. Mjane: a bereaved person, widow, widower; a bachelor or spinster.

701. Mkwaju muwi una tumbiriwe. [A](#) 308; [T](#) 275; [SAM](#) 15.12; [AL](#) 854.

The bad tamarind tree has its monkey. The general meaning is that everybody has a companion; the special meaning is that nobody is despicable.

Mwajumi, mkwaju: tamarind, rather a useless tree.

702. Mkwere hajiingilii mwenyewe. [KS](#) mkware; [AL](#) 838.

The prostitute does not copulate alone. Mkwere: a prostitute.

703. Mla nawe hafi nawe ila mzaliwa nawe. [F](#) 28.84; [B](#) 1.54; [H](#) 70; [L](#) 53; [MARA](#) 2; [JKP](#); [T](#) 280; [SACL](#) 654.

A person who eats with you does not die for you, but one who is born with you will - [L](#).

You'll be friendly with your associate in matters of profit and gain, but if you get into trouble, your associate will leave you, but on the contrary your family will stay with you - [MARA](#).

"Uterine relatives are the closest relatives. They will always support each other. Loyalty to one's family entails remembering them when one moves up the social ladder. Usisahau ubaharia kwa sababu ya unahodha {3416}: Do not forget the lot of the seaman because [you are now] a captain" - [SPK](#) p.21. Cf. 380, 3625.

704. Mlevi ni yule anayemtambua mlevi. [REK](#).

A drunkard is the one who recognizes a drunkard. It takes one to know one.

705. Moto wa mbali hukolea vizuri. [EM](#). m26.

A reasonable distant fire satisfies most. You'll keep warm, without getting burned. Beware of what can destroy you.

706. Mpiga maji maganja, huvuja kwa makwapani. [ED](#) 39.

One who hits water with the palms of the hands [will have the water] oozing from the armpits. A useless effort. One does not give anything to a person who is unworthy of it - [ED](#).

When you associate with worthless people, you cannot avoid being caught up with their worthlessness.

An uneducated person will not understand benefits - [SPK](#).

707. Mpika majungu hataki majungu. [EM](#) m27.

A potboiler does not like other potboilers. Potboiling is causing discord. People who cause discord do not like others to cause discord between their colleagues - [EM](#). Cf.729.

708. Mpika vyungu viwili, kimoja huungua. [REK](#).

The person who cooks two pots will burn one.

709. Mrega havuki nyangwe: mkunguru na papasi. [AL](#) 1137.

A Mrega does not travel through Nyangwe, on account of fever and ticks. It is better not to visit places where one may risk not being welcome - [AL](#).

709a. Mshipa haukai ela kwa kipeto. [SPK](#).

The belt does not stay [with its wearer] without a clasp. E.g., a marriage needs to be concluded in a proper way - [SPK](#).

710. Mtama ukimwagika huonekana punje. [JK](#) 144.

When you spill millet, a grain will be seen. [JK](#). Your mistake will not remain hidden.

A more literal equivalent of this proverb is the following: Panapofuka moshi panaficha moto. The place that emits smoke, hides fire" - [SPK](#) p.24.

711. Mtegemea nundu haachi kunona. [F](#) 31.112; [L](#) 63; [H](#) 77; [MS](#) 112.

A person who relies on the hump of a cow will not fail to grow fat. If you associate yourself with the right people, you cannot fail profiting from your relationship.

Nundu: the hump of the zebu, a delicacy. Cf. 635, 698, 711.

712. Mti ukifa shinale na tanzuze hukauka. [A](#) 308; [NS](#) 39; [SACL](#) 978; [T](#) 329; [SAM](#) 17.26; .

When a tree dies at its roots, its branches dry up also. If the leader dies, the followers often give up. This refers also to moral corruption.

Mti mkubwa ukigwa [ukianguka], wana wa ndege huyumbayumba. [JK](#) 140; [KB](#) gwa; [M](#) 51 huyumba.; [SACL](#) 258,1032; [T](#) 328.

When a big tree falls, the young birds flutter around it.

Mti huvunja mimea, nani ataililia? [RSP](#) 49.

The [falling] tree crushes the plants, who will cry for them?

Mti mkubwa ukianguka matawi hayabaki. [EM](#) m30.

If a big tree falls the branches cannot remain where they were. If a person with many dependents dies, the dependents' conditions deteriorate - [EM](#).

Mti mkuu umeanguka, ndege wa mashakani. [KA](#).

A big tree has fallen, the birds are in trouble.

713. Mto hauna tope kwenye chemchemu. [EM](#) m32.

A river has no mud at its spring. But as it proceeds on its way it can become dirty. The meaning is that a person is innocent as a child, but growing up may be spoiled - [EM](#).

714. Mtoto (or mwana) wa nyoka ni nyoka. [F](#) 32.122; [FSM](#) 149; [B](#) 2.60; [MARA](#) 54.

The offspring of a snake is a snake. "If intelligent parents have backward children, this proverb is also used" - [MM](#).

Mwana wa simba ni simba. [F](#) 34.146; [B](#) 1.70.

The offspring of a lion is a lion.

Mtoto and mwana: child, son/daughter, offspring.

To show that the proverb is not always true: Cf. 519.

715. Mtoto wa paka haanguki chali. [LE3](#) 226.6; [AL](#) 343.

A kitten never falls on its back. A cunning person succeeds to get out of trouble. Cf.1111.

716. Mtu hamfanzii hiana mtu asiyoamini, kefu aliyomwamini. [V](#) hiana.

People do not deceive others whom they do not trust, much less whom they trusts.

716a. Mtu hufanya wanayofanya watu. [SPK](#).

A person does what other people do.

717. Mtu hujulikana kwa sababu ya mwenziwe. [NGU](#).

One is known on account of companions.

718. Mtu kwao. Unyonge p.43.

A person is [when] in his/her own environment.

719. Mtu ni watu. [MARA](#) 52.

A person is people. A person cannot live alone. Without living in fellowship a person cannot grow.

A similar proverb : **Kizuri cha mtu huonekana na wake.** [AL](#).

A person's beauty is that person's willingness to meet fellow humans.

720. Mtu pweke ni uvundo. [MARA](#) 53; [Ipeka](#).

A loner is like a bad smell. It is bad not to associate with others.

Upweke si maisha, vibaya kuvaa gunia. [LE2](#) 303.8.

Loneliness is not a life, to put on sack cloth is not recommended. It should not be a permanent condition. Cf. 615, 1406.

720a. Mtu, wake humwong'onya hamtapiki. [SPK](#).

Your family may be disgusted with you, but they will never throw you out.

720b. Muhogo mchungu usiuchezee. [SPK](#).

Do not play with bitter cassava. Bitter cassava is poisonous. It should be properly boiled first. Do not play with a vindictive character; do not take a serious matter lightly - [SPK](#).

721. Muwi huombewa na mwema. [JK](#) 121.

A good person will intercede on behalf of a bad person. We often see useless criminals being bailed out by honorable people, bad sons saved by their noble fathers - [JK](#).

722. Mwacha asili ni mjasiri. [E](#) 33.137; [AL](#) 639.

One who leaves his/her place of origin is foolhardy - [AL](#). It is a bold person who renounces ancestry - [E](#).

But also: **Mwacha asili si mjasiri.** [SACL](#) 73; [AL](#) 640.

One who leaves one's own people is never a hero [abroad].

A variation: **mwacha mwongo ni muongo.** [T](#) 355a.

One who leaves his/her own people is a liar. "A person who forsakes association makes a mistake (lit., is a liar), and will never be fully human. A person is a social animal" - [T](#).

These proverbs are closely related. A bold person is often foolhardy, is taking risks and therefore not easily to be trusted. Mjasiri: a bold person.

Kila jasiri salama. [AL](#) 641.

Every foolhardy person [believes to be] safe.

Mwacha asili ni mtumwa. [KA](#).

One who leaves his/her ancestry is like a slave. Such a person loses knowledge of his/her origin, customs, tradition and therefore is looked down upon and ridiculed. Do not despise your own culture, even if people laugh at those customs.

Mwacha asili: a person who leaves customs, traditions, the ways of ancestors and culture. Mtumwa: a person who is owned and used by somebody.

Mwacha kwao ni mwasi, endako hana kiasi. [KA](#).

Those who leave their homestead are rebels; they are in trouble wherever they go.

723. Mwana wa mtu ni kizushi, akizuka zuka naye. [J](#) zua; [SACL](#) 427; [T](#) 371; [B](#) 3.61.

A person is a revolutionary; if a person emerges, emerge with that person. There is no telling what a person may do: be ready, seize any advantage offered. Be ready for change.

Kizushi: what appears or comes up suddenly; therefore, an unexpected guest, or somebody who does not shout hodiò (May I come in?).

724. Mwegama haanguki, ila mwegamiza huanguka. [SACL](#) 200; [AL](#) egama; [AL](#) 1549.

The one who is supported does not fall, unless the one who supports falls - [SPK](#). One leaves a benefactor who has nothing more to offer - [AL](#).

725. Mwenda kwao si mtoro. [NESTOR](#) 43.

One who goes home is not a deserter. A person never forgets his home. Cf. 698, 718, 719, 722.

726. Mwenda na kuu k'owi wala haoni miuya. [T](#) 376; [SACL](#) 630; [AL](#) 38.

One who goes with a large [vessel] bathes not, nor does he see the billows. That person is not splashed by the waves and is not in danger. About traveling in style and having good associations. Kowi from kuowa (kuoga): to bathe. Miuya: waves (mawimbi) - [SACL](#).

727. Mwendo kikwongonga nawe mtapike. [KS](#) ongonga; [AL](#) 1129.

If your companion gives you nausea, reject him as vomit.

728. Mwenye kutembea na mbuzi anatamani nyama. [AL](#) 488.

One who walks with goats desires meat.

729. Mwenye majivuno hataki majivuno. [EM](#) 20 m35.

A proud person does not like pride. A proud person does not like another proud person. Cf. 3985B.

730. Mwenye shombo hajisikii. [NGU](#).

A person who has a fishy smell does not know it.

731. Mwili wa mwenzio ni kando ya mwilio. [F](#) 36.171; [KA](#).

Your companion's body is beside your body. The pain and suffering of your friend does not hurt you as much as it hurts your friend - [KA](#).

732. Mwitu ni mpya, komba ni wapya. [JKP](#).

New forest, new bush babies. "If you are unhappy, move house and make new friends who may have unknown talents. Bush babies are believed to make palmwine" - [JKP](#).

733. Mwituni mna matata na wa miji hwenda mbio. [JKP](#).

In the forest there are many hazards and townspeople walk through it in great haste. "Wa miji [townspeople] are proud of their urban background, but are frightened in the bush. Everyone in his own environment" [JKP](#).

734. Mwivi huenda na wevi, mlevi nao walevi. [JK](#) 145.

A thief goes with thieves, a drunkard with drunkards. Birds of a feather flock together. As a man is so is his company - JK.

735. Mzazi haachi ujusi. [F](#) 37.178.

She who gives birth cannot escape ritual defilement.

Ujusi: "natural defilement of childbirth as affecting both mother and child and everything that comes into contact with them until both have been washed ceremoniously according to Muslim usage seven days after the birth of the child" - [J](#).

736. Nazi mbovu harabu ya nzima. [F](#) 38.3; [B](#) 2.24; [J](#); [SWA](#) 31; [H](#) 88; [FSM](#) 165; [RECH](#) 126, 398; [MARA](#) 57; [V](#) 52; [KB](#) harabu; [SACL](#) 269; [KS](#) nazi.

A bad coconut spoils the good ones. One is tainted by association; even when an innocent one is involved in group punishment. Cf. 758.

737. Nchi ya mhaini ina mengi mazuri. [REK](#).

The land of a traitor has many nice things. Otherwise nothing would tempt a traitor.

738. Ndege wa aina moja huruka pamoja. [NGU](#).

Birds of a kind fly together.

739. Ndugu chungu, jirani mkungu. [F](#) 38.6.

A brother is like a cooking pot, a neighbor is like a pot cover. Both are useful, they complement one another. Family and neighbors help each other.

740. Ndugu mbaya hushinda rafiki mzuri. [JK](#) 139; [AL](#) 878.

A bad member of the family is still better than a nice friend. One does not leave one's own, how imperfect they may be. Cf. 3745.

741. Ndugu mbaya si sawa na jirani mwema. [NGU](#).

A bad sibling is not comparable to a good neighbor. Same as 740.

742. Ngoma ndio sauti ya umoja wa watu. [NGU](#).

The drum is the unified voice of the people.

743. Nguruwe anafia muhogo. [AL](#) 87.

The pig dies for cassava roots. Craving stops for nothing. Cf. 1107.

744. Ni mti wa mfereji. [AL](#) mfereji.

It is a tree at an irrigation ditch. Said about an opportunist. A person appearing wherever there is something to obtain.

745. Ni nduguyo akuhusuye. [JK](#) 139.

It is your brother who concerns you [or any kinsman] - [JK](#).

746. Njia ya kupimia haki ni adhabu. [NGU](#).

To measure justice is by way of punishment.

747. Njiapanda iliua udugu. [AL](#) 889.

The bifurcation killed the family relationship. Looking for personal profit harms the family.

748. Nyani mwenda pweke. [T](#) 439.

An ape that goes alone.

Nyati mwenda pweke. [T](#) 440; [A](#) 292.

A buffalo that goes alone. The rogue elephant or buffalo driven away from the herd has a savage temper. Used to describe people.

Nyati mwenda pweke, windo rahisi la mwindaji. [SAM](#) 20.5.

The buffalo that goes alone is an easy bag for the hunter. A person without friends has nobody to turn to in time of need.

748a. Nyani nyani kunanani. [SPK](#).

Monkey, monkey scratch one another [If you scratch my back...] - [SPK](#).

749. Nyege ni kunyegezana. [KA](#); [KS](#) nyege.

Itching is itching together. It is good when done together or done to each other.

Nyege: itching but also tickling for sexual excitement.

749a. Nyege senende pekeyo. [SPK](#).

Lust, don't go on by yourself. As soon as sexual desire awakes in boy or girl, he or she must be married. If their elders leave them unmarried, they will become sinners - [SPK](#).

750. Nyota haionekani mchana. [AL](#) 487.

A star is not visible in plain daylight.

751. Nyuki huenda na maua yake. [J](#); [SACL](#) 701; [V](#) nyuki; [AL](#) ua

The bee goes with its flowers. And sways with the flowers. It follows its natural tendencies.

752. Nyumba na rika haziachwi. [JK](#) 139.

The house and the age group are not deserted. The family and those who were in the same initiation rites must never be deserted. Cf. 722.

753. Palipo na moshi pana moto. [RECH](#) 342; [JK](#).

Where there is smoke there is fire.

Panapofuka moshi panaficha moto. [JK](#) 144.

The place that emits smoke, hides fire.

754. Penye mavi hapakosi uyoga. [KA](#).

There is no lack of mushrooms on farm manure. Cf. 174, 753.

755. Povu lapanda, uliepe. [JKP](#).

Scum floats on top, avoid it.

756. Riziki ya mtu iko kwa watu. [EM](#) r12; [SPK](#).

A person's fortune is with other people. "Everybody gets his fortune from Almighty God, but God does not give a person his fortune directly. He does so through other people" - [EM](#).

757. Riziki ya paka iko mapipani. [KA](#); [SM](#).

The daily necessities of a cat are in the drums. The cat is searching for food in garbage bins. Lazy people try to get their food for nothing - [KA](#).

Pipa: big oil drums.

758. Samaki mmoja akioza, huoza wote. [F](#) 43.2; [RECH](#) 466; [JK](#) 145; [V](#) 52; [SACL](#) 718. If one fish rots, they all rot.

Samaki mmoja akioza ni mtungo pia. [J](#) samaki; [L](#) 114; [A](#) 140; [T](#) 473; [V](#) 52; [RECH](#) 421; [SACL](#) 718; [KB](#) 274; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) samaki.

If one fish goes bad the whole string does also.

Pono mmoja akioza, huoza na shazile. [ED](#) 65.

If one pono rots, the whole string rots also.

Pono: name of a fish, said to be often in a torpid state. The expression goes: Ana usingizi kama pono, So and So is as sleepy as a pono - [J](#). Cf. 736.

759. Shurubu za paka huzaliwa nazo. [NGU](#).

Cats are born with whiskers. Someone boasting about his special qualities.

760. "sitaki" haviwi nongwa, vikachongea na watu. [T](#) 495.

My saying "I don't want it" is not by way of disagreeableness, or being invidious to others - [T](#).

That refusal of mine is not meant to involve other people. A polite explanation of a refusal of anything that is proposed to one or given one in company, intended as a hint: "Don't let my having refused, deprive my friends" - [T](#).

Sitaki is the subject of the sentence and is therefore considered a noun (ki-vi class).

761. Sogea huko sikulala upeka. [NGU](#).

Come close, I don't sleep alone. Upeka: upweke, alone. Cf. 720.

762. Sote twataliwa na mazingira. [NGU](#).

We all are ruled [influenced] by our environment.

763. Sultani hakamati mwizi. [AL](#) 840.

The chief [alone] does not catch a thief.

764. Tawi kavu kuanguka si ajabu. [MARA](#) 2.

It's not a wonder that a dry [tree] branch falls down. Or a very sick person dies, or a lazy student fails; a drunkard falls, a thief is caught.

765. Tawi lililokatwa, lakauka. [KB](#) 290.

A branch cut off a tree will dry up. A child deprived of its parents wastes away.

766. Tumbili akiisha miti huja mwilini. [SAM](#) 23.3; [SM](#).

When the monkey has finished the branches, it comes to the trunk. When a bad person gets caught he/she will drag down as many people as possible - SAM. If a monkey lacks the trees for its living on account of enemies it goes all out and attacks. So, don't provoke even a weak person, because you might get hurt - [SM](#).

767. Tunda jema halikawii mtini. [MARA](#) 2.

A good fruit does not stay for long on a tree. A beautiful woman will get married.

768. Tunda la pori haliwezi kuchekelea tunda mwenzake. [KB](#) 296; [AL](#) 1178.

A fruit of the bush cannot laugh at its companion. In case of a forest fire both are in the same danger.

769. Udugu wa nazi hukutania chunguni. [F](#) 45.4; [L](#) 96; [AL](#) 906.

The relationship of coconuts happens to be a meeting in the cooking-pot. This is said of people who do not want to cooperate until it is too late - [E](#). Misfortune brings the family together - [AL](#).

Udugu wa nazi mkutano pakachani. [TAA](#) 25.

The meeting place of the coconut brotherhood is in the basket. When all the members agree they stay together, but when trouble comes everyone goes his own way - [TAA](#).

770. ujana-dume ni miongoni mwa wenzio. [EM](#) u5.

A youth's bravery is seen when among companions [where he can count on their help]. When confronting a lion or another danger.

771. Ujirani ni fedha katika kasha. [J](#); [V](#); [AL](#) 1000.

Having neighbors is [like having] money in a box. But also: Help received from neighbors must be paid back by mutual services.

772. Ukelele wa shundi ni mmoja. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2.

The songs of the coucal birds are all the same. One sings and all answer in the same tune. All other birds imitate the shundi - [MARA](#). People of the same character or outlook work together - [MARA](#).

Shundi, dudumizi, gude, tipitipi: the white-browed coucal. Cf. 893.

773. Ukienda njia ya pofu, utapofua lako jicho. [V](#) 47.

If you go the way of the blind, you will blind your own eye. If you follow bad examples you'll become bad.

774. Ukikaa karibu na waridi huachi kunukia. [REK](#).

If you stay close to roses, you'll have a nice smell. Cf. 698.

775. Ukikaa na kilabu hupati kitu [ila] aibu. [AL](#) 11 27; [NGU](#).

If you stay with the club, you won't get anything but shame - [AL](#).

Kilabu is not in Swahili dictionaries. It is derived from the English club and has two meanings: rungu, a cudgel and a social group, a club. Cf. 1710 for another meaning of kilabu.

776. Ukimwona buku mchana, ni siafu. [AL](#) 489.

If you see the buku rat during daytime, it's on account of the safari ants. An unusual happening has its reason. Buku: a very large long-tailed rat, also called ndezi.

777. Ukipenda mtu, upende na mbwa wake. [AL](#) 1532.

If you love someone, love also his/her dog.

778. Ukitaka kusaidiwa nawe saidia wenzako. [NGU](#).

If you want to be helped, help your neighbor. Start helping others and you'll find helpers.

779. Ukosefu wa mwenenzi si wa mkazi milele. [SACL](#) 647, 946; [T](#) 529; [AL](#) 866. The oddities of a passer-by are not so annoying as those of one you live with constantly. Relatives cannot hide their faults from one another.

T. quotes the following verse:

**Ukoshefu wa mwenenzi si wa mkazi milele
Kufunua macho panzi si chui kufuma ndole
Kufileko kwa ndovu si uzima wa kunguni.**

Traveller's straits are not so annoying as a constant inhabitant's.
A grasshopper opening its eyes is not so bad as a leopard clenching his paw.
An elephant's death-scene is not so annoying as the life of a bug.

780. Umwogope mwenda peke. [AL](#) peka.

Beware of the solitary person.

Umwepuke mwenda-pweke. [SPK](#).

Avoid the solitary. [Elephant or buffalo.] Cf. 720, 748.

780a. Usifungue duka ila kupenda kucheka. [SPK](#).

Do not open a shop unless you like smiling.

781. Usisafirie nyota ya mwenzio. [F](#) 49.38; [Mulika](#), p.10; [KS](#) nyota.

Don't travel under the [lucky] star of your companion. "Do not risk an enterprise only because someone else succeeded in it" - [JKP](#).

782. Omitted.

783. Uyoga unaotea mavini. [KB](#) 37.

A mushroom grows on dung. This is said if someone is prevented from taking revenge or from being realistic on account of family ties, etc. - [KB](#).

784. Vumbi la kisonzo si la ufukwe. [MARA](#) 2.

The dust of the cow dung is not comparable to the white sand on the beach. Stay with the good people, follow their habits and behavior and you'll be loved.

Kisonzo; the thick sludge of the cow dung in the stable. Ufukwe (mchanga): sand of the seashore.

785. Wa kuume haukati wa kushoto. [T](#) 573; [J](#) ume; [V](#) 19; [SACL](#).455; [MS](#) 87; [L](#) 50.

The right hand does not cut off the left one. One must not harm oneself or one's immediate family.
Cf. 3089.

786. Waarabu wa pemba, hujuana kwa vilemba. [FSM](#) 196.

The Arabs of Pemba know each other by the turban.

Waswahili hujuana kwa vilemba. [FK](#).

The Swahili can tell each other by the turban they wear. Cf. 3294.

787. Wananchi wakila panya, ule panya. [AL](#) 317; [JK](#) 146.

If the inhabitants of a country eat mice, you too eat mice. Follow the customs of the country.

788. Wanandugu siwatenge. [JK](#) 139.

"Do not keep your kinsmen away" - [JK](#). "Uterine relatives are the closest relatives. They will always support each other. Loyalty to one's family entails remembering them when one moves up the social ladder" - [JK](#).

Wanandugu siwatenge wachangane. [JKP](#).

Do not separate kinsfolk, they should join together.

Changana: of people joining together for a special purpose, e.g. as of volunteers for a cause - [J](#).

789. Wavuvi wa pweza hujuana (or hukutana) mwambani. [MARA](#) 2.

The cuttlefish (octopus) fishermen know (meet) each other at the reef. People of the same profession know each other.

Pweza: cuttlefish, inkfish, octopus that lives at the reefs.

790. Waweza kuishi bila ndugu (rafiki), huwezi kuishi bila majirani. [NGU](#).

You can live without relatives (friends), but you cannot live without neighbors.

791. Wenye kusuka virago ni mabinti; siku wataolewa nani atasuka? [AL](#) 177.

Girls plait the sleeping mats, who will plait them when they are married? Today prepare for tomorrow.

792. Wewe mkono, unakula na giza, unasahau kinywa. [AL](#) 1198.

You, the hand, you eat in darkness, you forget the mouth [of the others]. One who eats alone and in secret shows that he does not want to share.

793. Wingi wa siafu ndio nguvu yao. [NGU](#).

The multitude of ants is their strength.

794. **Yako hunitembelea.** [REK](#).

What is yours walks over to me. Visits me. Your goodness or evil reflects on me.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Borrowing - debt

795. Achilia madiuni, na mungu akuauni. [SPK](#).

Forgive your debtor, and God may help you [on the day of judgment].

795a. Ada ya deni: hulipa. [SPK](#).

The rule about debts is: they are to be paid.

795b. Alacho cha mwanamke arudishacho kingine. [TS](#) 63,12; [AL](#) 1078.

Who eats food of a woman gives something else in return.

796. Anadaiwa hata kope si zake. [KSukope](#); [MS](#).

That person is so deep in debt his eyelids are not even his own.

Idiom: Ana madeni chungu nzima, he has a big pot full of debts - [MS](#).

797. Aombaye maji huombea chungu chake. [KA](#).

The person who asks for water asks for her own pot. All people care for their own interests. Therefore do not think that others will take care of your interests.

798. Cha kuazima hakiishi udhuru. [AL](#) udhuru; [AL](#) 1113.

What one borrows does not end a pretext. One always finds a pretext to borrow or to keep the borrowed item.

799. Cha kuazima si kama chako mwenyewe. [REK](#).

A borrowed item is not like your own.

800. Chaza anakuja huyo, pukusa mawe. [SACL](#) 519.

There is your creditor, start thrashing your millet. In order to blind him with the dust.

Chaza: snail, oyster, which supposedly adheres to ships.

801. Deni ni ahadi kulipa ni muamana. [NGU](#).

A debt is a promise, to pay is a pledge.

802. Heri kukosa kama kukopa. [MA](#) 137.

It is better to lack something than to borrow. "Borrowing is not considered to be a good habit" - [MM](#).

803. Kafiri alipaye deni siye sawa na mwungwana adaiwaye. [NGU](#).

The infidel who pays his debt is better than the free person in debt.

804. Kanzu ya kuazima usiendelee ijumaa. [MA](#) 164.

A borrowed kanzu, do not go with it to Friday's prayers.

Kanzu: gown. Cf. 826, 1528.

805. Kopa! Kopa! Kulipa kuna kinyongo. [AL](#) 1109.

Borrow! Borrow! But paying back is bitterness.

806. Kopa ulipe. [AL](#) kopa; [AL](#) 1106; [NGU](#).

Borrow and pay.

807. Kubali kukopesha uondoke sokoni. [NGU](#).

Sell on credit so that you can leave the market. A business person will sell some left-overs on credit and go and buy more stock.

808. Kukopa harusi, kulipa matanga. [F](#) 18.48; [SWA](#) 30; [B](#) 1.71; [L](#) 35; [H](#) 54; [MS](#) 44.18; [LE3](#) 226.5; [V](#) kopa; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) harusi.

Borrowing is like a wedding, paying back is like mourning. It is always easier to borrow than to pay back.

Harusi or arusi: a wedding.

Kukopa rahisi, kulipa matanga. [RECH](#) 243.
Borrowing is easy, paying back is pain. Cf.1530, 4705.

809. Kukopa kunazaa umaskini. [KB](#) 121.
Borrowing leads to poverty.

810. Kukopa sio kupata. [MA](#) 221.
Borrowing is not the same as getting. What is borrowed has to be given back; special care should be taken in using it. "Don't be proud of borrowed wealth" - [MM](#).

811. Kukopesha udongo. [AL](#) 1107.
Loaning is like earth. Like a productive field.

812. La leo, lipa leo. [JKP](#).
Eat today, pay today - [JK](#). The proverb could be translated as: [Debt] of today, pay today.
La: eat; imperative of kula, to eat. "La is rarely used as the imperative, as a rule the infinitive is used: kula, sing. kuleni, plural" - [J](#).
La, prep form of -a, e.g. neno la, the word of..

813. Madeni ya mtu halipwi. [NGU](#).
A person in debt is not paid.

813a. Mali yetu karadha tu. [SPK](#).
Our possessions are only borrowed. We have to leave them behind - [SPK](#).

814. Mdaiwa hakasiriki. [EM](#) m12.
A debtor does not get angry. A debtor may be abused by the lender. If this happens, he should not get angry, for the lender may disgrace him/her more - [EM](#).

815. Mfinye kinyama! [ED](#) 30.
Press him/her in a brutish way! Saying used when somebody wants to collect a debt.

816. Mkopa kitoweo humangiria. [NGU](#).
A borrower of condiments eats dry food.
Kitoweo: all relish, meat, fish, vegetables, etc.

817. Mla mbuzi hulipa ng'ombe. [F](#) 28.82; [SACL](#) 569; [T](#) 279; [V](#) 92; [B](#) 1.41; [A](#) 39; [CM](#) 53; [KB](#) 190; [JKP](#).
The eater of a goat pays back a cow. The interpretation varies: A borrower loses. If you accept bribes, you will have to pay back much more. One who accepts gift, accepts obligations. "Also, refers to borrowing with interest, which is forbidden in Islamic religion" - [MM](#).

Mla mbuzi, lipa ng'ombe, mla nyama usiombe. [SPK](#).
The eater of a goat, pay an ox, the eater of meat, do not beg. Eating meat is a luxury. One has to pay dearly for it, one cannot beg for it. - [SPK](#).

818. Mlipaji muungwana, na mwibaji ni mtana. [JKP](#).
The one who pays is the noble person, the one who pilfers is the low-class one. "Lit., slave, a man without honor. For the gentle person it is a matter of honor to pay his/her debt" - [JKM](#).

819. Msiitani hodi, msipotoa kodi. [RSP](#) 29.
Do not call on [your landlord] if you have not paid your rent. Do not call on somebody if he has a claim on you.

820. Mwema kuwa mwovu, aliyetaka ni yeye. [JK](#) 130.
Good people become bad, and they wanted it themselves. "There is no gratitude in lending and borrowing" - [JK](#). A lender will be abused as soon as he asks for his money back - [JK](#).

821. Mwenye chake ni mungwana, akikataa, kaa zako: huwezi kumfunga kamba. [KB](#) 218; [AL](#) 1091.
The owner is a free man; if he refuses help, go home; you cannot bind him with a rope. Nobody goes to help the one who refuses help.

822. Mwenye deni analala mlango wazi. Alwazi; [AL](#) 1514.
A person in debts sleeps with open doors. Creditors importune the borrower every moment.

823. Mwenye kuazima hatoi, mtovu ni mwenye chombo. [T](#) 383; [Sacl](#) 615; [AL](#) 1114.
The borrower does not give, the giver is the owner of the thing. The borrower does not give it back, the owner is the loser - [AL](#).
A play on words: kutoa and mtovu, to give and giver; i.e.. the one who has not got it anymore - [J](#).

823a. Mwia na muraba hulipwa haki, deni ya adabu hailipiki. [SPK](#).
Creditor and miser can be paid their due, a debt of courtesy cannot be paid.

824. Mwomba chumvi huombea chunguche. [F](#) 37 173; [FSM](#) 163.

Those who ask for salt, ask for their own cooking pot.
Chunguche = chungu chake: his or her pot.

825. Mzoea kutwaa, kutoa ni vita. [F](#) 37.181; [CM](#) 44; [SACL](#) 1048.

For a person accustomed to taking, giving away is a battle. "Many people take with a spade, but return with a spoon" - [V](#).

Aliyezowea kupokea, kutoa ni vita. [KA](#).

To one used to receive, giving is like a battle. See also the section Gifts.

826. Nguo ya kuazima haisetiri matak0. Ukulima wa kisasa, Nov 1973, p.13; [MARA](#) 61; Nestor p.75; [KS](#) nguo.

Borrowed clothing does not conceal the buttocks. It is not yours. The owner can take it back anytime and leave you without. Used in an advertisement for the monthly Ukulima wa kisasa: "Make sure that you get your own copy:" If you borrow it, the owner could ask it back while you are reading it in the middle of a story.

Nguo ya kuazima haisetiri bega. [EM](#) n17.

Borrowed clothes do not fit the wearer. Lit., Do not cover the shoulder. A borrowed thing cannot be satisfying.

Nguo ya kuazimu haina bindo or heshima. [NGU](#).

Borrowed clothing has no money-belt or honor. For meaning of bindo, Cf. 186.

Nguo ya kuazima huwezi kuiringa. [NGU](#).

You cannot swagger [show off] in borrowed clothing. Cf. 828, 4754.

826a. Niwapo sina sikopi, kukopa si matukano. [SPK](#).

When I have none do I not borrow? Borrowing is no insult.

827. Pilau ya kuomba si muhogo uliojilimia. [NGU](#).

The pilao you begged for is not so tasty as the cassava, that you cultivated yourself. As the saying goes: "The hottest fire is made by the wood you chop yourself."

Pilau, pilao: a dish of boiled rice, cooked with ghee, raisins.

828. Shoka la mgeni haliwezi kumaliza kazi yako. [KB](#) 286.

The axe of the stranger cannot finish your work. A borrowed instrument may be asked back any time - [KB](#).

829. Siazime chango, ukatwaa na nyumbae. [ED](#) 66.

Do not borrow a cross-beam, you might also take the house. Cf. 2489.

830. Sitaki kupigwa na yangu. [JK](#) 130.

I do not want to be beaten by my own [money] - JK. "Lenders will be abused as soon as they ask for their money back. So, when asked for a loan, a person may answer with this proverb" - [JK](#).

831. Subaheli inakuwa deni. [AL](#) subaheli; [AL](#) 1248.

The good morning becomes a debt. Saying good morning gives the impression that one can come to ask for service. Kindness [friendliness] invites profiteers to ask for help - [AL](#).

Subaheli or sabalkheri: good morning, good day.

832. Sumu ya deni kulipa. [NGU](#).

The poison of a debt is in the payment.

833. Ukikopesha - utajitafutia maadui. [NGU](#).

If you start lending - you'll look for enemies.

834. Ukilipa deni waweza kukopa. [NGU](#).

If you pay your debt you can borrow [again].

835. Uliye mkopo mrudishie, hakujaza. [NGU](#).

Give back to the one you borrowed from, the lender does not give you more.

836. Usiku kucha si mwaka, usiku kungugu. [AL](#) 1111; [AL](#) mchana.

[Waking] a whole long night is not a year, night is like a mist [that disappears in the morning].

It is always hard to repay one's debt. The one who borrowed will tell the lender: "I'll pay you back, be patient" - [AL](#).

837. Usiseme madeni ya jirani yako isipokuwa ukitakakuyalipa. [NGU](#).

Don't speak about the debt of your neighbor unless you want to pay for it.

838. Uteo [ungu] ulisemaje? Nipe, nikupe! [T](#) 563; [SACL](#) 980, CM 50.

What did the winnowing basket say? Give me and I'll give you! The proverb is used as a favorite way of getting rid of an inopportune

beggar. "A widely used expression referring to prostitutes, who demand money in advance." [SWHL](#) ; March 1967, p.110.
Uteo and ungo are flat round baskets used for sifting grain.
The saying Nipe, nikupe is suggested by the noise made by the tray during winnowing.

839. Vya kuazima haviishi huba. [AL](#) azima; [AL](#) 1112.

Things borrowed do not end desire. There remains the desire to borrow more and to keep what is borrowed. Cf. 826.

840. Ziwilie chako, sitete na wako. [ED](#) 89; [JK](#) 121; [AL](#) 1101.

Withhold your things, so that you don't come into trouble with your own people. Be careful in lending, if you need it back, you might get in trouble. It is better to be independent; help from others is sometimes a cause of disagreement.
Ziwilia or zuilia:: to withhold.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Compatibility

841. Ala moja haikai panga mbili. [MARA](#) 2.

Two swords don't fit in one scabbard. Cf. 848, 894, 909.

842. Aliyezoea tumbaku tambuu haiwezi. [KA](#).

One who is used to tobacco is not satisfied with betel leaves. Said of people who cannot change their ways. Cf. 825, 891.

843. Ana nchi yake simba, ana maji yake mamba. [RSP](#) 118.

The lion has its land, the crocodile has its water. "And never the twain shall meet" -[JK](#).

844. Aumwae na kiukizi (or pili) hakamiki. [JKP](#).

One who is bitten by a viper cannot be sucked (lit., be milked). That person will surely die. The wound caused by a snake bite has to be squeezed out or sucked - [JK](#).

Kiukizi: Tana dialect for pili, viper. Kama: to milk.

845. Bibi wa ovyo anampata mume mzuri. [KB](#) 32.

A nobody-woman will marry a fine husband. Cf. 887.

846. Chanda si sawasawa. [ED](#) 88.

The fingers are not alike. All humans are different.

847. Chui na mbuzi hawalali nyumba moja. [LE3](#) 226.10.

The leopard and the goat do not sleep in the same house. There is no harmony possible between totally dissimilar people. They do not frequent the same places. Cf. 848.

848. Fahali wawili hawakai zizi moja. [MARA](#) 2; [H](#) 98; [B](#) 2.8; [J](#); [SWA](#) 33; [MS](#) 45.28.

Two bulls cannot stay together in one stable.

Mafahari: [RECH](#).88; [NS](#) 12; [F](#) 21.3; [V](#) 141; [SACL](#) 213 under hawaikai Boma instead of zizi occurs.

849. Giza na nuru havikai pamoja. [NGU](#).

Darkness and light don't stay together.

850. Hapachezei ngoma ya matanga penya arusi. [EM](#) h.9.

A mourning dance is not played at a wedding ceremony.

851. Haramu yako ni halali ya mwenzio. [REK](#)

What is illegal for you is permitted for your friend.

Haramu: forbidden, unlawful, prohibited, e.g., by Muslim law or custom. Halali: lawful, permissible, allowed, rightful, ceremonially clean. Mwana wa haramu: an illegitimate child.

851a. Hasara nda kichwa koko kuwana na mwenye pembe. [JKP](#).

It is the disadvantage of the hornless animal to fight one with horns. Meet your rival well prepared, the craftsman needs good tools - [JK](#).

Nda: ni ya, is of. Koko: stone of fruit, such as mango. Also ena kokoni: go into a mangrove swamp, to cut firewood (Sacl.). -wana: -pigana, fight. Mbwa koko: a wild dog.

852. Hata ng'ombe mweusi, maziwa yake meupe. [NGU](#).

Even a black cow gives white milk.

Hata ng'ombe mweusi na mwekundu maziwa yao ni meupe. [NGU](#).

Even a black and red cow give white milk. Cf. 2858.

853. Hati ikiwa hiari, husitawisha shairi. [JKP](#).

When the handwriting is superior, the poetry will flourish. "Excellence of form and expression ought to be in harmony with beautiful

contents" - [JK](#).

Hiari: choice, free. Cf. 2156, 2160.

854. Hawapikiki katika chungu kimoja. [SEMI](#) 20.

They cannot be cooked in the same pot. Said of people who do not agree, who are entirely incompatible, who quarrel all the time.

855. Huwaje kuisaliti nyama ndavu na asali. [SACL](#) 791.

What good<!--[if !supportFootnotes]--> does it do to mix stale meat and honey? Said of something that is beyond repair; also said of people. ÒStale meatÓ refers to a woman of loose morals - [SPK](#). Cf. 3508.

856. Ilipo haki dhuluma haidumu. [NGU](#).

Where there is justice, injustice does not last.

857. Inzi hatui juu ya damu ya simba. P 230.

The fly does not settle on a lion's blood. Even a wounded lion is dangerous. In riddles, lion's blood stands for fire.

858. Ituuazayo tia iyo isokuwako si dawa. [SM](#).

Apply the medicine that is not so good anymore, the medicine that you don't have is useless. Whatever little and old you have, use it. Don't throw it away. It's better than nothing. And one day you may need it.

Ituuazaye, ichuruzikayo, itiririkayo: what trickles, flows. Iyo, hiyo: that.

859. Iyuayo ndiyo ipigayo. [T](#) 635d.

The [arrows] that go waveringly are the ones that hit.

Understood: mivi = arrows. Yua: wobbling, not flying straight.

860. Jivu halijai gao la mkono. [KB](#)gao; [SACL](#) 246; [JKP](#).

One cannot keep two hands full of ashes - Sacl. Ashes do not fill the palm of your hand, they will escape your grasp. "Do not try to keep something useless" - [JK](#).

Gao: a handful. Halijai = halijazi: does not fill.

861. Jogoo wawili hawawezi kusaidiana wakamate kidudu kimoja. [KB](#) 85.

Two roosters are unable to help one another to catch the same insect. Two enemies will fight one another.

862. Kangaja silile, mchuzi towele. [ED](#) 16.

I don't eat the kangaja, but its gravy is a relish. We may dislike a person, but his favors are welcome.

Kangaja: fish with a disagreeable smell (Acanthurus gham).

Towele or kitoweo: anything eaten as a relish with the staple food: vegetables, meat, fish, etc. Cf. 2486.

863. Kipofu haonyi njia. [JKP](#).

A blind person cannot show the way.

Onya or onyesha: to show.

864. Kisochongolewa hakichongi. [ED](#) 19.

What is not sharpened does not cut. One cannot work with a tool that is not in good condition. Cf. 622.

865. Kitambaa kimoja, mivao mbalimbali. [AL](#) 348.

The same [head] cloth, but the ways of wearing it are different. Cf. 880, 2620.

866. Kivuli cha fimbo hakimfichi mtu jua. [F](#) 16.30; [KB](#) 113; [MS](#) 110.

The shadow of a stick cannot hide a man from the sun.

Huwezi kuficha jua na ungo. [MEM](#) 324.

You cannot hide the sun with a sieve. Use the appropriate means. Cf. 3324.

867. Kofia kubwa na kichwa chake. [NGU](#).

A big hat for a big head. They go together. Two people who are well together.

868. Konzi ya maji haifumbatiki. [J](#) fumba; [F](#) 16.35 [T](#) 165; [V](#) III; [SACL](#) 230,438; [MS](#) 39; [KS](#) fumbata .

A handful of water cannot be retained. Water cannot be grasped in the fist - J. One cannot carry water in a sieve - [V](#). This is said of a person whose real intentions one is not sure of. Cf. 860.

869. Kuku ataota meno? [AL](#) ota.

Will the chicken grow teeth?

Utamwoteshea mbwa pembe?

Can you make a dog grow horns?

870. Kunguni wengi, kitanda hakilaliki. [JKP](#).

The bed with many bedbugs is not slept in. "There is a limit to the amount of annoyance a person can take. Said of a troublesome spouse" - [JK](#).

871. Kupata kwa ushupavu, pepo haiwezekani. [JKP](#).

Paradise cannot be gained by toughness or argumentation - [JK](#).

"Ushupafu wa mwili : hardness of body, inured by labour. Ushupafu wa maneno, hard words used e.g. before a judge; fig.uskupafu, inclination to deny, quarrelsomeness." Krapf, uskupafu .

872. Kwenye hame hapaliwi chakula. [REK](#).

In an abandoned homestead no food is eaten. Nothing edible is left.

873. Kwenye miti hakuna wajenzi. [T](#) 213; [SWA](#) 47; [FSM](#) 88; [MS](#) 44.2; [V](#) mti; [H](#) 47 Kunako miti...; Penye miti...; [F](#) 4214; [KB](#) 263; [MARA](#) 3.

Where there are trees, there are no builders. You do not find builders where the trees are, even though trees are used for building; i.e., things do not go as expected - [SWA](#).

There where nature is generous, there is none to exploit it - [KB](#).

Things go by opposites. It shows the irony of people who do not use their special talents. This is said when resources are left unused or misused - [MM](#).

Trees are regarded as useless wilderness, builders as bringers of civilisation. 'Trees' also means 'blockheads,' primitive people - [SPK](#).

"Wajenzi, builders, implies people who have turned the bush into habitable land" - [JK](#).

The verse goes on: **Kuna wapuzi tu, hakuna wasaidizi.** [JKP](#).

There are only fools, none who can help.

874. Kwenye mpilipili hutafuti mbaazi. [EM](#) k40.

You do not get peas from a pepper bush. Good people do good things, bad people don't.

874a. Kwenye ng'ombe kuna pembe. [SPK](#).

Where there are cows there are horns..

875. Lazima haina haramu. [EM](#) l6.

Necessity has no illegality. "When a person wants to satisfy a necessary need, that person ignores even taboos attached to it. "Necessity knows no law" - [EM](#). Cf. 884.

876. Lila na fila havitangamani. [J](#) lila; [T](#) 223; [F](#) 20.6; [KB](#) lila; [SACL](#) 473; [B](#) 4.83, Hazitangamani; [JKP](#); [KS](#); [NGU](#).

Perhaps and actuality are not compatible - [J](#). Good and evil will not mix - [E](#). Used when two situations must not be confounded. The case of lila is not the same as that of fila - [KB](#); [SACL](#).

Hila na lila havitangamani. [MM](#).

Bad intentions and the consequences thereof do not mix. They come back - [MM](#).

The good will be spoiled by contact with the bad - [SPK](#).

Tangamana or changamana : to join together. Lila na fila, a saying: for good or bad - [J](#).

"Lila (night) and fila (action) are two women. No two cases are the same. Another interpretation is that lila means good and fila evil" - [JK](#).

877. Maji mengi hayazuiliki. [SACL](#) 1050.

A great amount of water cannot be retained.

878. Maziwa ya mbuzi hayadhuru chai. [NGU](#).

Goat's milk does not spoil the tea.

878a. Mbuzi angelia mlilo wa ng'ombe angejipasua. [SPK](#).

If a goat would [try to] low like a bull she would burst. ...if a woman would try to rule the house - [SPK](#).

879. Mbwa hali mbwa. [NGU](#).

Dog does not eat dog. Cf. 881.

880. Mchele mmoja, mapishi mengi. [F](#) 24.33; [KB](#) 172 mapikio mbalimbali .

Rice is one, [but there are] many ways of cooking. Things can be done well in many ways.

Mchele mmoja, mapishi mbalimbali. [RECH](#) 286; [MEM](#) 170; [KS](#) mapishi.

Rice is the same but the ways of preparing are different .

Mchele mmoja kila mtu na upishi wake. [MS](#) 97.

One rice but every one has his/her own way of cooking.

Mtama [ni] mmoja, wapishi [ni] mbalimbali [wengi]. [JK](#) 124; [JKP](#).

"The millet is always the same, but the cooks have different ways" - [JK](#). Cf. 2620.

880a. Mchovu halali kitanda cha mbali. [SPK](#).

[Even] a tired person cannot sleep on a distant bed [i.e., not available].

881. Meno ya mbwa hayaumani. [B](#) 2.54; [CM](#) 44; [F](#) 25 48; [RECH](#) 576; [MARA](#) 40; [JK](#) 131; [J](#); [KB](#) 162.

The teeth of a dog do not bite each other. Do not enter when relatives fight, they will turn against you.

Simba na simba hawauani. [SPK](#).

Two lions do not kill each other. Cf. 892, 905.

881a. Mfikiri huru hutukanwa. [SPK](#).

A free thinker is abused. Few people like originality of thought - [SPK](#).

881b. Mkufu hausimami. [SPK](#).

A chain does not stand.

882. Mkwamba hauzai zabibu. [MEM](#) 81.

A thornbush does not grow grapes.

883. Mnazi huhimili dhoruba, mwembe huanguka. [EM](#) m24.

The palm tree can survive through a storm, but the mango tree falls. The palm tree is tall, but bends and bends. The mango tree does not bend and is uprooted - [EM](#). "The moral is that to survive the storms of life it is better to be flexible as the palmtree" - [EM](#).

884. Msafiri kafiri. [F](#) 29.99; [B](#) 3.71; [NGU](#); [AL](#) 123.

A traveler becomes like an unbeliever. A person is sometimes compelled by circumstances to act contrary to that person's religion. E.g., Muslims are not allowed to eat pork, but away from home, they are allowed to eat pork, when nothing else is available.

Msafiri kadiri. [AL](#) 123.

A traveller does according to his condition. In case of need one gives a twist to one's religious rules or customs - [AL](#).

885. Mshale juu ni kutembea, chini ndipo pake. [AL](#) pake; [AL](#) 1552.

An arrow travels high in the sky, but its place is here below. Dependence is hard for the ambitious - [AL](#).

886. Mshale kwake ni porini. [NGU](#).

Mshale kwao porini. [NGU](#).

An arrow belongs in the wilds. There an arrow can be used, not in town. Cf. 3532.

887. Mtu wa ovyo ana mali nyingi. [KB](#) 202.

A good-for-nothing has great wealth. Cf. 845.

888. Mwanzi hauvunjwi na upepo. [Nestor](#) p.75.

A reed is not broken by the wind. Cf. 883.

889. Mwenye kuchoma hali chenga zenye kuungua. [AL](#) 1196.

One who roasts corn does not eat the burned ones.

890. Mzinga mchafu ndio hutoa asali. [REK](#).

It is the dirty beehive that gives the honey. There has been lots of activity going on.

891. Mzowea kunyonga, kuchinja hawezi. [F](#) 38.182; [AL](#) 808; [KA](#); [KS](#).

One who is used to strangling food, cannot eat slaughtered meat. This proverb refers to persons who prefer a life of hardship to a life of ease, or to those who like doing things "the hard way" - [F](#). A person who is too demanding comes in conflict with the rules accepted by society; and becomes offensive - [AL](#). Said of someone who cannot change his ways (activities, hours) for even better ways or a better job. A person who is used to get things easily without sweat will not do hard work - [KA](#).

Ukizowea vya kunyonga, vya kuchinja huviwezi [utakonda]. Aliyezoea tumbaku tambuu haiwezi. [KA](#).

One who is used to tobacco is not satisfied with betel leaves.

892. Ndege hao wawili hawafungi matumba. [EM](#) 23/4.

Those two birds do not tie bundles. Here birds means eyes. A person's eyes do not tie bundles.

They do not act; therefore they cannot be blamed or accused that they have done something - [EM](#). Thus what makes a person guilty is not seeing but doing.

893. Ng'ombe na mbuzi ni wamoja; mtu kando [mbali] ni kondoo. [MARA](#) 60; [JKP](#).

Cows and goats are alike; a person however is like a sheep. Do not get mixed up with other people's fights. "The sheep is regarded as a nobler animal than the dumb cows and goats" - [JK](#).

Ng'ombe na mbuzi ni wamoja; mtu kando na kondoo. [KA](#).

Cows and goats are alike; man and sheep are different.

Ng'ombe na mbuzi ni mmoja, kondoo ni mtu mbali. [SPK](#).

Cows or goats it is all the same, but a sheep is a different parson. Important people and low-class people are of the same character; only a few are good and noble - [SPK](#).

893a. Ngozi na mafupa iyafunike hakuna lisilo na ndugu yake. [SPK](#).

The skin and the bones: let it cover them, there is nothing that does not have its brother. Nothing is unique: every person may find a partner in life. Brothers and friends fit together like the skin over bones -[SPK](#).

894. Ngozi ya paa haikai watu wawili. [T](#) 421.

The hide of a gazelle does not seat two people. Said of something in short supply. Cf. 848.

895. Ngumu ngumu inazaa teketeke, teketeke inazaa ngumungumu. [AL](#) 1758.

Hard grains produce soft ones; and soft grains produce hard ones. This is also a riddle: Unripe maize and hard maize. Generation follows generation - [AL](#). About vexation in life.

896. Ngwena na mwingine ngwena, hawawezi kupatana. [RSP](#) 138.

Two crocodiles cannot agree. "Aggressive people do not get along together" - [JK](#).

896a. Njia haimeli mani (or majani). [SPK](#).

No grass grows on the path. No sleep comes to the worried mind - [SPK](#).

896b. Nyendo hazitakufaa, ila maji yakijaa. [SPK](#).

Rollers will be of no use to you [when trying to launch your boat] unless the tide is in. The high tide is needed to float the ship. The rollers can take it only so far -[SPK](#).

896c. Nyoka muomba njiani usimlishe nyumbani. [SPK](#).

Do not feed in your house the snake you found begging on the roadside. Do not trust people who solicit your pity - [SPK](#).

897. Paka wa nyumba hawingwi. [F](#) 41.6.

A house cat is not chased away. "Don't cut off your nose to spite your face."

898. Pakubwa huingia mtu mkubwa. [NGU](#).

In a big place enters a big person. A capable person is needed for a difficult place or situation.

899. Pembe hazioti kabla ya kichwa. [EM](#) p9.

The horns do not grow before the head [has grown].

899a. Penye mtu mzima ni pazima. [SPK](#).

The place where there is a sound person is a sound place.

Mzima, lit., whole, healthy, adult, here refers to a person of sane mind and clear judgment - [SPK](#).

899b. Penye watu wafunziki kazi haiharibiki. [SPK](#).

Where there are experienced people the work is not wasted.

900. Pongo hawezi kulala siku moja na chui. [KB](#) 267.

The gazelle and the leopard cannot sleep any time in the same spot. Enemies avoid one another. Cf. 847.

901. Raka la jamvi ni kanda. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

A rag of the floormat is a [shopping] bag. The difference of the two is in the making. Things that are similar go together, and so do people.

The jamvi [doormat] and the kanda [a bag] are made of the same material (leaf strips of the wild date palm: mkindu).

902. Reli chuma - gurudumu chuma. [NGU](#).

The rails are iron - the wheels are iron. They go together. Hand and glove.

903. Sahani isiyo kawa hufunikwaje mkeka? [MS](#) 73.

How can a plate without its cover be covered with a mat? Ironic. How can you use something so big and expensive to cover up something so little: There must be more to it than meets the eye.

Don't burn your house to fright the mouse away.

904. Simba hamli mwanawe. [KA](#); [SM](#).

A lion does not kill her young. Bad people do not harm their children.

905. Simba na simba hawauani. [JK](#) 131; [AL](#) 657.

Lions do not kill each other. Bad people do not harm each other - [AL](#). Cf. 881, 891.

906. Sisimizi hawi ng'ombe. [KS](#) sisimizi; [AL](#) 689.

The small sisimizi will never be cows. About ambition.
Sisimizi: a small black harmless ant (almost invisible).

907. Ukaonapi (or ujaonapi) mnandi kujenga nyumba kutwani (or barani)? [T](#) 518; [SACL](#) 575; [AL](#) 617.

When have you ever seen a cormorant build its nest westwards [on the mainland]? - [T](#). This proverb is tied up with legend. The cormorant is thought to build its nest as a kind of white sponge just above water level - [T](#).; [SACL](#). It is used to explain that people generally act in their own accustomed way. Don't believe all that people tell you - [AL](#).
Kutwani: where the sun sets; inlands. Mnandi: cormorant, a voracious seabird. Cf. 4087.

908. Unga umezidi maji. [SM](#).

There is more flour than water. And a loaf cannot be good. This is said when somebody has a good thing going but then exaggerates somewhere and the project flounders - [SM](#).

909. Uo mmoja hautiwi panga mbili. [T](#) 545; [SACL](#) 888; [AL](#) 951.

Ala moja haikai panga mbili. [MARA](#) 2.

One single sheath cannot receive two swords. Two swords are not put in one sheath. A woman cannot have two husbands - [AL](#). Cf. 848, 894.

910. Uonepi jiwe gumu baharini likelea? [JKP](#).

Where did you see a hard stone float in the sea?

911. Utamwoteshea mbwa pembe? [AL](#) 688.

Will you succeed growing horns on a dog? Cf. 2127.

912. Vyanda vya miguu havivishwi pete. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

Rings are not put on toes. Do not put a fool in charge of an important job. Cf. 4158, 4574.

913. Watu hawakwei miti na matalawanda. [EM](#) w13.

People do not climb trees with sandals. Here sandals are like handicaps. A ridiculous thing to do.

914. Watu walio pamoja si maji mtungini. [EM](#) w19.

People who are staying together are not like water in a waterpot. People together will not stay quiet for long.

915. Wenye ghadhaba hawalingani, wenye mahaba hawatengani. [RSP](#) 86.

Irascible people do not get along together, lovers cannot be kept apart.
Ghadhaba: more common is ghadhabu..

916. Ya nini kutumia bomu kuulia sisimizi? [EM](#) y5.

Why use a bomb to kill a small ant?

Sisimizi: a small black harmless ant (almost invisible).

917. Yaliyo pemba na mrima yapo. [NGU](#).

What you find in Pemba island you find also in Zanzibar.
Mrima: the coast opposite Zanzibar island.

918. Yaliyoko mbele yako utayaona, ya nyuma huwezi kuyaona. [EM](#) y3.

You see what is before you, not what is behind you. A person cannot control all the things happening in his area of work.

918a. Yaliyovunjika hutengenezeka. [SPK](#).

What was broken can be repaired.

919. Zobe na msuwale ni wamoja. [KA](#).

The zobe and the msuwele are alike. The zobe and the msuwele have legs and claws like crabs and shells like a tortoise. Stay with your associates - [KA](#). Cf. 893.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Consequences

920. Aepukaye peke yake, halengeki. [REK.](#)

The one who stands aside will not be hit.

920a. Afugaye ng'ombe tume mwenye ziwa la kujaza. [SPK.](#)

One who keeps a healthy cow will have plenty of milk. He who has married a faithful wife will have good children - [SPK.](#)

921. Alimao ndio avunao. [MA](#) 31.

What one cultivates is what one harvests. As one works so one earns. "The one who does the action is responsible for good or evil" - [MM.](#)

922. Alimaye mtama havuna kunde. [MA](#) 30.

One who cultivates millet does not harvest beans. Cf. 990.

923. Alimaye njiani sharti alinde ndege (or nyuni) asipate chembe. [A](#) 114; [T](#) 13; [SAM.](#)

A person who cultivates near the road must watch that the bird gets no grain. Envy and jealousy of people might spoil one's plans " - [SAM.](#)

Nyuni or ndege, bird - [J.](#)

Alimaye shamba chembe azipande, sharti azilinde nyuni wasipate. [SPK.](#) The cultivator will sow seeds, then must watch lest the birds get them. Cf. 2049.

923a. Amapata fimbo atapata mambo. [SPK.](#)

The one who has got a stick [to beat a dog] will get trouble.

924. Anayejitia lisilomhusu hupata lisilomridhi . [KA](#); [SM.](#)

The person who involves oneself in what does not concerns her/him, will get what is unpleasant. Don't put your nose in other people's business.

925. Anayemsagia mamaye unga huonja asali. [REK.](#)

She who grinds flour for her mother will taste honey.

926. Apasukwaye [na] nguo ni fundi wa kukunja. [MARA](#) 2; [KA.](#)

One whose clothing is torn must be an expert in folding it. In order to cover nakedness. If a person does not take care of things, that person will be caught when things are scarce.

927. Arusi usiyoalikwa, ukivumja kikombe utalipa. [AL](#) 1576.

If you break a cup at a wedding, where you were not invited, you'll pay. A mistake must be repaired.

928. Asiyekaribu na mto ndiye alalaye kiu. [REK.](#)

The one who is not near a river sleeps thirsty.

929. Asiyekitika kinywa ataitikia fimbo. [AL](#) 1578.

One who does not listen to advice will listen to the stick. Cf. 1160.

930. Asiyetembea huoa kwao. [REK.](#)

One who does not travel will marry in his/her own village.

931. Avaaye kiatu kimoja hana budi kwenda chopi. [REK.](#)

A person who wears only one shoe walks lamely.

932. Bahari iliko ndiko mito iendako. [EM](#) 23.4.

Where the sea is there the rivers go. The few follow the many. Money goes where there is much money - [EM.](#)

933. Bila mti hakuna kivuli. [EM](#).26.11.

There is no shade without a tree. Everything has its cause - [EM](#).

934. Chura alia mbogo. [KB](#) 47; [AL](#) chura.

The frog killed the buffalo. Something little can defeat a powerful person. Cf. 935, 936.

935. Chura huweza kumwua tembo. [EM](#) 40.23.

A frog can kill an elephant. A small person may inconvenience a big man so much as to cause the big man's downfall - [EM](#). Cf. 936.

936. Chura mzuia maji, ndovu akitamani. [T](#) 55; [SACL](#) 1050; [AL](#) tamani..

A frog may obstruct water, while the elephant longs for it. Petty causes, big effects. A frog can prevent an elephant from drinking water by getting stuck in his trunk, and so kill the elephant.

937. Fimbo mpya kuangua kuukuu. [T](#) 67.

A new stick knocking down an old one. A new insult reminds of old ones. But also when somebody uses valuable things to obtain worthless things - [MM](#).

Atiya koko wangu koma. [SPK](#).

Throw a fruit stone [into a tree] and you may bring down a koma (fruit of the dwarf palm). Invest a little, gain much - [SPK](#).

938. Giza usifyatue mshale. [EM](#) g5.

Don't shoot an arrow in the dark. Without seeing the target clearly it is foolish to release an arrow - [EM](#). This applies to words, letters, etc. You may hurt the wrong people.

939. Gogo hili limelimba haliwezi kusukumwa. [JKP](#); [KS](#) limba.

This log is glued [to the earth], it cannot be pushed. A log that is stuck to the earth cannot be moved. Do not try the impossible, i.e., do not try to persuade old-fashioned people to accept novelties - [JKP](#). [KS](#) does not say that this is a proverb. In a proverb the form might be: Gogo lililimbalo haliwezi kusukumwa.... Limba, sink into the earth.

940. Gunia la chumvi hurishai chumvi. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

A bag of salt sweats salt. Meaning it sweats salt, not sugar. You'll know a person by conversation and actions - [MARA](#). Kurishai, to sweat; used in speaking about sweating walls and handshakes.

941. Hakuna kisichokuwa na mwanzo. [NGU](#).

There is nothing that has no beginning.

942. Hakuna masika yasiyo na mbu. [B](#) 3.47; [A](#) 207; [H](#) 37; [SWA](#) 68; [MS](#) 145; [F](#) 10.6 has hapana; [KB](#) 59 has bila mbu..

There is no rainy season without mosquitoes. A mixed blessing.

Masika, monsoon, is the heaviest rainy season of the year and lasts for three or four months. Cf. 3469.

943. Hapana kapa isiyokuwa na usubi. [FSM](#) 43.

There is no coat without its gnat. The meaning is that nobody is perfect.

Kapa, a sort of coat without sleeves - J. Usubi, a small biting gnat, midge, sandfly - [J](#). Cf. 942. See also the section Misfortune.

944. Hapo ufuliapo wenzio ndiyo hupigia pasi. [WIKON](#) 166.

It is there where you do your laundry, that your friends do the ironing. While one does all the work another may harvest.

945. Hataki upepo mkalia ukuti mkavu. [EM](#) h16.

One sitting on a dry palm leaf does not like the wind. A dry palm branch breaks easily. A person who is not sure of his/her position is scared hearing of lay-offs. Cf. 1018, 4062.

946. Hikosa mwaka naruzi, silimi vuli hachekwa. [T](#) 94; [MS](#) 21.

If I fail during the big rainy season I give up, I do not cultivate during the short rainy season and be laughed at. "If a rich man fails me, I don't apply to a poor one" - [T](#).

Mwaka, masika, the long rainy season. Vuli, the short rains.

947. Huwezi kumvisha kiatu mtu anayekimbia. [NGU](#).

You cannot put a shoe on a running person.

948. Huwezi kupika keki bila kuvunja yai. [NGU](#).

You cannot bake a cake without breaking an egg.

949. Jamvi ulitandikavyo, ndivyo utakavyoketi. [EM](#) j2.

As you lay down a mat, so you will sit. To the extent that you prepare a matter, to the same extent you will reap its benefits - [EM](#).

Jamvi, a mat for sitting on the ground. Cf. 921, 1036.

950. Jangwa la simba halikosekani mfupa. [NGU](#).

The hunting ground of the lion does not lack a bone. Signs of activity. Accidents happen when people are working.

951. Jeshi la haki hupenya ambapo jeshi la watu haliwezi. [NGU](#).

The forces of justice enter where the forces of human beings cannot. Justice will be done. Evil will be punished. Goodness will be rewarded.

951a. Kaa na mwimbaji ukaimba wimbo. [SPK](#).

Sit with a singer and you will sing songs.

952. Kaakale kaikele, mbuka kale ikeleje. [T](#) 122.

If my sitting here does not sit well with you, why don't you go so I can sit; how does that sit with you? This probably refers to somebody who is not happy with the arrangements.

Kale (k'ale) = nikale: that I may sit. K'aikele, old past negative of kukala (kukaa): to sit [well], to fit, suit. Mbuka = niuka or niwuka (uwuka, mbuka) from uka: depart, leave.

953. Kama baba kama mtoto, mti mzuri huzaa matumda mazuri. [NGU](#).

"Like father like son", a good tree produces good fruit.

954. Kama hukula vitunguu vya pori hutakunya mbegu zake. [AL](#) 649.

If you did not eat wild onions you would not void their seeds.

Vitunguu vya pori, in Maniema dialect, masusu. Cf. 1008.

955. Kanyea pazuri kafuatwa na nzi. [NGU](#).

A nice place fouled is visited by flies. If a nice park is defaced, trash will be thrown on it.

956. Kijito kitakulowanisha nguo. [AL](#) 1748.

Even a small brook will wet your clothes.

957. Kijondi ni nini ingawa ana mbawa. [JKP](#).

What value has a little bird, though it may have wings. "Much ado about a trifle" - [JKP](#). Kijondi, small bird.

958. Kikuba cha yasumini hakikuja bure. [JKP](#).

A corsage of jasmine did not come in vain. "Jasmines have a strong, pleasant smell. A corsage of jasmine brought profit to the girl who wore it, by attracting a young man [who became her husband] to her - [JKP](#).

959. Kila mlaji zabibu haachi kujimumunya. [JKP](#).

Everyone who eats grapes must wet his/her chin. "Every lover of girls will make a mistake" - [JKP](#).

However, if one reads kuzimumunya (to crush them), then it would translate as: Everyone who eats grapes does not delay crushing them.

Mumunya, crush a thing between the tongue and the palate - [KS](#).

960. Kilio huanza mfiwa, ndipo na wa mbali wakaingia. [F](#) 15.20.

The bereaved begin the wailing, then those from afar follow. This proverb has many uses: 1. Wait for your turn. 2. Two people start a fight and soon everybody gets involved. 3. Before help can be expected one has to try to solve one's own problem.

961. Kimrudishacho mzee malishoni hakijulikani. [REK](#).

Whatever returned the old person to the meadows is unknown.

Malishoni, grazing ground, paddock. Mzee, old person, master, parent.

961a. Kiozacho hutoa uvundo. [SPK](#).

What rots stinks.

962. Kisiki mjini, japo kifupi, kina maneno mengi. [AL](#) 1747.

A tree stump in town may be small, but provokes many palavers. Cf. 4349.

963. Kisu kisio mpini hakikati nyama. [EM](#) k19.

A knife without a handle cannot carve meat. Use the right tools.

964. Kitembeacho hakiachi shindo. [NGU](#).

What moves on does not leave a big noise.

965. Kuchomeako mwiba ndiko utokeako. [CM](#) 37; [FSM](#) 161.

Where the thorn pierces is where it comes out. "Where the thorn went in, that is where it will come out" - Racial 588.226. A problem is solved by investigating the cause so that the remedy can be found.

966. Kudharau ng'ombe wayachukia maziwa. [REK](#).

Those who hate milk insult/scorn the cow.

967. Kuinukako ndiko kuinamako. [MM](#); [KA](#); [JPK](#).

Where there is bending, there will be rising up. "Oppression cannot last long" - [JPK](#).

968. Kuti kavu kuanguka si ajabu. [FSM](#) 63, 82.

A dry leaf falling down is nothing to be amazed about. It is natural: if a marriage or relationship dries up. Cf. 4062.

969. Kuvuna ni ile mbegu. [I](#) 333a.

The reaping depends on the seed. As they sow, so let them reap. Cf. 4750.

970. Licha makoo ya kuku, hata mafaranga yako. [JPK](#).

"To say nothing of the hens, there are chicks too" - [JPK](#). Used in many ways. A wealthy man can afford many wives and so he gets many children, which is considered a great blessing. Also: All undertakings in this world have their consequences; once you start the ball rolling, it will go on all the way. Those who have, to them shall be given, etc" - [JPK](#). Licha....hata, not only....but also.

970a. Luti ameokoka, mke wake ghabiri. [SPK](#).

Lot was saved, his wife was dilatory. A reference to the Koran 29, 32-33. Lot obeyed God's word with alacrity, but his wife tarried on the road - [SPK](#).

971. Madogo yanavuruga watu wasitambuane. [NGU](#).

Little things stop people to recognize each other. To respect or be friendly with each other.

972. Maji ya moto hayachomi (or hayaunguzi) nyumba. [KA](#); [NGU](#).

Boiling water does not burn a house.

973. Mali bila daftari hupotea bila habari. [J](#).

Possessions without an [account] book are lost without noticing.

Mali bila daftari muhali. [NGU](#).

Wealth without accounting is very difficult.

Muhali, impossible, very difficult. Cf. 2938.

974. Mambo (or maneno) ambayo hujui mwanzo wala mwisho yatakupataje? [AL](#) 579.

If you don't know the beginning or the end of an affair how can it concern you? Cf. 1008.

974a. Mashizi hugandamia chungu. [SPK](#).

Suet sticks to the pot. The pot is a useful object, we have to accept the black grease - [SPK](#).

975. Mbega huchongewa ngozi yake. [NGU](#).

The skin is shaped by the shoulder. A shirt is cut according to the shoulders.

976. Mbinu hufuata mwendo. [F](#) 23.25; [AL](#) 986.

The arm follows the pace of the walk. The curvature of the arm goes together with the gait of the legs - [AL](#). A good race produces a good offspring. The thought is the father of the deed.

Mbinu is an interesting word: a double-jointed arm or leg, so that when stretched out the elbow-joint curves upwards. "A well shaped arm or leg" - [J](#).

A new meaning is mentioned in TS Nam. 2 #93: Mbinu/njia za kufundishia, teaching methods.

977. Mbinu huishia kibiongo. [NGU](#).

A curved spine ends the strut.

978. Mchambia mgomba huondoka na mavi yake. [FSM](#) 96.

Free translation: He who uses a banana leaf as toilet paper doesn't leave clean. The banana leaf is not good for this purpose. Use the proper means to succeed in an enterprise.

979. Mcheza na tope humrukia. [F](#) 24.37; [KA](#).

One who plays with mud will get splashed.

Mchezea mavi hayaachi kumnuka. [KA](#).

One who plays with dung will smell badly. Cf. 8, 989.

980. Mchezea moto hakosi jeraha. [NGU](#).

One who plays with fire will get burned.

981. Mchoma nyama ndiye msikia harufu. [NGU](#).

The person who roasts meat is the one who senses the smell.

982. Mchovya asali hachovyi mara moja. [J](#); [F](#) 24.42; [CM](#) 50; [V](#) 69; [L](#) 46; [NS](#) 24; [KB](#) 176; [SACL](#) 535.

One who dips a finger in honey, does not do it [only] once.

Mlamba asali halambi mara moja. [AL](#) 78.

One who tastes honey does not do that once only.

983. Mlala mapema huamka mapema. [FSM](#) 122.

One who goes to sleep early wakes up early. Used in cases of procrastination.

984. Mlenga jiwe kundini hajui limpataye. [F](#) 28.85; [MS](#) 118 limpigaye; [EM](#) j15.

One who throws a stone into a crowd does not know who will be hit. Think about the consequences before doing something. Do not punish the whole crowd on account of one. This means that where there are many people do not insult your enemy - [EM](#).

985. Mnunuzi wa mchuzi, talipia mbuzi. [RSP](#) 44.

One who buys the gravy will have to pay for the goat. To slaughter a lamb for the sake of a chop.
To sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.

986. Mpiga mbizi sharti azame. [REK](#).

A diver must sink. [And probably drown one day.] A risk-taker once will fail.

987. Mpige mbwa ukitaka kumfahamu mwenyewe. [REK](#).

Hit the dog if you want to know the owner.

988. Mshale hupindukia utakako or utokako. [FSM](#) 127; [HM](#).

An arrow turns as it wants - [FSM](#). The arrow going up comes back from where it came. We have no control over many things. Often things come out differently from what we intended.

989. Mshika mavi, hayaachi kumnuka. [JK](#) 130.

The one who touches dung will inevitably smell. If you are in charge of other people's money you may be tempted to take a little for yourself - [JK](#).

Mshika kinyaa haachi kunusa mkono. [NGU](#).

One who touches excrement does not stop smelling his hand.
Kinyaa, kinyesi, excrement, dung, stool.

990. Mtaka mtama hapandi kunde. [MA](#) 355.

One who wants millet does not plant cow peas. In the sense that you will expect the same treatment you give to others.

990a. Mtawany vumbi michanga huusha. [SPK](#).

The winner raises dust. The critic will attract criticism - [SPK](#).

991. Mti huomolewa na matunda yake. [J](#) omoa; [SACL](#) 710; [MARA](#) 49.

"A tree is dug up with its fruit, i.e. digging up a tree involves the fruit also" - J. It is because of its fruits that the tree is exposed to hostilities - [SACL](#). This proverb can be understood in different ways:

1. Destroying a tree is destroying its fruit (goose and golden eggs). 2. A tree is destroyed (betrayed) by its fruits. Stones and sticks are thrown in the tree to get at its fruits, branches are torn off. The general meaning is that the misdeeds of the children harm the parents. An example is the mikarafuu (clove tree) on Unguja Island. These trees were so heavily damaged by the people, wanting cloves, that the government had to make punitive laws to protect the trees.

992. Mtoka kivulini huwekwa juani. [FSM](#) 135.

One who comes out of the shade is put in the sun. When people do not want to be helped they should not feel sorry if they are denied help they ask for later - [FSM](#). However it could be used equally well for people who leave the cozy isolation of their homes and go public: they will feel the hot sun of public criticisms.

993. Mtoto mwenye bidii hakosi wa kumtunza. [REK](#).

An active child does not lack someone who takes care of it.

994. Mtoto wa mhunzi akikosa kufua, huvukuta. [F](#) 31.121.

If the child of the blacksmith fails in working the metal, he will work the bellows. Somebody unsuitable or unwilling to work will be downgraded.

Mtoto wa mhunzi asiposana huvukuta (or avuvia). [KS](#) sana, vuvia, mhunzi.

If the son of the blacksmith does not forge he will work the bellows.

995. Mtu aliyeipiga nafsi yake asilie na mtu. [FSM](#) 13.

If you harm yourself you should not cry [for pity] from anybody. If you harm yourself do not blame it on anybody. Cf. 1036.

996. Mtu mcheza na nyimbo haibudi kumuimba. [JK](#) 145.

A person dancing with songs, inevitably [someone] will compose a song on that person. - [JK](#). "In the Swahili towns, kumuimba mtu, (to sing a song on somebody) is a common pastime. Insiders will know who the composer is, and who the target of the satire must be.

996a. Muhadazi kihadawa hivi huona uchungu. [SPK](#).

When the deceiver is deceived then he/she feels bitter about it

997. Mwana mkaidi hafaidi mpaka siku ya idi. [F](#) 33.140.

A stubborn child does not even get gain on the day of the Id festival. "On this day that child will suffer, when it finds that it has neither new clothes to wear nor decent food to eat while others are enjoying themselves" - [F](#). This is also used when somebody refuses to work. That person will be hungry while the others enjoy the fruit of their labor.

Hafaidi (does not gain) is used to go with mkaidi(stubborn). Siku ya Idi, a Muslim festival at the end of Ramadhan.

998. Mwenda omo na tezi, marejeo ni ngamani. [J](#) rejea; [F](#) 35.156.

One who goes from the bow to the stern must pass through the bilge. If you want to succeed you must also take the means, hardship, etc. But the proverb can also be translated thus: One who goes to bow and stern returns to the hold of the ship. After traveling abroad and meeting hardship, a person finally comes home to a secure place. All messages come to an important official in different ways.

999. Mwenda pwani hali uchu. [FSM](#) 152.

One who goes to the beach does not eat dry food. Craving for food will be satisfied. Use the right means to reach your goal.

Uchu, craving for food. Cf. 4730.

1000. Mwenye kuchamba mno huchubuka. [AL](#) 299.

One who self-cleans too much, bruises the skin. One who is too clean (ambitious, precise, exacting) damages the body.

Kuchamba, cleaning after call of nature. Cf. 978, 1770.

1001. Mwenye kuchinja hachelei kuchuna. [F](#) 35.160; [KA](#); [AL](#) 1607.

One who slaughters a beast does not hesitate about skinning it - [F](#). Do not expect mercy from someone who has brought you down.

People in power often abuse their power - [AL](#).

1001a. Mwenye kulinda halindi jicho lisiponudhuri. [SPK](#).

The watcher does not keep watch if the eye does not see. A blind person cannot keep watch - [SPK](#).

1002. Ngoma haikosi manju. [NGU](#)

A dance is not without a composer.

Manju, an expert at composing songs and leading the singing at dances. Cf. 4782.

1003. Nyasi hazikauke bure: kuna mti kati. Bahemba dialect. [AL](#) 484.

Grass does not dry up without a reason: there is a tree in its midst. There is a fruit tree, or a tree that gives shade.

1004. Palipoondoka jino pana pengo. [NGU](#).

Where a tooth is taken away, there is now a gap.

1005. Pasipo meno hapavunjiki mfupa. [NGU](#).

Without teeth the bone can not be broken. One needs the necessary tools to do a job.

1006. Penye moto hapakosi moshi. [AL](#) ota; 1662.

Where there is fire there is also smoke. Nothing is perfect - [AL](#).

1007. Penye mzoga hapakosi inzi. [EM](#) p12.

Where there is a carcass there must be flies.

Penye uvundo hapakosi inzi. [NGU](#).

Where there is a stench there flies are not lacking.

1008. Pilipili usizozila zakuwashiaje? [F](#) 42.20; [H](#) 97; [B](#) 2.17; [L](#) 88; [KB](#) 264; [MARA](#) 65; [KS](#) pilipili.

Chiles which you have not eaten, how can they burn you? This proverb is used when people take personal offence at others' grievances, why should you feel guilty for something you did not do?

Also used as an accusation: **Pilipili zikuwashazo huna budi umezila.** [NS](#) 31.

If the chiles burn you, it is because you ate them. You have earned your punishment.

Mavi usiyoyagusa hayakuharibu. [MA](#) 298.

Dung that you do not touch, does not spoil you. Cf.1009.

1009. Pilipili shambani zakuwashani? [EM](#) p22; [KS](#) pilipili.

Why should you be irritated by pepper in the field? Something unrelated should not bother you. Cf. 1008.

1010. Ndiwe ulotia moto sasa moshi umo machoni mwako. [JK](#) 145.

You were the one who started the fire, now the smoke is in your eyes. "As you have made your bed, so you will have to lie in it" - [JK](#).

1011. Ndovu huangushwa na nyasi. [EM](#) n8.

Grass may cause an elephant to fall down. To an elephant grass is small stuff but if it is tied in a knot, it can trap the elephant - [EM](#). Cf.

934.

1012. Pavumapo palilie. [T](#) 455; [FSM](#) 178; [T](#) 455.

Where there is too much jubilation, cry for that place.

Pavumapo palilie si kazi kudamirika. [SAM](#) 21.3; [MS](#) 121; [KA](#); [SM](#).

A place where there is shouting and screaming is easily destroyed.

Kudamira [kuharibu kabisa], destroy completely. Pavum apo [penye kemi na mayowe] a place of screaming. Palilie, [pasikitikie] place of sorrow. Cf. 1105, 3929.

1013. Omitted.

1014. Punda akiota pembe, watu wa mashakani. [NGU](#).

If a donkey grows horns, people have problems.

Mashaka, doubts, perplexity, uncertainty.

1015. Rahisi yaleta taabu. [AL](#) rahisi.

Cheapness brings trouble. Buying cheap does not satisfy.

1015a. Rumani bovu ondoa huyaharibu mazima. [SPK](#).

Remove the rotten pomegranate; it spoils the whole ones. Dismiss a lazy, cantankerous wife or farmhand - [SPK](#).

1016. Rungu la uso halimwui nyani. [NGU](#).

The blow of a club on the face of an ape does not kill [the ape].

1017. Rungu si mkuki. [EM](#) r13.

A club is not a spear. The words of some people crush and those of others pierce like a spear - EM.

1018. Shingo ya kuitikiza si uchungu. [ED](#) 71.

Giving consent with the nod of the neck is not bitter. Giving consent is not difficult, but afterwards seeing the consequences of an easily given consent, it may become very bitter.

1019. Siku hazilingani. [NGU](#).

Days are not equal.

1019a. Ukicheza ujanani utalipa uzeeni. [SPK](#).

If you play while young, you will pay when old.

1020. Ukiingilia lisilokuhusu, utapata lisilokuridhi. [KA](#).

If you interfere with things that don't concern you, you'll get what does not please you. cf. 1008, 4389.

1021. Ukijua kucheka ujue kununa. [NGU](#).

If you know to laugh you should also know to sulk.

Nuna, grumble, show discontent. complain, be sullen, sulk.

1022. Ukijua kupiga, ujue kuepa. [AL](#) 1407; [AL](#) piga.

If you know how to hit, you should also know how to fend.

1023. Ukijua kusuka ujue na kunyoa. [NGU](#).

If you know how to plait [the hair], you should also know how to shave.

1024. Ukijua sana na jua litakuchoma sana. [NGU](#).

If you know much, the sun [that knowledge] also will burn you much. The meaning is that if you think that you are good at something, that knowledge could also backfire. This seems to be a poor play on the word jua. As a verb it means to know, but as a noun it has the meaning of sun.

1025. Ukila cha mbwa, usishindwe mbio. [AL](#) 798.

If you eat what belongs to a dog, you must be an expert runner. If you lower yourself, you must expect being treated as such - [AL](#).

1026. Ukila cha radi, macho juu. [AL](#) 1574.

If you eat what belongs to lightning, look up [skywards] - [AL](#). One who profits of the goods of a superior exposes him/herself to punishment - [AL](#). Cf. 1027.

1027. Ukila chakula cha wizi, uangalie juu. [AL](#) 1570.

If you eat stolen goods, look up.

1028. Ukila utakapo - wemdako pia utakula. [NGU](#).

If you eat where you want, the place where you go will also eat you.

1029. Ukilala na mambo hulala. [JK](#) 124.

If you sleep, your business too will sleep.

1030. Ukiiona zinduna, ambari iko nyuma. [F](#) 46.9; [MS](#) 130.

If you see amber, ambergris is not far behind - F. Association of two things. If you see one you are bound to see the other. Zinduna, a fossil gum-copal, is found on the beaches. A perfume like incense and burns on charcoal. Ambari, a wax-like substance found floating in tropical seas, and in intestines of sperm whales. It is odoriferous and used in perfumery and cooking. Ambergris: ambre gris. Ambergris was eaten to become more virile.

Ukiona zabadi na zinduna i papo. [KS](#).

If you see zabadi musk you find also zinduna close by.

Zabadi, civet, musk taken from the civet cat.

Note: "Ambari, ambarum, species odoramenti; nomen piscis marini magni; ambergris, an odoriferous substance which is said to be eaten as a clammy matter by the whale at the bottom of the sea and then cast off in the excrements. Ambergris found at Mombasa must be given to the

Government under penalty to the offender. This is owing to the great value attached to the ambari. The natives tell a story about an island in the Indian ocean, whither the whales resort, and where the matter is found at the bottom of the sea. Fishermen are sometimes attracted and guided by the

multitude of birds pouncing upon the ambari as it floats on the surface of the sea" - Krapf, a'mbari.

1031. Ukipanda upepo, utavuna dhoruba. [KB](#) 306.

If you sow the wind, you will harvest a hurricane. One must suffer the consequences of one's deeds.

1032. Ukipasua ujue kushona. [NGU](#).

If you tear [clothing], you must know how to sew.

1033. Ukitaka mama aje, mfinye mtotoe. [EM](#) u13.

If you want the mother to come, pinch her child. Interfering with somebody's property the owner will soon appear.

1034. Ukitaka mvua, usiogope matope. [AL](#) taka; [AL](#) 1666.

If you want rain, you must not be afraid of mud.

1035. Ulalapo ndipo uamkiapo. [NGU](#).

Where you lie down there you will get up.

1035a. Ulipopika samaki huachi kunuka vumba. [SPK](#).

When you have cooked a fish you will smell fishy.

1036. Ulivyoligema utalinywa. [F](#) 47.20; [FSM](#) 139.

As you tapped it [the palm wine] so you drink it. If you do a thing well, you'll enjoy it.

Gema, make incisions in the tree to get the sap. Cf. 921, 1575.

1037. Wakaao na waridi hunuka waridi. [EM](#) w5.

Those who stay with roses also smell like roses. "This means that one who lives and works with a big man also acquires some prestige which derives from the master" - [EM](#).

1038. Watu huota jua lililochomoza. [NGU](#).

People bask in the rising sun. People are always looking to improve their lives.

1039. Watu wafuata pachekwapo. [NGU](#).

People gather where there is laughter.

1040. Wema wa mtu humfaa mwenyewe, na ubaya wake humdhuru. [JKP](#).

A person's good character is beneficial and that person's wickedness will do harm.

1041. Wewe ni wewe. [NGU](#).

You are you. You are different from others, you act differently.

1042. Yakizidi hata bubu husema. [NGU](#).

If things get extreme, even a dumb person will speak.

1042a. Yambo kuingia sahali, kutoka ni uthakili. [SPK](#).

It is easy to get involved in a matter, but it is hard to get out of it.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Constancy

1043. Aingiaye baharini huogelea. [ED](#) 3; [JKP](#).

One who goes into the sea must swim. "Let the spoilt children fend for themselves in the world and they will have to learn to overcome their laziness" - [JKP](#).

1044. Aliyeshika ameshika, akiacha azuzue. [REK](#).

One who holds must hang on, the one who relents will be treated like a fool.

1045. Ana uso mwingine kwa mungu na mwingine kwa shetani. [MEM](#) 71.

That person has one face [eye] to God and another to the devil. About people who change their beliefs, or positions, continuously.

1046. Asiyetua (or asotua) hupata alitakalo. [JKP](#).

One who does not rest will get what he wants. Keep trying, working, striving.

1047. Atakaye hachoki. [NGU](#).

One who really wants something does not give up [will not tire].

1048. Avumiliaye moshi ataota [moto]. [AL](#) 1661.

The one who can stand the smoke will enjoy the warmth [of the fire].

1049. Bandu, bandu huisha (or humaliza, humala) gogo. [E](#) 4; [H](#) 96; [L](#) 10; [B](#) 1.12; [MARA](#) 2; [T](#) 44; [A](#) 39; [MA](#) 86; [SACLI](#) 92.

Chip, chip, finishes the log. Perseverance does the job - [SPK](#). Little by little a great work will be finished. Bandu from bandua, strip off, remove. Cf. 1057, 1063.

1050. Bendera hufuata upepo. [B](#) 1.59; [H](#) 97; [SWA](#) 5.

A flag follows the wind. It is easier to swim with the current. An ostentatious person has no steadfast character but obeys the prevailing spirit - [SPK](#).

1051. Bendera ipepeayo sana mwishowe huchanika. [TAA](#) 4.

A flag that waves very much will tear in the end. Someone who boasts all the time will get bad results. Cf. 1105.

1051a. Cha mbele hicho hicho. [SPK](#).

What came before was just so. The more it changes, the more it remains the same.

1052. Cheko, uangue mwisho. [EM](#) 35.10.

Laugh at the end. "He laughs best who laughs last" - [EM](#).

Angua kicheko, burst out laughing.

1053. Chema duniani hakina maisha. [AL](#) 1674; [SPK](#).

A good thing in the world does not have [a long] life. Said by a poet when his best friend departed - [SPK](#). Cf. 1920, 1921.

1054. Chembe na chembe hulisha kiumbe. [JKP](#).

A grain and a grain will feed a creature.

1055. Chembe na chembe mkate huwa. [ZO](#) p.253; [A](#) 95; [V](#) 5; [KB](#) 41.

A grain and a grain and a loaf appears. Little brooks make great rivers. Cf. 1063.

1056. Chenye barafu hakikosi kuwa maji. [REK](#).

Ice will soon [be] water again.

1057. Chovya, chovya, humaliza buyu la asali. [F](#) 7.6; [B](#) 2.59 and 4.84; [KB](#) 44; [FSM](#) 36.

A dip and a dip finishes the honey calabash. A big job can be finished in small steps.

But is generally used when someone finds that pleasant things often have a bitter ending. Cf. 1049.

1058. Chungu cha mifupa huvunjwa na fupa. [NGU](#).

A potful of bones will be broken by a single bone. A good working relationship can be broken by a single person.

1059. Chura akitupwa anabana mlango. [AL](#) 1538.

If a frog is thrown away it will jam the door. About an insistent salesman.

1060. Chura hakimbii mchana bila sababu. [NGU](#).

A frog does not run during daytime without a reason. A frog is nocturnal. If something happens suddenly people will move. Cf. 3339.

1061. Chururu, si ndo, ndo, ndo. [F](#) 7.7; [MS](#) 44.5; [AL](#) 1006; [MARA](#) 2; [JKP](#); [KS](#) chuchuru; [Mulika](#) p.10; [FSM](#) 168; [MS](#) 9I.

A flow of water is not [as effective as] constant dripping - F. A beverage is not poured out drop by drop - [AL](#). "Said to a miser" - [JKP](#). This proverb is used to show that something that is constant is better than something that comes only once at a time, even if it is much - [MARA](#). However: A little leak in the roof is not half as bad as no roof - [FSM](#).

Chururu, a flow of water. Ndo stands for ndogo, a little, a dripping.

1062. Efu huanza moja. [KA](#).

A thousand starts with one. Cf. 1549.

1063. Haba na haba hujaza kibaba. [J](#); [H](#) 98; [F](#) 9.1; [SWA](#) 3; [A](#) 39; [T](#) 70; [V](#) 5; [MARA](#) 16; [LE3](#) 226.4; [KB](#) 55.

Little by little the pint is filled. Little by little a bird builds its nest - [KB](#).

Kibaba: a common dry measure, about a pint, or a pound and a half of grain - [J](#) kibaba.

1064. Hakuachi kucha kwa sababu jogoo mmoja amegoma kuwika. [EM](#) h6.

The sun doesn't stop rising because one rooster has refused to crow. In life there are things which happen even if they are opposed by one person or many - [EM](#). Cf. 188, 189.

1065. Hakuna kisicho badali. [JKP](#).

There is nothing that cannot be replaced by something else. Or, There is nothing that does not change. None of us is indispensable - [JKP](#).

Badali or badili, change.

1066. Hata iweje, kutakucha tu. [NGU](#).

However it will be, dawn will come.

1067. Heri pazia kuliko bendera. (Printed on a khanga.)

A curtain is better than a flag. A curtain has stability.

1068. Ili ngwe iwe ndogo, chutama uipimapo. [EM](#) I.3.

To make a farming area smaller, squat when measuring it. In dealing with a big matter, look at it from an aspect which makes it appear favorable - [EM](#).

Ngwe, a patch of land for cultivation. Cf. 1163.

1069. Imani haifi. [EM](#) I5.

Faith never dies. Faith is a state of mind. It can change direction or target, but cannot die - [EM](#).

Imani, faith, trust, confidence, honesty.

1070. Ivumayo haidumu. [F](#) 12.4; [KB](#) 79; [MARA](#) 3.

What roars does not last. If a person is becoming too well known, many may become jealous and by opposing put that person down - [MARA](#). "What is famed does not last" - [E](#). Cf. 1105, 3972.

1071. Jitahidi, utazidi. [JK](#).

Make an effort and you'll succeed.

1072. Jiwe kubwa halichukuliwi na maji. [REK](#).

A big stone is not carried away by water.

1073. Kibuyu kisipopasuka, kinaweza kuchotea maji mengine. [EM](#) K7.

If the gourd is not broken, it can be used again to draw water. If your plan fails, you can formulate another one - [EM](#).

1074. Kinyonga hubadili rangi kulingana na mazingira yake. [REK](#).

A chameleon changes its color according to its environment.

1075. Kipila mwa ufukoni, shakwe mwa chakani gani? [JKP](#).

The curlew is on the sandbanks, in which bush will the seagull be? "Normally, the seagull sits on sandbanks, the curlew is not a seabird" - [JK](#).

1076. Kitumba cha jongoo hakina mwokotaji. [AL](#) 1404; [AL](#) okota.

There is nobody who will pick up a dead centipede. One does not come back on what one despised nor on what one has called bad. No

mercy for the enemy - [AL](#).
Kitumba (nzoga), cover, outer case.

1077. Kiwambaza hakina sura mpaka kisirimwe. [AL](#) sura.
The framewall of a house is ugly until it is smoothly plastered. "A work started should be finished." Cf. 1095.

1078. Kondoo haachi kufuata ukoo. [NGU](#).
A sheep always follows the flock. Cf. 1050.

1079. Kujikwaa si kuanguka, bali ni kwenda mbele. [F](#) 18.47; [MARA](#) 3.
Stumbling is not falling, on the contrary, it is going forward. Said of people easily discouraged: don't give up.

1080. Kumbuko kama la punda wa masai. [JKP](#).
A memory like a Masai donkey. The Masai loaded his donkey so heavily that it quit one day. But the next day it had forgotten its master's cruelty and came back to him. Said of masochists" [JKP](#).

1081. Kupanga ni kupangua. [REK](#).
Arranging is removing. Planning and cancelling; hiring and dismissing. Nothing is stable.

1081a. Kutulubu usichoke. [SPK](#).
Never tire of searching [knowledge, e.g.].

1082. Kwa kumpiga kenge mahali pamoja anakufa. [AL](#) 244.
By hitting the monitor lizard on the same spot it dies.

1082a. Kwa ujitahadi hunali muradi. [SPK](#).
By exertion one obtains one's purpose.

1083. Maji hufuata mkondo. [H](#) 21; [F](#) 21.5; [B](#) 1.33; [KB](#) 148; [RECH](#) 329 mkondo wake; [KS](#) fuata.
Water follows its course [runs in its bed]. Swim with the current. Do things normally using your common sense - [KB](#).

1084. Maji hutelemkia bondeni, hayapandi kilimani. [L](#) 40; [F](#) 21.6; [B](#) 1.33; [KB](#) 147.
Water flows down into a valley, it does not climb a hill. Favors come down, not up - [KB](#). Cf. 1050.

1085. Maji ukiyavulia nguo, huna budi kuyaoga. [CM](#) 44; [F](#) 21.7; [B](#) 1.33; [MS](#) 99; [KA](#); [EM](#) y6.
If you take off your clothes for water you must bathe. Finish the job you started. If you have decided to do something, then you should do it. Cf. 1043.

1085a. Maji yende njia yake. [SPK](#).
Water must go its own way. Love cannot be forced - [SPK](#).

1086. Maji yatiririka kwenye bonde. [AL](#) tiririka.
Water flows down to the valley. Cf. 1083, 1091.

1086a. Maliza kazi yako kwanza. [SPK](#).
Finish your work first.

1086b. Maliza ubakishayo. [SPK](#).
Finish what you have left.

1087. Mazoezi kukamilisha. [NGU](#).
Practice makes perfect.

1088. Mchimba kaburi hachoki mpaka anaona mwanandani. [KB](#) 175.
The grave digger does not stop working until he sees the corpse inside the cavity of the grave. One must finish the work one has started. Mwanandani, open space in the side of the tomb, where a body is put. Cf. 4026.

1089. Minyoo humfuata mwenye mikasa uhamishoni. [REK](#).
The worms follow the storyteller into emigration. Things will stay the same, moving the homestead does not help. Minyoo, intestine worms; sickness.

1090. Mkoma ukimfukuza, usibakize vyombo vyake. [EM](#) m20.
If you throw out lepers, you should not keep their belongings behind. "This means that if you decide to rid yourself of a certain shortcoming, e.g. drunkenness, smoking, you should get rid of all things that pertain to that habit" - [EM](#). Cf. 1100.

1091. Mkondo upitishao maji na ukae utapitisha maji. [FSM](#) 166.
Let the current which allowed the water to pass continue passing the water. The river bed stays, it does not follow the water. Used to speak about constant things, which are good and need no change.

1092. Mkondo wa maji hauachi maji. [NGU](#).

The waterbed does not desert the water. Cf. 1083, 1091.

1093. Mlinzi husuka teo. [T](#) 285; [KA](#).

The watchman braids a sling. The bird watcher protects the harvest (millet, sorghum, rice) from the birds, using a sling and stones. One who guards the crop from birds occupies free time braiding slings.

Mlinzi usuke teo, kanyamaze ulimio. [SPK](#).

Bird watcher, plait your sling and hold your tongue. Bide your time, sit tight, ready to strike at the right moment - SPK.

1094. Mpita njiani huja milimani. [RSP](#) 121.

One who goes on along the road will arrive in the mountains. Cf. 4026.

1095. Mtenda jambo asiishe, ni kama asiyetenda. [T](#) 323; [A](#).256; [MS](#) 50; [SAM](#) 16.23; [V](#).64.

They who do not finish their work, are as if they had not started. Perseverance leads to the goal.

Jambo (mambo), deeds, actions.

1096. Mti uliozoea kupanda rahisi kuteremka. [NGU](#).

The tree you used to climb in, is also easy to climb down. Repetition makes it easy; but it is also easy to fall down from it.

1097. Mto hauguzei mkondo wake. [REK](#).

A river does not change its current.

Mkondo, current, flow, rush.

1098. Mtoto wa nyoka hukua na sumu yake. [NGU](#).

The young of a snake grows up with its poison.

1099. Mtu hawezi kuficha tabia yake. [NGU](#).

A person cannot hide his/her character.

1100. Mtupa jongoo hutupa na mti (or ungōongo) [WAKE](#) [L](#) 69; [F](#) 32.129; [J](#) jongoo; [V](#) jongoo; [Mulika](#), p.10; [KB](#) 215; [T](#) 389A; [KA](#); [FSM](#) 57.

If you throw away a millipede, throw away the stick [it is on] as well. A person who wants to quit a bad habit must get rid of all the means and circumstances which may bring back that bad habit.

Also the opposite: **Usitupe jongoo na mti wake pamoja.** [KA](#).

Don't throw away the millipede together with the stick. If you hate somebody do not destroy that person, who may be useful later. Cf. 1818.

1101. M(w)ungwana ni mwenye ghera. [JK](#) 133; [AL](#) 775.

A noble person has perseverance - [JK](#). A noble person has energy and courage - [AL](#).

1102. Mwanzo wa mia ni moja. [NGU](#).

The beginning of hundred is one.

1103. Mwangwana hufungwa na kauli yake. [NGU](#).

Noble people are bound by their word.

1104. Neno baada ya neno, kitabu hujaa. [NGU](#).

Word after word and the book is full.

1105. Ngoma ivumayo haidumu. [F](#) 39.10; [KB](#) 242.

Noisy drumming does not last long.

Ngoma ikilia sana hupasuka. [H](#) 98; [SWA](#) 56; [L](#) 79, [MS](#) 45.26; [KB](#) 241 haikawi kupasuka; [MS](#) vuma/ngoma; [KA](#).

When a drum sounds too loud, it will soon burst.

Ngoma ivumayo haikawii kupasuka (kiwambo). [F](#) 39.11; [J](#) ngoma, [PM](#) 84; [SACL](#) 681ikilia.

A drum that is sounded loudly will soon split [its skin will tear]. Do not stretch things too far - [SWA](#). Cf. 1070

1106. Ngoma ya kitoto (or wana) haikeshi. [FSM](#) 171; [KA](#).

A child's play does not last long. To make a thing last it must have content/meaning.

Cf. 1108, 1826.

1107. Nguruwe hawezi kuacha vihama. [KB](#) 47; [AL](#) kihama.

A pig always comes back to its tubers [truffles]. An evil fellow bears a grudge, maintains hostility.

Vihama, edible tubers (cassava) - [KB](#).

1108. Nyimbo ya (or za) kufunza (or kufunzwa) haikeshi (or hazikeshi) ngoma. [F](#) 40.23; [AL](#) kesha; [NGU](#).

Songs to be learned do not keep the dance awake. "Songs learnt from outside sources (foreign importations) are not used at a dance so long" - [F](#). The social and political implications are obvious.

1109. Nyoka ni nyoka hata aking'olewa meno. [EM](#) n25.

A snake is a snake, even when it is toothless. Evil people will keep their evilness, even when helpless.

1110. Oa, uzae kama ulivyojaliwa. [NGU](#).

Marry, give birth as you were given birth.

1111. Paka hakubali kulala chali. [KA](#); [KB](#) 199.

A cat does not agree to stay on its back. Cf. 4763.

1112. Papo kwa papo kamba hukata jiwe. [B](#) 2.15; [F](#) 41.8; [H](#) 94; [L](#) 85; [KB](#) 260; [MS](#) 170.

There at that very same place the rope cuts the stone. "Constant rubbing of a rope will cut a stone" - [F](#). Keep on trying.

Variation: a play on words: **Papo kwa papo kamba hukaza jiwe.** [FSM](#) 177.

There and then a rope will fasten a stone - [FSM](#). It is obvious that a rope doesn't fasten a stone, but the proverb here has the meaning that even if something seems to be impossible often it can be done by constant application and ingenuity - [FSM](#).

1113. Pema si pema ukipapema. [EM](#) p8.

A good place does not continue to be a good place if you frequent there. Familiarity breeds contempt.

1114. Penye nia ipo (or ndipo) njia. [F](#) 42.15; [B](#) 3.43.; [JK](#) 145.

Penye nia pana njia. [SWA](#) 46; [B](#) 3.43; [H](#) 45; Ostrosky 78; [MS](#) 151; [KS](#) nia.

Where there is a will there is a way.

Iwapo nia, njia hupatikana. [F](#) 12.6; [B](#) 1.76 and 4. 37; [H](#) 45.

If there is a will a way will be found.

1115. Pia ipate kiti chake na iringe. [JKP](#).

"The top has settled on its point, it must continue to spin rapidly in order to stay upright. Nothing goes well without continuous attention" - [JKP](#).

1116. Pongo akigeuka-geuka ana madoa. [AL](#) 799.

The gazelle changing all the time gets dots [like the leopard]. A person changing his mind will arouse suspicion.

1117. Samaki anaenda kwenye maji. [KB](#) 275; [AL](#) 1502.

The fish always moves towards water.

1118. Shoka huangusha mbuyu. [EM](#) s8.

An axe can fell a baobab tree. A baobab is a huge tree, and an axe is a comparatively small tool. Cf. 1049.

1119. Si hoja kujenga, hoja kuezeka. [SAM](#) 22.3.

The difficulty is not so much in building as in thatching. It is the constant care and repair that is the testing ground of somebody's devotion. Cf. 3664.

1120. Si maua yote yanayotoa matunda. [EM](#) s15.

Not all flowers produce fruit. Not all good beginnings end well.

1121. Siafu wanaondoshwa mmoja kwa mmoja. [AL](#) 247.

Safari ants are removed one by one. These ants bite into your body and have to be removed one by one. Evil is repaired with difficulty.

1122. Simba ni simba hata akila majani. [EM](#) s14.

A lion is a lion even if it eats grass. A respectable person is still respectable even when his situation appears to be low - [EM](#). Cf. 3906.

1123. Simbiko haisimbuki ila kwa msukosuko. [L](#) 91; [F](#) 44.13; [KA](#).

A well-fastened hook cannot be dislodged except by much shaking. "A thing that is firmly fixed cannot be dislodged except with much trouble" - [F](#). People who stick together are not easily separated; e.g., lovers, man and wife.

Simbiko, a knot in a rope or line. Haisimbuki or haifunguki, get loose.

1124. Songa mbele, kurudi kuna fedheha. [AL](#) mbele; [AL](#) 232.

Go forward, going back is shameful. Don't give up.

1125. Subili haiwi tamu. [A](#) 282; [SAM](#) 22.5; [T](#) 106; [AL](#) 1784.

Aloes never become sweet. Aloe is known for its very bitter juice.

1126. Tembo kiwa tonetone, ndipo ijaapo panda. [JK](#) 124;

Sacl 308, tembo ni instead of kiwa ; AL tone.

If the palm wine is drop-drop, then the coconut shell is filling up. The sap of the palm tree flows drop by drop into the coco-shell - Sacl.

Patience is efficient - [AL](#). Cf. 1049, 1063, 1127.

1127. Tone na tone bahari huweka (or huwa mchirizi). [KA](#).
Drop by drop the sea is established [flows over]. Cf. 1063, 1128.

1128. Tone na tone hujaza ndoo. [B](#) 1.8.
A drop and a drop fills the bucket. This looks like a modern version of **Haba na haba**. (1063), but it misses the alliteration.

1129. Tumbili haachi kuchutama. [EM](#) t21.
A baboon cannot avoid squatting.
Kuchutama: squat on the haunches as one does going to the toilet. Cf. 2839.

1130. Tumbili hawezi kusahau kuruka. [REK](#).
A monkey never forgets how to jump. It is its nature. Cf. 1107, 1117, 2839.

1131. Tumbo halishtuki njaa wala shibe. [NGU](#).
The stomach is not disturbed by hunger or satisfaction [plenty].

1132. Ubembeze kafiri upate mradi. [AL](#) mradi ; [AL](#) 1534, 1536.
Coax the pagan until you reach your aim.

1133. Ujadidi wa jududi. [RSP](#) 85.
Newness of the ancestors. "There is nothing new under the sun" - [JK](#).

1134. Ukambaa wa milele ulikata jiwe. [T](#) 521; [V](#) 126; [SACL](#) 37, 942.
The rope [of the well] by constant rubbing cuts the stone.
Ukambaa, a cord of plaited palm-leaf strips; coconut fibers. Cf. 1112.

1135. Ukikomboa mtumwa atarudi utumwani. [REK](#).
If you redeem a slave, he/she will return to slavery. People get back to their old habits, until they redeem themselves.

1136. Ukimwona akipekua kwa mkia, alifanya hivyo mbeleni. [REK](#).
If you see it pecking at its tail, it did that also in front.
Pekua, peck like a hen, search diligently, be curious, inquisitive.

1137. Ukipoteza mshale, tupa ngeu. [NGU](#).
If you have lost your arrow, throw away the quiver.
Ngeu, red color, blood, headwound, a carpenter's marker. (An informant translated ngeu by quiver. But it could also mean the bowman's marker, bull's eye, target). Cf. 1100.

1138. Ukiruka kikorongo uagane na nyonga. [FSM](#) 186.
If you fly as a heron take leave of your hips. Take the necessary means to succeed.

1139. Umekula ng'ombe mzima, washindwa na mkia? [KA](#); [SM](#).
You ate a whole cow, how come the tail is too much for you? Said of someone who stops to finish a project after having done almost everything.

1140. Unayemwita hajaitika. [AL](#) 245.
The one you are calling has not answered yet. Notwithstanding poor results one should not give up - [AL](#).

1141. Usiache kazi na zidi kuomba. [JKP](#).
Never stop working and increase your prayers. Never give up - [JKP](#).

1142. Omitted.

1143. Usijifanye kinyonga kujigeuza rangi. [NGU](#).
Don't make yourself a chameleon by changing color.

1144. Usiwe unakunjwa na watu kama jani. [WIKON](#) 228.
Don't allow yourself to be bent by people as a straw.

1145. Usultani kigegeu. [AL](#) 1655.
The function of a chief is instable. See also the section Master.

1146. Utakosa kaa na gando. [TAA](#) 26.
You'll miss the crab legs and all. It's not good for a person to be all over the place. It's better to finish one thing until its conclusion than to fail in all projects.

1147. Utamu wa muwa kifundo. [MS](#) 135.
The sweetness of the sugar cane is in the knot.

1148. Utumwapo, utumike. [JK](#) 122.
When you serve, serve well.

1149. Uzi hufuata sindano. [EM](#) u38.
The thread follows the needle. The thread cannot go through a place that the needle has not passed. This means that a disciple cannot go ahead of his master - [EM](#). Cf. 1050.

1150. Uzuri wa nguo rangi, ikifuliwa huenda na maji. [AL](#) 1656.
Color makes a cloth beautiful, if one washes it in water it goes away with the water. Beauty is transient.

1151. Wa mia alianza na moja. [REK](#).
The person with one hundred started with one.

1152. Wachezaji bora ngomani ni wale waliojizatiti. [NGU](#).
The best dancers are those who prepare themselves.
Ji-zatiti: prepare oneself.

1153. Ya juzi siyo ya leo. [NGU](#).
Things of yesterday are not the things of today. Cf. 3129.

1153a. Ya pwani yakijaa huja ndani, yakipwa hwenda nje. [SPK](#).
When the tide is in the water comes inside, when it is out, it goes out. Money comes and goes out, friends come and go - [SPK](#).

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Consultation

1154. Akili ni nywele, kila mtu ana zake. [F](#) 2.9; [H](#) 95; [B](#) 1.68; 2.34; [KB](#) 10; [SWA](#) 44.

Intelligence is [like] hair, every person has his/her own. No two people are alike in intelligence. It is said as a sign of respect for the opinions of others, but also to express that everybody follows his/her own opinion.

1155. Akili yachotwa katika mkutano. [KB](#) ll.

Ideas are picked up in a meeting [of brains]. Cf. 1163.

1156. Akuambiaye: "kula kitoweo kwa uangalifu" anataka ushibe. [NGU](#).

The one who says to you "Eat the relish carefully" wants you to be satisfied, because it will do you good.

1157. Ametoa waadhi akajisahau. [MA](#) 58.

One gave a sermon and did not do a thing for self-improvement. Said of someone who gives advice but does not practice it.

Mtowa waadhi hajisahau mwenyewe. [MM](#).

The giver of counsel must not forget oneself.

1158. Ampae maana shetani, hujipatisha ghadhabu za rahmani. [MA](#) 34.

A person who pays heed to Satan deserves divine anger.

1159. Asiyeeona aibu zake, haifai aone aibu za wengine. [MA](#) 34.

If you do not see your own shame [vices] you should not take notice of the faults of others.

1160. Asiyesikia la mkuu huona makuu (or maovu). [F](#) 4.39; [KB](#) 27; [MARA](#) 3; [CM](#) 53; [V](#) 17; [SACL](#) 566; [J](#) *kubwa*.

One who does not listen to the advice of an elder will see bad things. Cf. 1161.

1161. Asiyesikia la mkuu huvunja mguu. [F](#) 4.40; [MARA](#) 8; [L](#) 8; [SWA](#) 65; [B](#) 2.39; [H](#) 14; [KS](#) *guu*; [RSP](#) 2; [NGU](#).

One who does not listen to an elder's advice breaks a leg. One who does not heed superiors will have to repent later when in trouble - [SWA](#). Cf. 1160.

1162. Asiyauliza hufanya makosa. [Nestor](#) p.55.

The person who does not ask questions makes mistakes. If you cling to your own ideas without heeding others' advice, you'll regret your own mistakes - [Nestor](#).

1163. Bamba na waume (or wake ni) bamba, hakuna bamba la mume peke yake. [T](#) 43; [J](#) *bamba*; [SACL](#) 89; [KS](#) *mume*; [AL](#) 1477; [V](#) 98.

Counsel with men is counsel; there is no counsel of one person [alone]. In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.

Bamba na waume. [ED](#).8; [SPK](#).

[You need not only] a wall [but] also people [to help you defend it]. A town can only be defended by co-operation in unison - [SPK](#). A great person has helpers. *Bamba*: a great man - [ED](#). Consultation, deliberation, important business needing reflection - [SACL](#). Cf. 1241.

Warume hufanya bamba, hakuna bamba la nguvu. [SPK](#).

Men make a council, there is no council of force. The African democracy expects common rule by consultation - [SPK](#).

1164. Fanya sahibu wa heri kwa kutakana shauri. [JKP](#).

Make a good friend for mutual counsel.

1165. Fimbo ya maonyo huadhibu. [NGU](#).

The stick of warnings hurts. It punishes when you do not listen to warnings.

1166. Fujo inatoa amani. [AL](#) 390.

Animated discussion produces peace. From contradictory advice a peaceful solution is born - [AL](#).

1167. Jeraha uliganga sharti ulione. [EM](#) j7.

To treat a wound you must see it. To solve a problem you must understand it. Tell the doctor what ails you. See also section on "Health."

1168. Hukunyima tonge; hakunyimi neno. [F](#) 11.21; [KB](#) 74. [AL](#) 1139.

One denies you a ball of food, but does not deny you advice. A person may not be prepared to give you some food, but will always give advice or information - [F](#).

Tonge or *donge*, a small ball of food shaped with the fingers.

1169. Kalia mtu kitako. *Semi za Kiswahili* II.13.

To put a person on his/her seat. To stop someone's evil doing.

1170. Kuambiana kupo, kusikilizana hapana. [B](#) 1.59; [F](#) 17.39; [T](#) 167; [AL](#) 1096.

There is conversation, but there is no listening. Especially when there are warnings involved.

1170a. Mashauri ya mtu usiyashike, mtu siri husema na moyo wake. [SPK](#).

Do not accept anybody's advice, people discuss secrets with their hearts alone.

1170b. Mkae mkiambiana mshike yenu miradi. [SPK](#).

Go on talking to each other [about your differences] that you may reach your purposes [in the end].

1171. Mkutano wa vyura. [JKP](#).

A meeting of frogs. "Said of a useless argument, 'hot air'" - [JKP](#).

1172. Mwenye busara mara hunasihika. [SAM](#) 19.41; [KA](#).

Even a wise person sometimes needs forgiveness - [KA](#).

Nasihii, taka radhi, need of forgiveness.

1173. Mwenye kuuliza hakosi njia. [AL](#) 387.

One who asks questions does not take the wrong road.

1174. Oni la tajiri hukubalika, la maskini hukataliwa. [EM](#) o4.

A rich person's suggestion is accepted, a poor person's is rejected. Suggestions should be examined regardless of who gave them.

1175. Onyo kwa mwerevu ni baraka, kwa mpumbavu ni tusi. [EM](#) o5.

A warning to the wise is a blessing, to the fool an insult.

1176. Panapo (or penye) wengi hapaharibiki neno. [F](#) 41.7; [MS](#) 136 *penye*; [MARA](#) 2.

Where there are many people nothing goes wrong. "A counsel of many people ensures that things are kept on the right lines" - [F](#).

1177. Penye wazee haliharibiki neno. [H](#) 95; [B](#) 2.54; [F](#) 42.17; [SWA](#) 48.

Among a group of elders nothing goes wrong. Implied that elderly, wise, experienced people give good advice - [MM](#). Where there are many people there is bound to be one who is experienced - [SWA](#).

Penye kuwa watu hakuozei chura. [AL](#) 1468.

Where there are people [not even] a frog does rot.

1178. Penye wengi pana mengi. [F](#) 42.18.

Where there are many people, there are many words [opinions]. Or many matters, or much business, or: many quarrels - [SPK](#).

Palipo na wengi pana mali mengi. [SPK](#).

Where there are many people there is much money [to be earned] - [SPK](#).

1179. Penye wengi, pana mungu. [F](#) 42.19.

Where there are many people, there is God.

1180. Shauri baraka. *Vbaraka* 89; [AL](#) 391.

Deliberation brings blessing. Four eyes see more than two - [V](#). Cf. 718, 719.

1181. Shauri jema halivuti wengi. [EM](#) s2.

Sound advice is not attractive to many.

1182. Unaumia, sasa unakoma. [AL](#) 651.

Now you stop, because you are in pain. One who did not listen to a warning.

1183. Usiseme kibanza jichoni mwa mwenzio kumbe wewe una boriti. [NGU](#). Don't speak about the splinter in the eye of your friend, while by the way you have a pole in your eye.

1184. Usitoe shauri hadharani. [NGU](#).

Don't give advice to a crowd. It's useless.

1185. Waonywapo ndipo waonapo. [FSM](#) 202.

Where people are warned there also is understanding.

1186. Wawili si mmoja. [F](#) 51.8; [T](#) 588; [B](#) 4.62; [V](#) 89; [KA](#).

Two are better than one - [T](#); [V](#). Two are not one - [F](#); [T](#).

The difference in translation is caused by *si*, which can mean: "is not" or "is better than".

Therefore the proverb can mean: Two heads are better than one, or Two persons, two opinions. This last translation is also expressed in 1154. Cf. 718, 719.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Contentment

1187. Afadhali dooteni kama ambari kutanda. [KA](#); [SM](#); [J](#) ambari.

It is better to have a little bad thing you have, than something very beautiful you don't have or possibly will have. Don't desire things that cannot be had.

Ambari: ambergris. If eaten at high tide, while standing in much water, results in stoutness; if eaten at low tide in shallow water, results in slimming - [J](#).

1188. Asiyekunywa kwenye chemchem hunywa kwenye mto. [EM](#) 17.25.

One who does not drink from a spring, drinks from a river. Take the second best. Cf. 1540.

1189. Bahati ya mwenzio usiilalie [nje]. [EM](#) 24.7; [MS](#) 44.16.

The good luck of your colleague should not keep you out of sleep.

If your colleague is lucky, don't spend days and sleepless nights finding out why that person got good fortune, why you missed it, and how you can get it - [EM](#). Don't be envious.

Bahati ya mwenzio usiilalie mlango wazi. [KA](#).

Regarding the good luck of your friend, don't sleep with open doors. Don't think that you can share in your friend's luck.

1190. Bahati ya pua si ya mdomo (or kinywa). [AL](#) 1715; [AL](#) pua.

Good luck of the nose is not as good as that of the mouth - AL. Smelling the aroma of food is not yet the same as eating it.

1191. Baya baya lako, si jema la mwenzako. [SAM](#) 5.3; [MS](#) 114; [KA](#); [TAA](#) 28; [NGU](#).

Your evil is your own, the goodness of your friend is not yours. Be satisfied with what you have. It's useless to covet.

Kibaya chako chema cha mwenzio. [NGU](#).

Bad luck is yours, good luck is for your companion. Bad things that happen are for you to carry alone, success is shared with friends.

Kibaya chako si chema cha mwenzio. [SPK](#).

What is bad for you is not good for your neighbor. Cf. 668, 671, 3419, 4482.

1192. Bora nusu kitumbua mkononi kuliko kitumbua kizima kilicho dukani. [EM](#) 28.18.

Half a bun in the hand is better than a whole bun in the shop.

1193. Bora nusu yai kuliko ganda tupu. [MEM](#) 136.

Better half an egg than an empty shell. Cf. 3473.

1194. Bura yangu sibandili kwa rehani. [E](#) 6. 9; [B](#) 3.50; [H](#) 23; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) bura.

I shall not substitute my own *bura* for a *rehani* which does not belong to me - [E](#). We value what is our own even if inferior - [H](#).

Bura and *rehani* were two kinds of cloth in days gone by, the latter was of superior quality - [E](#).

A play on words: **Bure yangu sibandili na rahani.** [MM](#).

I shall not give away what is free [but my own] for something I have to pay for in exchange [even if superior] - [MM](#).

Bure, free, gratis, instead of *bura*. *Rahani*, exchange instead of *rehani*.

1195. Chota si mwaga. [SAM](#) 6.5.

Drawing a little water is not the same as pouring it out. Don't despise a little thing given to you in the hope of getting a bigger one.

1196. Chungwa unaloweza kulifikia lichune, sio kulirukia liliko juu zaidi. [REK](#).

Pick the orange you can reach, don't jump for the one that is higher up.

1197. Enenda na ulionalo. [ED](#) 12.

There are two meanings: Do things the way you see fit; and Go with what you see people doing.

1198. Funza kidoleni umri. [AL](#) umri.

A chigger in the toe, old age. Wishing someone to accept the inconveniences of a [long] life - [AL](#).
Old people need help to extract the chigger from their toe.

1199. Furaha inahitaji cha kufanya, cha kupenda na cha kutumaini. [EM](#) F10.

Happiness requires something to do, something to love and something to hope for. "Happiness is not mere resting and laughing. Happiness comes from working to your satisfaction, loving others and having hope for a better life" - EM.

1200. Hakuna furaha ya milele zaidi ya uzima wa roho. [REK](#).

There is no greater permanent joy than the wellbeing of the soul.

1201. Hata simba hula majani. [EM](#) h17.

Even a lion eats grass. This means that if people are unable to get something they are used to, they may have to use something else of lesser quality. Cf. 1232.

1202. Heri nitakula na nini kuliko nitakula nini. [KA](#); [SM](#).

What shall I eat with it is better than what shall I eat. It is better to have something to eat than nothing to eat.
Na nini, "what comes with it?"

1203. Huishi kama ameingia peponi. [J](#); [MM](#).

A person living as happy as if in paradise. Said of a lazy, careless person - [MM](#).

1204. Jibwa lishibishwalo halendi mapipani. [MM](#).

A big dog that is well fed does not go to the [garbage] drums.

1205. Kila mtu na roho yake. [JK](#) 129; [KB](#) 98.

Every person with his/her own soul (or character). Each of us has to come to terms with our own psychological problems - [JK](#).

1206. Konzi ya maji yamtosha kunywa mtoto. [J](#) *konzi*; [AL](#) 343.

A fistful of water is sufficient for a child to drink. Cf. 2312, 3625.

1207. Kwamba una kidogo au kwamba una wingi, uwe radhi. [Holiday](#).

Whether you have little or much, be content.

1208. Kwenu ni kwenu japokuwa porini. [NGU](#).

Your home is your home, even in the wilds.

1209. Kwetu kwanifaa zaidi. [REK](#).

Being at home [with my own family and countrymen] suits me best. There is no place like home.

1210. Maji meupe baharini, lakini pwani hayanishi nyota. [KA](#).

Seawater may be clean, but on the beach it does not quench my thirst.

1211. Mbaazi ukikosa maua husingizia jua. [F](#) 23.24; [KS](#); [AL](#) 1401.

When a pigeon-pea plant has no flowers, it blames the sun. It's hard to accept one's own shortcomings - [AL](#).

1211a. Mbwa apendeleo mifupa. [SPK](#).

A dog ought to prefer bones. Said when people are doing something they ought not to do, e.g. a wife looking at another man - [SPK](#).

1212. Mlikula chumvi, haikosi utamu. [AL](#) 9.

You have eaten salt, it is not without taste. It is good to remember the pleasures of life. Cf. 2476.

1213. Mlilia choyo huongezwa. [T](#) 282; [MM](#).

The grumbler gets more [to grumble about]. Of a person who grumbles for no reason.

1214. Mpata radhi hupata hadhi. [KA](#).

One who is content obtains respect.

1215. Mwenye chake hakosi cha mwenzake. [JK](#) 121; [KB](#) 218; [AL](#) 66.

One who has what is needed does not miss his neighbor's. One who has his/her own does not pass the occasion to use what belongs to another. Greed is never satisfied - [AL](#).

1215a. Mwenye moyo wa furaha, humzaidia raha. [SPK](#).

The owner of a cheerful heart will find joy ever increasing.

1216. Ni asili ya binadamu kutotosheka. [NGU](#).

It's the nature of mankind never to be satisfied.

1217. Njiwa hakomi kulia. [JKP](#).

The dove never stops crying. "The East African turtle dove has a sad call, so it is compared to a plaintive person" - [JKP](#).

1218. Nyosha miguu kadiri ya kitando chako. [KB](#) 252, 321.

Stretch your legs according to your bed. Be content with what you have - [KB](#).

1219. Nyumba ya nyuni, haioni nduni. [RSP](#) 127.

The bird does not think that its own nest is shabby.

1220. Pabaya pako si pema pa mwenzako. [F](#) 41.1; [MARA](#) 3.

Your own bad place is far better [so far as you are concerned] than your companion's place [which will do you no good] - [E](#). Love your own things; do not envy others'.

1221. Padogo pako si pakubwa pa mwenzako. [F](#) 41.2; [L](#) 83; [H](#) 92; [B](#) 2.11; [MS](#) 169; [SWA](#) 32; [NGU](#).

The little place that is yours is better than the big place of your companion - [L](#).

Si, is not. In proverbs the *si* means that the first part of the sentence is more important than the second part. Cf. 1211, 1220, 2493, 3151.

1222. Penda chako. [NGU](#).

Love what is yours.

1223. Penye mvua, dungu hutuficha. [SAM](#) 21.4.

When it rains, a platform shields us. When in difficulty a person is not selective. Cf.

4093.

1223a. Raha ya dunia ni mambo matatu: la kwanza afya, la pili ni kitu, tatu bahati ya kupendwa na watu. [SPK](#)

Pleasure in this life is three things: First health, second money, third, the happiness of being loved by people.

1224. Radhi ni bora kuliko mali. [F](#) 43.1; [B](#) 4.81, [J](#); [SACL](#) 774; [KA](#); [AL](#) 1481; [MARA](#) 2; [T](#) 463; [CM](#) 51; [V](#) 23.

Contentment is better than wealth. The proverb could be translated thus: A parent's blessing is better than wealth. Or, God's blessing is better than wealth. The Swahili believe that a child that honors and looks after his/her parents, will be happy and find contentment. But if a child hurts the parents its future will be miserable. Property that is lost can be retrieved, but after parents' death, the evil deeds committed against them remain unforgiven - [MARA](#).

Radhi, contentment, blessing, pardon. Cf. 3757.

1225. Raha ya chura: tumbo ndani ya maji, mgongo nje. [AL](#) 1670.

The comfort of a frog consists of having its belly in the [cool] water and its back out [in the sun]. To every happiness there is an adversity. Nothing is totally perfect - [AL](#).

1226. Radhia na hicho chako kifungacho nyumba yako. [SPK](#).

Be content with this which you have, this which ties your house together [i.e., the family] - [SPK](#).

1227. Shibe ya hasidi ni majuto. [REK](#).

The fulfilment of envy is regrets.

Hasidi, envy, grudge, jealousy.

1228. Starehe ya mbwa kukalia mkia. [KS](#) *mkia*; [NGU](#).

Dog is happy when sitting on its tail.

1229. Sugi zamani zilizopita. [JKP](#).

Blessed are the good old days.

Sugi, from German *segen*, blessing - [JKP](#).

1230. Taabu ya mtu ndiyo raha yake. [NGU](#).

A person's trouble is his/her comfort. A person is longing all the time for comfort.

1231. Tajiri ni yule asiye na mahitaji mengi. [EM](#) t5.

A rich person is the one who has few wants.

1232. Tusipopata wali tule sima. [JK](#) 146; [AL](#) 1865.

If we do not get rice, we shall eat porridge of maize flour. We'll eat cassava - [AL](#).

We content ourselves with less. Cf. 3878.

1233. Twaridhia na baghala tuwakosapo farasi. [JK](#) 146; [AL](#) 1869.

We are content with mules if we have no horses. Better small fish than an empty dish - [JK](#).

Cf. 1232, 3878.

1234. Ukiwa na ngozi, usitamani ngozi zenyi mikia mirefu na mizuri. [KB](#) 311.

If you have a hide, don't desire others with nice long tails. Don't lead a life above your means - [KB](#).

1235. Usishindwe (na) kupika ukasingizia jiko lina moshi. [KA](#); [SM](#).

If you cannot cook, don't blame the smoke in the kitchen. The smoke has nothing to do with it. Cf. 1211.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Cooperation

1236. Ala ala jirani hata akiwa baniani. [NGU](#).

Thanks to God for the neighbor, even if he/she be a Banyan.

Baniani, Banyan. Indian follower of Brahma, i.e., neither a Christian nor a Muslim.

Ala Ala, exclamation of surprise. Cf. 2486.

1237. Aliyekufaa ana cheo chake. [NGU](#).

The one who is useful to you has a title [price].

1238. Asiye mkoma hujikoma mwenyewe. [KS](#) *mkoma*.

A person who has no helper, helps one self [to finish the job].

Mkoma: 1. One who stops, comes to an end; 2. a kind of palm tree; 3. a leper; 4. one who sticks with you, a friend. Cf. 246.

1239. Asiye na mtoto (or mwana), na abebe (or aeleke) jiwe. [SACL](#) 101; [V](#) *beba*; [KA](#); [NGU](#); [K](#) *seleke*; [AL](#) *mtoto*; [SPK](#).

One who has no child should carry a stone [instead]. Everyone should share in the burden. This saying was used in a proclamation where everybody had to turn up - [V](#). Refers to the cruelty of life - [SPK](#)

Eleka or *beba*, to carry.

1240. Asiyenitua kwa hili langu, akiwa na lake n'asitumai. [T](#) 35; [SACL](#) 909; [AL](#) 1100.

One who does not help me putting down my load, must not expect [help] when that person has a load. Heavy loads are carried on the head; to put them down, especially when heavy and breakable, as big water pots, help is needed and expected.

1241. Bamba la warume, si bamba na maguvu. [SACL](#) 89; [JKP](#); [AL](#) 1478.

A council of adults is not a council of force. "Adults are considered to be wise, so they will not need the use of force before coming to a reasonable agreement" - [JKP](#).

Warume for *wanaume*, Mrima dialect: leader. Cf. 1241.

1242. Bamba na waume. [JKP](#).

[You need not only] a wall [but] also men [to help you defend a town] - [JKP](#). "A town can only be defended by cooperation in unison. Much work can only be done together" - [JKP](#).

Bamba: counsel, case; iron sheet. Cf. 1163, 1241.

1243. Chombo hakiendi ikiwa kila mtu anapiga makasia yake. [EM](#) 36.13; [KA](#).

A boat doesn't go forward if each one is rowing his/her own way. Cf. 1244.

1244. Chombo hakiendi ila kwa nyenzo. [J](#) *chombo*; [B](#) 2.30; [KB](#) 43.

A vessel does not move without a roller. No progress without effort - [KB](#). Requires a leader or helper.

Nyenzo, a roller; from *-enda*, go.

Dau la upweke haliendi joshi. [FSM](#) 37.

A vessel of a single person cannot sail near the wind. Cf. 1288.

1245. Gunia tupu halisimami wima. [EM](#) g9.

An empty sack can't stand upright. Refers to assistance and cooperation and has many applications. One needs capital, know how, friends. Children use it to say that they are hungry.

1246. Haukweeki upesi, mti usio na panda. [EM](#); [H](#) 32.

A tree without a fork [branches] is difficult to climb. That means it is difficult to solve a difficult problem without assistance - [EM](#).

1247. Imekuwa vuta nikuvute. [EM](#) i6.

It has become "pull me and I'll pull you."

1248. Jifya moja haliinjiki chungu. [B](#) 4.4; [F](#) 12.2; [MARA](#) 2; [KB](#) 49.

One stone will not support a cooking pot. Three stones form a firm platform for the pot. This proverb is used to bring people to cooperate. It is also used to advise a person to have different ways of making a living; e.g., having different crops in the field - [MARA](#).

Mafiga mawili hayaivishi chungu. [AL](#) 1048; [KS](#) *figa*.

Two cooking stones do not bring the cooking pot to a boil.

Jifya, figa, cooking stone to support a pot. Cf. 718, 720, 1177.

1249. Jito likinenepa ni sababu ya mito mingine. [AL](#) 709.

If a river is high, it is because other rivers have joined. A river is enlarged by its tributaries.

1250. Juu ufike mzinga, sharti uvutwe kwa kamba. [EM](#) j23.

The beehive cannot be raised without being pulled up with a rope. This means that for a person to be successful, assistance of others is needed. Beehives are put up high in trees .

1251. Kama kusingwa ni huku, naradhiwa taka zangu. [JKP](#).

If this is being rubbed with liwa wood [to make a bride's skin smooth] I prefer my own skin-dirt - [JKP](#). "Said of something that is no real help. Marriage is no easy matter for a woman, and although girls are supposed to look forward to it, they will find little but hardship in it. It all begins with the rubbing of the bride's entire body, when all the body hair is pulled out" - [JKP](#).

Singa: rub or massage with perfume: e.g., *singa mwili kwa sandali*, rub the body with perfume of sandalwood -[J](#); to rub off dirt - [Krapf](#).

1252. Kamba haipandi bila mti. [AL](#) 1506.

A creeper [liana] does not climb without a tree. Without support it's difficult to advance in society.

1253. Karibu isiyo kitu, siioni ni karibu. [JKP](#).

If near [a relative] has nothing, I don't regard it as near. "Relatives are supposed to help each other mutually in times of need, if they do not, are they really relatives?" - [JKP](#).

1254. Kata zamani utafika kwangu kuomba dawa ya mtoto. [PM](#) 303.14.

Later you will come and ask me a remedy for [your] child. This is said to someone who refuses to render a service, warning that person that help will be denied in future needs.

Zamani here means, later (Kingwana dialect).

1255. Kazi ya kugawanywa haziishii katikati. [NGU](#).

Shared works don't stop halfway. Work done together will be successfully finished.

1256. Kidole kimoja hakivunji (or hakiui) chawa. [B](#) 1.32; [A](#) 72; [T](#) 139;

[F](#) 14.12; [Rech](#) 50; [MARA](#) 27; [NS](#) 27; [Y](#) 16; [KB](#) 94; [FSM](#) 19; [MS](#) 34; [J](#) *chawa*; [KS](#) *chawa*.

A single finger does not kill a louse. The necessity of joint action. One cannot cut a tree with one stroke - [V](#).

Mkono mmoja hauvunji chawa. [LE3](#) 227.17.

One hand does not kill a louse.

Goti moja halimlei mtoto. [JGH](#).

One knee doesn't bring up a child. Cf. 1283-85.

Kiroboto kwa kimoja chanja, bila kucha kuwezi kuvunja. [SPK](#).

The flea [sitting] on a finger without your nails you cannot crush it. It is necessary to stamp out evil with adequate measures - [SPK](#).

1257. Kifimbo cheza ni mali yangu. [NGU](#).

The play of the little stick is my good fortune. The old person needs a stick for walking and the rhythm of walking with the stick is like a play.

1258. Kifo cha wengi arusi. [RECH](#) 190; [ZO](#) p.243; [KS](#) *kilo*.

The dying of many is like a wedding. Hard working on a job is like a feast if there are many who give their strength to a common cause.

However big an ordeal, sharing it with many people

makes it less unbearable -[ZO](#). Common suffering is easier to bear - [MM](#).

Kifo, death, dying; but here "hard working."

1259. Kijiti kimoja hakisimamishi jengo. [SM](#).

One pole cannot support a house. Cf. 1248, 1256.

1260. Kila apigaye mlango hupata majibu. [MA](#) 216.

Everyone who knocks at the door gets an answer.

1261. Kila mtu kwa shauri lake. [JKP](#).

Every person with his/her own problem. "There is a limit to the help we can give others" - [JKP](#).

1262. Omitted.

1263. Kilio cha ndege ndicho kilichoozeshwa mayai. [AL](#) 1482.

The lamentations [at the death of the bird] caused the eggs to spoil. Nothing succeeds without the protection of one's own family - [AL](#).

1264. Kinga na kinga, ndipo moto uwakapo. [T](#) 152; [I](#) kinga; [A](#) 179; [B](#) 4.30; [RECH](#) 208; [V](#) 5; [KB](#) 107; [SACL](#) 384; [FSM](#) 72; [MS](#) 38, *ukawaka*; [MARA](#) 2; [KS](#) kinga.

Firebrand on firebrand, then the fire burns. To get a difficult cause moving, many little efforts are needed. Cooperation makes things easier. Perseverance will succeed. Also: Persistent stoking will cause rebellion - [SPK](#). When firebrands meet [mix], that is when the fire flares up.

1265. Kiraka cha jamvi ni kanda. [KA](#); [SM](#); [MARA](#).

The patch on the [floor] mat is [cut from] the basket. The basket is made of the same material. Get help from your own kind of people.

1266. Kukataa kwa chungu ni kuvuja. [KB](#) 20; [AL](#) chungu.

The refusal of the earthen cooking pot is that it leaks. To have a good reason in refusing service, one must not pester someone in giving a service, but leave that one free - [KB](#).

1267. Kukubali shingo upande. [KS](#) shingo.

Agreeing with the neck sideways. Agreeing without liking it. An idiom: *Fanya jambo shingo upanda*, Doing something without liking it.

1268. Omitted.

1269. Kwenye makaa bila moto hakukauki nyama. [AL](#) 1050, 1088.

Dead coals don't cure meat. To succeed cooperation is needed.

1270. Leo ndiwe, kesho ndimi. [MA](#) 254.

Today it is you, tomorrow it is me. If you help me today, tomorrow I may be able to help you. Cf. 681.

1271. Macho mawili huona zaidi kuliko jicho moja. [NGU](#).

Two eyes see more than one eye.

1272. Maji ya nazi yataka (or yatafuta) mvugulio. [KS](#) nazi; [AL](#) mvugulio.

The milk of the coconut needs an opening [in order to escape]. This is said when a present is needed for a diviner in consultation - [KS](#).

1272a. Majirani hufanyiana shime. [SPK](#).

Neighbors help one another.

1273. Mambo kikowa. [F](#) 22.14; [AL](#) 1970 *kikoa*; [Nestor](#) p.77.

Things in turn. One good turn deserves another; you help me in my difficulties, I help you in yours - [E](#).

1274. Mapaka wengi hawagwii panya. [T](#) 244; [KB](#) gwia; [SACL](#) 259; [V](#) 68.

Many big cats do not catch a rat. If many people try to solve a problem without using skill and brains they will usually make a mess of it.

1275. Mfanya na mfanyiwa. [JKP](#).

Craftsman and customer. "The maker needs the consumer to tell what is wanted. The latter needs the skilled craftsman" - [JKP](#).

1276. Mnazi mpata vyote, ila chujio iliukosa. [AL](#) 104.

The oil palm has everything, except the strainer.

Mnazi or *mchikichi*: palm tree. *Chujio*, *chungio*: sifter. The *mnazi* or *mchikichi* palm has many uses: the branches and leaves are used in house building and mat making; the nuts have oil, the flowers are salty; the sap becomes palm wine.

1277. Mgongo haupakwi mafuta. [REK](#).

The back is not rubbed with oil. Help is needed.

1278. Mikono mingi kazi haba. [EM](#) m16.

Many hands make light work.

1279. Mikono miwili ni kuoshana. [KB](#) 164.

The two hands wash each other. Cf. 1281.

1280. Miluzi mingi mbwa hupotea. [EM](#) m18.

For many whistles the dog is lost. If a dog hears whistles from different directions it will not know which way to go. Too many instructions will confuse a person. Cf. 1295.

1281. Miwili ndiyo pakamao. [ED](#) 34; [JK](#) 140; [AL](#) 1041.

Two [hands] are an anointment. The body needs rubbing with oil from time to time, and two hands (of wife and husband) are needed for that purpose - [JK](#).

Pakamao from *paka*, rub, apply oil, etc. Cf. 1279.

1282. Mkataa kikoa ni mchawi. [KA](#); [SM](#).

The one who refuses to join in an enterprise is a witch. Cf. 615, 748, 1273, 1624.

1283. Mkono mmoja haubebi mtoto. [KB](#) 186.

One hand alone cannot carry a baby. Cf. 1285.

1284. Mkono mmoja hauchinji ng'ombe. [F](#) 27.71; [FSM](#) 119.

A single hand cannot slaughter a cow. Cf. 1256, 1281.

1285. Mkono mmoja haulei mwana. [F](#) 27.72.

One hand cannot bring up a child. Child upbringing is a communal effort. It takes a village to raise a child.

1286. Mmoja hashui chombo. [JK](#) 141.

One man cannot launch a vessel. Cf. 1288.

1287. Msaidie anayekusaidia. [FSM](#) 128.

Help the person who helps you. By doing a service to someone, you teach indirectly to give service in turn.

1288. Mti hauendi ila kwa nyenzo. [F](#) 31.115; [H](#) 79; [MS](#) 45.21; [B](#) 3.39; [T](#) 325;

[L](#) 64; [RECH](#) 642; [V](#) 32; [SACL](#) 643; [KS](#) *mti*; [JK](#) 141.

A log cannot be moved except on rollers. About common effort. Could also be applied to bribery: "One who greases the wheels helps his oxen."

Mti hauendi ila kwa mwao. [T](#) 325; [SACL](#) 641.

A log cannot be moved except "properly," i.e., by under-supports - [T](#). Cf. 1244.

1289. Mti haushuliki ila kwa mti mwingine. [T](#) 326; [SACL](#) 844; [MM](#).

A log cannot be pushed along except by another log.

Kushulika from *shua*, to launch a boat.

1290. Mti pekee haujengi. [LE3](#) 227.18.

One builds nothing with one tree only. Cf. 1297.

1291. Mti ukigwa huegemea mti wenziwe. [T](#) 640A.

When a tree falls it leans on its neighbor. One looks to one's friend in adversity.

1292. Mwenye kubebwa hujikaza. [F](#) 35.159; [AL](#) 1054.

One who is carried [on the back] must cling on. A person assisted by another must also help - [E](#). It will make the effort of others easier - [AL](#).

1293. Mwenye lake usimngoje na lako. [TAA](#) 12.

Don't expect that someone with trouble will cater for yours.

1294. Mwewe hana mihadi na kuku. [AL](#) *kabemba, mihadi*, [AL](#) 1406.

The osprey does not promise the chicken anything [whether it would or would not take a chicken]. So, you should not have a grudge against the hawk. It follows its nature.

1295. Nahodha wengi, chombo (or jahazi) huenda mrama. [F](#) 38.1; [KS](#) *mrama*; [H](#) 87; [B](#) 2.63; [L](#) 79; [SWA](#) 53; [MS](#) 137; [MARA](#) 3. [KS](#) *hodha*.

Many captains and the vessel [dhow] rolls.

Manahodha wengi chombo huenda pera. [F](#) 22.15; [B](#) 3.67.

With many captains the ship is at the mercy of the waves.

Mpera, Be at the mercy of the waves (Kigunya dialect) - [Sacl](#).

Manahodha wengi hukiangamiza chombo. [B](#) 3.67.

Many captains destroy a ship.

Chombo cha manahodha wengi huzama. [RECH](#) 396; [MARA](#) 3.

A ship with many captains is liable to sink. Cf. 3508.

1296. Nguvu ni kusaidiana. [NGU](#).

Strength is helping each other.

Kusaidiana ni mali. [NGU](#).

Mutual help is wealth.

1297. Nguzo moja haijengi nyumba. [KB](#) 246.

One single pillar is not sufficient to build a house. Cf. 1290.

1298. Nia zikiwa moja, kilicho mbali huja. [T](#) 434; [V](#) 8; [MS](#) 61.

When minds are one, what is far comes near. Difficult things become possible.

1299. Njia ya umande wanatembea wawili. [AL](#) 1056; [AL](#) *tembea*.

On a dew-wet path, people walk two together [side by side]. Those narrow footpaths covered with overhanging tall wet grass are cold and very unpleasant. The inconveniences of life are best when shared.

1300. Ondoka (or amka or inuka) twende! Ni (or watu) waaganao. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2; [SM](#); [T](#) 446.

Move, let us go! is of people who have a plan. Rise up, let's go! means that people have decided to do something. This shows that what has been decided is going to be done and what will be done is not known to others. Used if somebody jumps into others' conversation. But this proverb is also used to express disappointment: you should have told me before ... we should have made previous arrangements. Tell people early about your plans if you want them to join you.

1301. Paka wengi wangewako, wamewazidisha panya. [JKP](#).

Though there are many cats, they have allowed the rats to multiply. A girl must not have lovers that give the house a bad name - [JKP](#). Cf. 1274.

1302. Penye uzia penyeza rupia. [EM](#) p17.

Inject money where there is a problem. Money helps to solve problems.

1303. Penye wanaume wengi hapaugui mwana. [NGU](#).

Where there are many good men there no child will get sick.

1304. Penye wengi adui hufa. [EM](#) p.18.

Where there are many good people an enemy usually dies.

1305. Pokea ukitoa. [EM](#) p.23.

Accept if you give. If you give to others, you should also accept their help, when they give it, otherwise people think that you despise their help or that you don't want to bother helping them.

1306. Shida ya ndugu humalizwa na ndugu. [NGU](#).

The trouble of a relative is solved by a relative.

1307. 'Shika shika' (or shike, shike) na mwenyewe nyuma. [F](#) 43.3; [B](#) 4.79.

Hold him! Hold him!" and you yourself [stay] back. You shouldn't expect others to do all the work - [E](#).

1308. Shikaneni mikono mvukapo mto. [EM](#) s6.

Hold hands when crossing a river. When people are faced with danger, they should cooperate in dealing with it.

1309. Tendegu moja halisimamishi kitanda. [EM](#) t10.

One leg cannot support a bed.

1310. Ukibebwa usilevyevye-levye miguu. [KA](#); [SM](#).

If you are carried don't slacken your legs. Try to cooperate and make helping you easier. Cf. 2660.

1311. Ukitemewa mate na wengi utaloana. [NGU](#).

If many spit on you, you'll be soaked. So, don't get in that situation. Cf. 1326.

1312. Ukuni mmoja hauwaki mekoni. [KA](#).

One piece of wood does not burn brightly in the kitchen. Cf. 1248, 1256.

1313. Ukuti kukazana ni kumbi. [REK](#).

The branches of a coconut tree squeezed together make a roof.

Ukuti : leaf, branch of the coconut tree. *Kumbi* : "The plaited coconut leaves used for thatching the cottages" - [Krapf](#).

1314. Ulingo wa kwae haulindi manda. [KA](#); [MS](#).

A platform [for a watchman in charge of crops] of the village Kwae, does not protect the village of Manda. Kwae and Manda are (old) villages of Lamu. Cf. 180, 181.

1315. Umoja ni nguvu, utengano ni udhaifu. [FSM](#) II9.

Unity is strength, division is weakness.

1316. Umvushapo mwenzio nawe unavuka. [EM](#) u22.

When you row your friend across, you also cross. If you help your fellow men, you will also help yourself in the process - [EM](#).

1317. Vikombe vikikaa pamoja havina budi kugongana. [F](#) 50.1; [KA](#); [KB](#) 335; [V](#) in *Desturi za Wasuaheli*, 1903.

If cups are [put] in one place, they are bound to clatter - F. The use of this proverb is quite common in East Africa. The meaning is that wherever people live and work together trivial clashes occur.

Often the words *majembe, vyungu*, (hoes, pots) are used instead of *vikombe*.

Vibuyu kapuni havikosi kugongana. [EM](#) v2.

Gourds in a basket cannot avoid knocking one another.

1318. Vunja nyumba, lakini ujenge wenyewe. [REK](#).

Destroy your house, but build it up yourself. Don't expect help to repair your own mistakes. Also used for familial and social break-ups.

1319. Wakubwa hupendelea ubinafsi; wadogo hupendeka ujamaa. [EM](#) w9.

Big people prefer possessions, while small ones prefer sharing possessions. Those who have become successful and have collected much prefer to hold on to that position, but those who have little prefer co-operating in fighting against the environment which has made their situation so low, with the hope that it will improve not for some individuals only, but for the whole group - [EM](#).

1320. Walioagana hawaitani. [NGU](#).

Those who made mutual agreements don't call each other. They just go and do what they promised. Cf. 1300.

1321. Wapishi wengi huharibu pilau. [EM](#) w15; [KA](#); [SPK](#).

Too many cooks spoil the rice. This means that if many people with differing ideas are asked to implement a decision, the implementation will be problematic - [EM](#).

Instead of *pilau* also the words *mchuzi*, *gravy* and *nyama*, meat are used. Cf. 1295.

1322. Watu waliambiwa "kakaeni," hawakuambiwa "kashindaneni." [T](#) 587.

People were told "Come and live together," they were not told "Come and compete with one another." Or: Do not waste your energy on useless arguments - [MM](#).

1323. Wawili hula ng'ombe. [J](#) ng'ombe; [RECH](#) 404; [NS](#) 33; [V](#) 85; [KB](#) 342.

Two can manage to eat a cow. Two can manage an ox. Two people are needed to plow with oxen, one guides with a rope, the other holds the plow. Therefore, two people working together can succeed in doing a big thing - [KB](#). Another understanding of this proverb: It's no use fighting against impossible odds - [V](#) 85.

1324. Wawili wakishirikiana mfuko wa fedha, mmoja huimba na mwingine hulia. [EM](#) w21.

When two people have a common purse, one sings and the other weeps. The honest one will be exploited.

1325. Wawili wenye shauri moja washinda wanane wenye kubishana. [KB](#) 343.

Two people in accord are stronger than eight who disagree.

1326. Wengi wape. [H](#) 111; [L](#) 106; [B](#) 2.8; [JK](#) 124.

To many, give! To many it is wise to yield.

Wengi wape au watajichukulia. [F](#) 52.10.

To many give it up or they will take it themselves. If there are many of the same opinion, don't be obstinate.

1327. Wima, nguzo na nduguzo. [RSP](#) 137.

Stand upright, pillar, with your brothers. The poles of the roof support each other - RSP.

1328. Yatima humnyonya mcha mungu. [REK](#).

An orphan is nurtured by a God-fearing person. An orphan depends on a benefactor.

Nyonya, suck milk; live off somebody else.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Cunning

1329. Akaaye kimya hakosi ujanja wake. [NGU](#).

The one who keeps silent is not without cunning.

1330. Akili nyingi huondoa maarifa. [F](#) 2.10; [H](#) 5; [B](#) 2.39; [MS](#) 44.19; *Vakili*; [MARA](#) 3; [SACL](#) 50; [KB](#) 7; [AL](#) 722.

Too much cleverness drives away wisdom. One who would be too clever makes mistakes.

Too much self confidence brings along stupidity - [AL](#).

1331. Akili ya mtu ndiyo wazimu wake. [KB](#) 8.

Somebody's wit is also that person's folly. A person's spirit gives rise to the best and the worst - [KB](#).

1332. Anayejidai mjanja ni mjinga. [FSM](#) 17.

Someone thinking to be clever is a fool.

1333. Asiye na mguu na achonge mti. [AL](#) 313.

A person who misses a leg should carve a [walking] stick. The need for adaptation - [AL](#).

1334. Asiye na mjomba hujifanya mjomba mwenyewe. [REK](#).

The one who has no uncle must become an uncle. If no help is available, do it yourself.

1335. Bunju akili [zi] kichwani. [NGU](#); [SPK](#).

The councillor's brain is in his/her head. Many people have more imagination than true intelligence. Cf. 3792.

1336. Cha mwerevu huliwa na mjinga. [CM](#) 53.

The [property] of the cunning person is eaten by the fool.

1337. Chiriku mzee hakamatwi na makapi. [EM](#) 36.12.

An old sparrow cannot be trapped with chaff.

Chiriku, a finch, a chatterer - [J](#). Cf. 1362.

1338. Chui na majani na mbuzi huvushwaje dau moja? [JKP](#).

A load of grass, a leopard and a goat, how can they be transported in one small boat? "This refers to the fable of the ferryman's dilemma" - [JKP](#).

1339. Duma hukamata, sungura hupata. [RSP](#) 144.

The cheetah catches [the prey], the hare obtains it. "The cheetah gets his food through his ability to run fast. This refers to a story where the cunning hare outwits the cheetah and has food without working" - [RSP](#).

1340. Fimbo uliyonayo mkononi ndiyo iwezayo kukupiga. [AL](#) 350.

The stick in your hand is the one that can hit you too. About tactlessness of speech and blunders.

1341. Heri nyoka akuume, kama watu wakukame. [JKP](#).

It's better that a snake bite you, than that people 'milk' you. "To be 'conned' is worse than a snakebite" - [JKP](#).

1342. Hila za sungura, kulia kwa vyura. [RSP](#) 145.

The wiles of a hare [are numerous as] the croaking of the frog. A cunning person always has new schemes - [RSP](#).

1343. Hunyoa watu bila ya maji. [Vnyoa](#).

Shaving people without using water. Hone who knows how to fleece a person. Cf. 289.

1344. Huyu mchokozi ajua pweza alipo. [J](#) *mchokozi*.

This inquisitive person knows where the cuttlefish is. This person is a sly dog, and knows what is what - [J](#). Cf. 1866.

1345. Kaa mkuu ng'ombe wa maji akinua gando mwelemeze nanda. [KA](#); [SM](#).

If the big crab, a water cow, raises its claws put a forked stick between. In the sea the crab is a powerful and fierce being, but if you outsmart it, you can easily catch it. In the same way you can overcome a dangerous person with a trick. At the same time don't mock a person in power or a dangerous person, they may harm you.

Ng'ombe wa maji, like a cow in the water. Could it be: big like a manatee (*nguva*), which is not dangerous at all - [SM](#).

1346. Kidevu kamwambia ndevu kila apataye huwa mwerevu. [KS](#) *kidevu*; [AL](#) 1340.

The chin says to the beard that everyone who obtains is clever. The most crafty one gets it.

1347. Kila jambo lina njia. [JKP](#).

Every matter has its proper way to handle it. Cf. 420, 423, 2873, 2875.

1348. Kitegwacho kukitega chataka ubongo. [WIKON](#) 186.

Brains are needed to trap.

1349. Kufanya kisunguru. [JKP](#).

To act like the hare. The hare (*sungura*) in Swahili tales is as the fox in European tales.

1350. Kumchokoa kenge katika tundu lake kwataka utaratibu. [AL](#) 350.

To poke a monitor lizard out of its hole prudence is needed.

1351. Kuna njia moja ya kumchuna paka. [NGU](#).

There is one way to skin a cat. There is more than one way to skin a cat - English proverb.

1352. Kwenye kuingia sisimizi watu wanaona. [AL](#) 467.

People can see where the minuscule ants enter. The *sisimizi* are extremely small, but people can observe their ways. Nothing remains hidden.

1353. Leo ni siku ya mwerevu, kesho ya mpumbavu. [MA](#) 253.

Today is a day of the cunning one, tomorrow is of the stupid. A wise man should never postpone what is supposed to be done today.

1354. Mguu wa mbwa haushiki tope. [LE3](#) 227.13.

The paw of a dog does not accumulate mud. This is said of an old rogue, whom nothing rebuffs, who enters late at night afraid of nothing. Coming home late at night and drunk as usual his wife will receive him with those words.

1355. Mhadaaji kihadaiwa hivi huona uchungu. [JK](#) 124.

A cheater cheated feels bitter.

1356. Mkaa kimya hakosi ujanja wake. [NGU](#).

One who remains silent is not [necessarily] without cleverness. Cf. 1329.

1357. Mtoto wa kunguru hapotei desturi. [REK](#).

A young crow does not lose its tricks.

1358. Mtoto wa mkima hamfundidhi mzee kima hila zamani mayele. [KB](#) 200; [AL](#) 406.

A young monkey does not teach tricks to an old monkey.

1359. Mwenye hekima huona gizani, mpumbavu hupapasa. [REK](#).

A wise person sees in darkness, a fool gropes about. Darkness here means in a difficult situation.

1360. Mwerevu hajinyoi mwenyewe, na akijinyoa hujikata. [CM](#) 36; [KS](#) *mwerevu*; [KB](#) 108; [KA](#); [AL](#) 1058.

A cunning person does not shave, but if he does, he will cut his the face. Refusing help is inviting failure - [AL](#). Usually a person can be more useful for the community than for oneself, e.g., a doctor, a craftsman, a teacher serves others. Nobody is selfsufficient - [KA](#). Instead of *mwerevu* (a clever person) also *kinyozi* (a barber) is used. *Kinyozi* : barber; has the figurative meaning of "crook, thief, cheat" - [SACL](#).

Mwerevu hajinyoi na akijinyoa hajitakasi. [SPK](#).

Even a clever man cannot shave his own head and if he does, he cannot shave it quite clean. A cunning person is bound to make a mistake - [SPK](#).

1361. Ndani ya akili ya mtu mna wazimu wake. [AL](#) 570.

In the mind [brain] of a person, there is also madness. The mind produces good and bad.

1362. Ndege mjanja hunaswa na tundu bovu. [F](#) 38.4; [B](#) 3.71; [KB](#) 237.

A cunning bird is trapped by a rotten trap. Even a clever person must be on guard.

1363. Panya akimcheka paka, anajua shimo lilipo. [EM](#) P.4; [SPK](#).

When the mouse laughs at the cat, it knows where the hole is. Do not mock anyone who is more powerful than you - [SPK](#). Instead of *aimcheka* (laughs), also *akimtantania* (mocks) is used.

1363a. Panya hasahau tundu. [SPK](#).

The rat does not forget its hole.

1364. Panya hutegwa kwa gunzi. [BM](#) p.7.

A mouse is caught at an empty maize cob. Cf. 1362.

1365. Penye maji hakuna ukalamzi. [AL](#) 802.

In water there is no outwitting. If there is no possibility of choice whims are excluded.

1366. Suluhia jini bi afriti. [JKP](#).

Pacify a djinn with an evil genius. Play one enemy off against another.

Bi, by, with, in; cf. *bi nafsi yangu*, by myself. *Afriti*, an evil genius. *Jini*, a genie, spirit, not always malignant.

1367. Sungura amemtenda leo. [Vtenda](#)..

The hare has done it to that person today. Somebody played a dirty trick on someone.

1368. Ujanja huzidiana. [NGU](#).

Cunning increases cunning. Deceit increases deceit. *Ujanja*: craftiness, cunning, deceit, fraud.

1369. Ujanja wa paa ulimpatiliza hasara. [AL](#) 1346.

The ruse of the antelope caught up with it. Even the best trick can cause damage.

1370. Ujanja wazaa ugomvi. [KB](#) 300.

Cunning produces a quarrel. Cf. 1378.

1371. Ujinga wa mtu ni werevu wake. [Jjinga](#); [AL jinga](#)..

A man's simplicity is [often] his shrewdness. The apparent silliness of a person is often disguised shrewdness - [AL](#).

1372. Usijidanganye ujajidanganya. [REK](#).

Don't deceive yourself [by thinking] that you have not yet deceived yourself.

1373. Usile na kipofu ukamgusa mkono. [F](#) 49.34; [Mulika](#) p.10; [FSM](#) 111; [JK](#) 143.

When you are eating with a blind person, do not touch his/her hand. "To do so will lead the blind to suspect that either the food is finished or you are trying to play a trick. In other words, with a simple person you must be very careful lest you might do something to make that person suspicious of you" - [F](#). Applied meaning: If you commit adultery with a man's wife, make sure he never sees you - [JK](#).

Ukila na kipofu, ujitahidi. [NGU](#).

If you eat with a blind person be careful. Don't eat from that person's side of the plate. "The cultural image that is used, is one which is still frequently seen: at meals many Swahili families do not have a separate plate for each person, but they eat, usually two together from one plate, each one scooping up some rice, meat and vegetables and kneading it into a ball. The implication is, of course, that the blind person does not know that you are eating together, and the blind person upon discovering may be furious, for you have stolen food from the plate and taken abject advantage of that person's blindness" - [SPK](#).

N.B.: The expression "*kula na kipofu*" means to exploit others without their knowing that they are exploited.

1374. Usitafute ncha ya kamba, lakini shina lake. [AL](#) 345.

Don't look for the end of the liana, but for its root. The intelligent person looks for the cause of things.

Kamba, a rope, a tropical creeper, liana.

1375. Usitafute werevu pasipo werevu. [AL](#) 1344.

Don't try to be cunning without [expecting] cunning in return. A trick calls for a trick in return.

1376. Watu waliona chawa ndani ya nyanya. Zimba dialect. [AL](#) 466.

People saw lice in tomatoes. Nothing remains hidden for a perspicacious person.

1377. Werevu mtupu haufungi mtumba. [NGU](#).

Pure cunning does not tie a bag.

Mtumba, a bale, a bag, a bundle, a load.

1378. Werevu mwingi mbele [ni] giza. [B](#) 1.19 *kiza*; [F](#) 52.11; [T](#) S92; [KB](#) 347; [KA](#).

Much cunning is followed by darkness. The sequence of much cunning is confusion. A person should not pretend to know all. It's good to learn from others - [KA](#). Cf. 1330.

1379. Werevu wa panzi ulimkosesha makope. [AL](#) 1349.

The cunning of the grasshopper has deprived it of eyelids. A foolish trick often fires back. Refers to an animal story.

1380. Werevu wa sungura, masikio merevu. [AL siku](#); [AL](#) 1250.

The cunning of the hare, clever ears. The cunning of the hare is betrayed by his reputation.

Masikio marefu, long ears. *Masikio merevu*, clever ears.

1381. Werevu walipo tele, mafanikio si tele. [REK](#).

Where clever people are many, their accomplishments are few.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Death

1382. Adhabu ya kaburi hujua (or aijua; aijuaye ni; ajua) maiti.

[L](#) 1; [Vyajua.](#); [F](#) 1.2; [B](#) 1.68, [KB](#) 29; [H](#) 1; [MARA](#) 1; [SWA](#) 61; [T](#) 2; [KS](#) adhabu; [SPK](#).

[Only] the corpse knows the torment of the grave. No one knows better where the shoe pinches than the one who wears it. Cf. 1848.

1383. Adhabu ya kaburi kila mtu ataiona. [REK](#).

Everybody will undergo the sentence of the grave. Adhabu: punishment, sentence.

1384. Afaye hakosi kuzikwa. [NGU](#).

The one who dies will be buried.

1385. Afua ni mbili, kufa na kupona. [T](#) 4; [MS](#) 4; [J](#) afua.

Deliverance is of two kinds, dying and getting better. Said to a person who is critically ill, that even death is just as good as getting better: it will end suffering - [MM](#).

Kufa na kupona, do or die; used in strong promises. Cf. 1448.

1386. Aibu ya maiti aijua mwosha. [F](#) 1.4; [B](#) 1.12; 3.61; [H](#) 1; [SWA](#) 1962 aijuaye ; [MARA](#)

The corpse washer knows the shame [defects] of the deceased. Cf. 4238.

1387. Aliye taabani hana uwongo. [EM](#).ll.ll.

A person on the death bed tells no lies. A person about to die is not afraid of the consequences.

1388. Aliyefariki haoni dhiki. [MA](#) 43.

One who has passed away does not feel oppression. "A dead person feels no cold."

1389. Aliyekufa ni nani kilio kikamleta? [JKP](#).

Whoever died [and found] that crying has brought him/her back [to life]? About useless effort.

1390. Aliyekula kitovu chako, hatakuachia utumbo. [KB](#) 18.

One who consumes your navel [i.e., your child] will not leave you the fruit of your belly.

An allusion to death, which spares neither child nor adult.

1391. Aloachwa kaachiwa mengi. [SAM](#) 3.13.

The people who are left [bereft, bereaved] find that they are left with many things [burdens].

1392. Amekaa katika kivuli cha mumewe. [KS](#) kivuli..

She lived in the shadow of her husband. Said of a widow living with her children, without remarrying.

1393. Amepeleka kilio matangani. [T](#) 24; [MA](#) 53; [V](#) 100.

Somebody has sent a wail to the scene of mourning. Said when someone does something very apropos" - [T](#). Cf. 2052, 2061.

1394. Anayekaa na maiti, hawachi kulia-lia. [NGU](#).

The person who stays with a dead person does not stop weeping.

1394a. Anokufa awachaye wana afurahi, haifi hayati, tawi hufa uhai hukaa. [SPK](#).

The one who dies leaving children let that person rejoice! Life does not die; the branches die, life goes on - [SPK](#).

1395. Asiyejua kufa na atazame kaburini. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2.

A person who does not know about dying should look in a grave. If you don't know something you should investigate. Don't laugh about things you don't know. Learn from other people's mistakes.

1396. Asojua kufa, nangalie ng'ombe. [T](#) 37.

Let a person who does not know how to die, look at the ox. Oxen and sheep are the images of quietness into death. Asojua for asiyejua. O may stand for any relative particle except one relating to place/time - [T](#). Nangalie, contraction of na and angalie. Cf. 1429.

1397. Bora kilema kuliko mfu. [KB](#) 36.

Better crippled than dead. There is no remedy against death.

1398. Chendako mavani hakina marejeo. [SAM](#) 6.4; [MS](#) 127.

What enters into the burial ground has no return. Only a free person has a choice - [SAM](#).

1399. Chenye asili ya kiumbe hakikosi deni la kifo. [REK](#).

What has the beginning of a creature, will not miss the debt of death. What is created must die.

1400. Hakuna chanzo kisicho [na] mwisho. [MA](#) 121.

There is no beginning that has no end. Everything has an end.

Lenye mwanzo lina mwisho. [ED](#) 25; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#)mwisho; [JKP](#).

What has a beginning has an ending. All things in the world, pleasant and unpleasant, will come to an end - [JKP](#). Cf. 3468, 4375.

1401. Hakuna kilima bila kaburi. [KB](#) 61.

There is no hill without a grave.

1402. Hakuna mrukaji aliyefaulu kuepa kifo. [KB](#) 63.

There is no one who can jump so high as to escape death.

1403. Hakuna tajiri shimoni. [KB](#) 64.

There is no rich person in a grave. The grave levels all distinctions.

1404. Hatuko sawa maishani, tukifa wote sawa. [NGU](#).

During our life we are not the same, but in death we are the same.

1405. Heri kufa kuliko kufariki. [FSM](#) 47; [AL](#) 777, 1881; [KS](#) heri.

It's better to die than to part company. Understood is total separation: ostracism, exile, etc. Cf. 720, 1406.

1406. Hii pweke ni uvundo, kuondokewa si kwema. [T](#) 91; [MS](#) 1; [AL](#) peke; [SACL](#).

This loneliness is disgusting, to be deserted is not good.

1407. Hivi sasa ni muovu, hifa utanikumbuka. [T](#) 97; [MS](#) 23 kifa for hifa..

Just at the moment I am bad, [but] when I die you will remember me. Hifa for nikifa : when I die.

1408. Hofu ya kaburi kaja na umri. [RSP](#) 7.

Fear of the grave comes with [old] age.

1409. Hucheka aliyefiwa kabla ya kufikwa na kifo. [KA](#).

Laughing at a bereaved person before oneself has experienced a death. It's bad to laugh at somebody's misfortune.

1410. Hujafa hujaumbika. [TS](#) 66.4; [TS](#) 127.5; [AL](#) umbwa..

You haven't died yet, you don't even look like you're dead. Wait till you are adult, then you could start thinking about dying. Cf. 1833.

1411. Hutabishi na akuzikaye. [KB](#) 75.

You don't argue with your grave digger.

1411a. Idadi ya wenye kufa, ni mungu aijuaye. [SPK](#).

The number of those who are going to die, God alone knows it.

1412. Kama hujui kufa tazama kaburi. [B](#) 4.41; [E](#) 12.2.

If you do not know death, look at the grave. Cf. 1396.

1413. Kifo hakichagui wala hakina mjanja. [NGU](#).

Death is not fastidious nor is there any one who can cheat. Death takes just anybody, and there is no escape.

1414. Kifo hakina kinga. [WIKON](#) 234.

Death has no defense. "Death is a black camel, which kneels at the gates of all."

1415. Kifo hakina mzee wala kijana. [AL](#) 1822.

Death does not respect neither adult nor child.

1416. Kifo ki karibu, ki kishogoni mwako. [T](#) 140, [SACL](#) 361, 407; [V](#)kifo ;[MS](#) 35 kisogoni.

Death is near, it is at the back of your head.

The answer to this is sometimes: Au, nadhani ki karibu zaidi. [SPK](#).
Or, I think, it is even nearer.

1417. Kifo kikimbizwa funza chawekwa mahali gani? [MA](#) 172; [SACL](#); [AI](#) 1817.

The death [dead body] from which the maggot is driven away, where is it kept? Where do you find a corpse sheltered from worms? - [AL](#). An ironical question. There is no escape from death.

1418. Kifo kimlacho jirani, hakikusahau wewe. [KB](#) 95.

Death which eats your neighbor will not forget you.

1419. Kifo kimoja mazishi mengi. [EM](#) k8.

One death but various burials. Death is all one, but there are many ways of disposing of the dead body - [EM](#).

1420. Kifo kina milango mingi. [NGU](#).

Death has many doors.

1421. Kifo na kiumbe, kiumbe na kifo. [MA](#) 168.

Death and creature, creature and death. They go hand in hand.

1422. Kila mahuluki, hufa hafufuki, kabula ya buki. [JKP](#).

Every creature dies and will not rise again, before the trumpet [of the Resurrection].

1423. Kila mlumbi nalumbe, hawatabaki viumbe. [JKP](#).

Let all talkers talk, mortals will not remain. All human beings will die, even the ones who put on airs of importance - [JKP](#).

Mlumbi (mlumbaji), a questioner, orator. Nalumbe (contracted na+alumbe), and let him/her talk.

1424. Kilichokufa kiliishi. [NGU](#).

What died was alive.

1425. Kilichomla baba na mwana kitamla. [FSM](#) 70.

What has consumed the father will also consume his child. One who hates the father will hate the son also. The weaker ones will be harmed sooner. Cf. 1390.

1426. Kitumba (or maiti) hakikosi lazima. [AL](#) kitumba ; [AL](#) 1440.

There is no death without someone culpable. A death of natural causes is not admissible. Kitumba, maiti, corpse, a dead person.

1427. Kiumbe hawezi kuvunja safari. [JKP](#).

A mortal cannot break life's journey. Ari, disgrace. Cf. 511.

The poem goes on:

Mfano mkizi, ni kufa kwa ari.

Like the octopus dying in shame- [JKP](#).

1428. Kiumbe mwisho n nini? [T](#) 161.

Mortal man, what is the end? Be consoled, all must die. Ni before nini is n.

1428a. Kufa hakwishi or kufa hakuna tamati. [SPK](#).

Dying never ends. Dying has no end.

1429. Kufa kikondoo ndiko kufa kiungwana. [T](#) 38; [F](#) 17.42; [KB](#) 117; [V](#) fa; [JK](#) 133.

Mungwana hufa kama kondoo.

A free person dies like a sheep. Use kindness against violence - [KB](#).

Kufa kiungwana, to suffer hardship without complaining. The opposite would be kufa kama mbuzi, to die like a goat. Cf. 1396.

1430. Kufa kolewa ni mungu. [SACL](#) 706.

Death is ordained by God.

1431. Kufa kufaana. [F](#) 17.48 ; [T](#) 170 kufa kufana.

Dying is a benefit. Death has its benefits [if the dead person was rich or hated or suffered much]. Kufana and kufaana (two forms from -faa) are used here: to be profitable.

1432. Kufa kuzima taa. [NGU](#).

Dying is like extinguishing the lamp.

1433. Kufa kwa wengi ni harusi. [F](#) 17.44; [JPK](#); [MARA](#) 2.

The death of many is like a wedding. When any hardship is a joint adventure, the burden becomes lighter - [MM](#). When someones dies leaving many descendants they will make a big meal (lit., a wedding) to console themselves - [SPK](#).

Kuja kwa wengi ni arusi. [JKP](#).

Where many people go there must be a wedding. "Free meals are served at Swahili weddings for all comers" - [JKP](#). Cf. 1258.

1434. Kufa kwa mdomo, mate hutawanyika. [F](#) 17.45; [KB](#) 118, [FSM](#) 78; [MARA](#) 3.

When the mouth dies, the saliva is scattered. If the leader dies the family or organization or structure breaks up.

Mdomo here: speaker, leader, mouthpiece.

Earthy version: **kufa kwa nyuma (or mkundu) mavi hutawanyika.** [FSM](#) 79; [KS](#) mkundu.

When the behind dies the excrement is scattered. When the supervisor leaves the workers take it easy.

1435. Kufa ni faradhi ya iliyokadirika. [J](#) kadiri; [KB](#) kadiriwa; [MM](#).

Death is a necessary condition of what is finite.

Hatari ya kufa haikimbiki, ni faradhi. [AL](#) kimba.

The danger of death cannot be outrun, it's a common necessity.

1436. Kufa ni nini? Ni kuonana na baba. [AL](#) 1826.

What is dying? It's meeting one's ancestor. If you find your ancestors you find the source of life - [AL](#).

1437. Kufa ni njia ya kila kiumbe. [MA](#) 202.

To die is the path of every mortal.

1438. Kufa si kuisha. [MA](#) 204.

To die is not [the same as] to come to an end. Life goes on. Belief in life after death.

1439. Kufa si suna, ni faradhi. [J](#) suna; [SPK](#).

Death is not optional, but inevitable.

1440. Kufa tutakufa wote. [Holiday](#).

As for dying, we shall all die.

1441. Kufiwako ndiko kuchekwako. Kiswahili March 1973:5.

Where is bereavement there is ridicule [laughter, mockery].

1442. Kulala na kufa ni sawa. [KB](#) 127.

Sleeping and dying look alike. Both are not productive.

1443. Kukimbia pafiwapo, kukimbilia paliwapo. [JKP](#).

Running away from a place where people die, running to a place where people eat.

1444. Kuna kufa na kupona, hwenda hesho tutaona. [T](#) 185; [JPK](#).

There is dying and healing, perhaps we shall see tomorrow. "This is a common saying to an enquiry about the state of a sick person. It is considered imprudent to discuss what ought to be God's prerogative" - [JKP](#). "Anything may happen at any time in life" - [JKP](#).

Kufa na kupona, to try in every possible way, to do one's utmost. Cf. 1385.

1445. Kuna uzima na kifo. [KB](#) 128; [JKP](#); [SACL](#) 211.

There is life and there is death. Two alternatives of mortals: there is a time of living and a time of dying. Cf. 1444.

1446. Kunako matanga kumekuwa watu (or kumekufa mtu). [F](#) 18.56; [KB](#) 129; [AL](#) 130.

Where there is mourning celebration, there are people [someone died]. Any gathering draws people for different reasons. There is mutual assistance in difficult situations - [KB](#).

1447. Kuzika ni thawabu, yaliypbaki ni fahari. [NGU](#).

To bury someone is praiseworthy, what is left is praise.

1448. Kuzimu kuna mambo. [T](#) 205; [KB](#).

In the other world there are [terrible] things. It is terrible in hell - [KB](#).

1449. Kwenda na ulele-ngoma. [T](#) 212.

To go with the Dead-March. Poetical for "to die." Ulele, a lament; probably from lala, lay down, sleep.

1450. Kwenye mauti kusi sauti. [RSP](#) 125.

The place of death has no voice. Do not raise your voice where there is bereavement.

1450a. Maisha hayana pato, hutupita kama ndoto. [SPK](#).

Life has no profit, it passes like a dream.

1451. Maisha huondolewa wakati yakiwa matamu. [NGU](#).

Life is taken away when it is sweet.

1452. Maisha matamu lakini mafupi. [NGU](#).

Life is sweet but short.

1452a. Maisha mawi na mema piga na kulaza hema. [SPK](#).

Life is bad things as well as good things, [it is] to set up our tent and then to strike it.

1453. Maisha ni mafupi kwa mahitaji ya mwanadamu. [NGU](#).

Life is short for the needs of a person. A person always desires more.

1454. Maiti haikosi mzishi. [ZO](#) p.250.

A dead person has an undertaker.

Mzishi : a bosom friend, undertaker, gravedigger. Mazishi, burial preparations. Cf. 1458, 1459.

1455. Maiti haina lawana. [NGU](#).

A dead person has no blame. Cf. 1463.

1456. Maiti haitoki (or hatoki) jasho. [AL](#) 363.

A dead person does not perspire. A lazy person expects everything from others - [AL](#).

1457. Maiti hakosi sifa. [AL](#) sifa; [AL](#) 1026.

A dead person does not lack praise. The eulogy is full of nice words, but is belated - [AL](#).

1458. Maiti hamziki maiti mwenziwe. [MA](#) 261.

A dead person does not bury another dead person. Two needy people cannot help one another.

1459. Maiti hana ndugu, ndugu yake kaburi. [AL](#) 1884.

The dead person has no relatives, one relative is the tomb.

1460. Maiti hapatilizwi sanda. [KS](#) patiliza..

A corpse is not bothered for a shroud.

Maiti hapatilizwi. [JKP](#).

"The dead man is not punished. De mortuis..." - [JKP](#).

1461. Maiti ha(i)toi sanda. [AL](#) pa; [JKP](#): [KB](#) 144.

The dead man gives no shroud. Or, The dead man does not take away a shroud. "After death it is too late to care: Who will pay for the shroud? Take timely precautions" - [JKP](#).

The i refers to sanda. Maiti belongs to the m-wa class: Maiti mpewa sanda, A dead person is given a shroud.

1462. Maiti haulizwi sanda. [B](#) 2.19; [F](#) 21.4; [B](#) 4.78.

A dead man is not asked whether he likes a shroud. Cf. 1461, 2610.

1463. Maiti hayana ubaya. [NGU](#).

A dead person has no evil. "Never speak ill of the dead."

1464. Maiti hutukumbusha mungu. [REK](#).

A dead person reminds us of God.

1465. Maiti mwenda peke. [AL](#) 1883; [AL](#) peka.

A dead person goes alone.

1466. Maiti mzito hazami majini. [NGU](#).

A heavy corpse does not sink in the water. Nobody will be lost, all come home. One home for all.

1467. Maiti ya jumanne hung'olewa mlango. [T](#) 227.

A Tuesday's dead has the door removed. "Tuesday is thought to be a very unlucky day to die on. The torment of the grave is then much greater. The door is lifted off its hinges out of pity, that there may be no jolting in getting the body out of the house, which it would feel, as it remains sentient till it has passed the or deal of the two angels in the tomb. As if to say, Let there be nothing done which might aggravate the poor person's hard lot" - [T](#).

1468. Makaburi mengi ni ya fukara. [NGU](#).

The poor have many graves.

1469. Malipo ya kifo ni kuzaa. [KB](#) 153.

The payment of death is procreation. Cf. 1508.

1470. Maombolezo katika kilio si mema. [Steere](#) p. 194.

Loud lamentations are not becoming in mourning.

1471. Mauti haitoi sanda. [KB](#) 144.

Death does not give a shroud. Death gives no presents.

1472. Mauti hayana muhula. [KS](#) muhula..

Death has no appointment.

Muhula, fixed time, season.

1472a. Mauti hutia kilio. [SPK](#).

Death makes people cry. One day the seriousness of life will be brought home to everyone - [SPK](#).

1472b. Mauti yatawakumba ghafula msihari. [SPK](#).

Death will strike you suddenly, when you don't want it.

1473. Mbwa hafi maji akiona ufuko. [KS](#) mbwa ; [AL](#) 1854.

A dog does not die in the water, if it sees the beach.

1473a. Mchukua roho hikimbiliki. [SPK](#).

No one can flee from the Taker of souls.

1473a. Mende hafi moshi. [SPK](#).

A cockroach does not die of smoke. Cockroaches foregather in the kitchen where the fire is. An old salt does not drown - [SPK](#).

1473b. Mfa maji hachi kulalama. [SPK](#).

The drowning person does not stop crying.

1474. Mfalme hafi. [NGU](#).

A king does not die. A new one will come. The power goes on. Sometimes this is added: na akifa hanuki, and if he dies he does not smell.

1475. Mfu hapatilizwi. [SAM](#) 13.1; [KA](#); [KS](#) patiliza.

A dead person is not reproached. Said of people who cannot take care of things.

1476. Mgeni mzuri ni pongo; akifa atakuachia pembe. [KB](#) 181; [JKP](#); [AL](#) 1262.

A handsome guest is like an antelope; when he dies he'll leave you his horns. The family rejoices in the death of a rich relative.

Contrary-wise: a poor guest would oblige you to pay his/her debts, burial costs, etc. "Handsome means a rich uncle; antelope trophies fetch good prices" - [JKP](#). Cf. 1431.

1477. Mgumba hana kilio. [KS](#) mgumba ; [AL](#) 1035.

A person who dies without children is not mourned. He or she is not remembered. A sterile woman has no ceremonial burial. Without offspring one is not bewailed.

1477a. Mpe mtu sifa baada ya kufa. [SPK](#).

Praise a person after his/her death. Many secret things may yet come out about a person while alive - [SPK](#).

1477b. Mtwaa roho haziwiki. [SPK](#).

The taker of souls cannot be stopped. Death is merciless - [SPK](#).

1478. Mtu hafi ila kwa mzishi wake. [T](#) 337; [JK](#) 126; [AL](#) 1825.

A man does not die except for his burier - JK. The last witnesses are friends accompanying to the cemetery. This means that after death we shall be properly buried, since it is a duty incumbent upon all Muslims to bury a corpse that is lying about. This is intended as a consoling proverb for those who never have luck. What can a person do if good luck does not seem to arrive? - [JK](#).

Mzishi (here), a close relative of the deceased - [MM](#).

1479.. Mtu hafi mara mbili. [NGU](#).

A person does not die twice. Die well the first time.

1480. Mtu huanza kufa mara tu akishazaliwa. [NGU](#).

A person starts dying as soon as he/she is born.

1481. Mtu hufa kwa zake. [NGU](#).

A person dies for his/her belongings.

1482. Mungu hajui kijana. [KB](#) 165 p.550; [SACL](#) 424.

God does not know a youth. God calls young as well as old.

1483. Mungu hangoji. [JK](#) 138.

God does not wait.

1483a. Mwanadanu atakufa, jina lake litakaa. [SPK](#).

People will die, but their names will remain.

1484. Mwanamaji hutaraji kufa maji. [JK](#) 135.

A sailor expects to die at sea. Cf. 1484, 1861.

1485. Mwanamaji wa kwale hufa maji mazoea. [F](#) 33.142; [KA](#); [AL](#) 637.

To a seaman of Kwale, death by water is a common experience. This applies to all who think that they are experts. They can easily have an accident - [KA](#). People who defy danger become reckless - [AL](#). Cf. 1484, 3609.

1486. Mwinda tembo hufa kwa tembo. [FSM](#) 162.

An elephant hunter usually gets killed by an elephant. A person usually dies on the site of his occupation. Cf. 1484, 3609.

1487. Mwosha hadhamini pepo. [T](#) 68.300.

One who washes the corpse does not give a certificate for paradise. Of people who pretend to have influence in high places.

1488. Mwosha hadhuru maiti. [F](#) 37.174; [FSM](#).

The undertaker does not harm the corpse. And keeps all the secrets. Cf. 1489, 4227.

1489. Mwosha [naye] huoshwa. [B](#) 2.19i; [F](#) 37.175; [H](#) 85; [JK](#) 45; [KB](#) 224; [J](#) osha; [NS](#) 14.

The washer of the dead is washed also [one day].

Mwosha, a professional corpse-washer.

1490. Na mwanadamu hapana kitu, mara huwa mzima na mara akafa. [CB](#) 21.

And so a human being is nothing, once healthy and at once dead.

1491. Ni afadhali kuishi kuliko kufa. [J](#) fadhili.

It is better to live, than to die. Cf. 1397.

1492. Pambo la jeneza. [T](#) 451.

The decoration of the bier. Cold comfort.

1493. Pang'okapo jino hapakosi pengo? [KA](#); [SM](#); [SPK](#).

Where a tooth has been pulled is there not an open space? If an important person goes away or dies, an open space is left. Said, for instance, of a widow - [SPK](#).

1494. Pia mwewe ashishiwe. [RSP](#) 106.

Even the kite has been seized [by death]. Dangerous men do not live forever - [RSP](#).

1495. Pua [ya kila binadamu] inaangalia chini. [AL](#) 1810.

The nose of human beings looks down [at the earth]. All men must die.

1496. Saa haingoji mfalme. [JK](#) 127; [NGU](#) wakati haungoji.

The hour does not wait for the king. The hour of death allows no delay - [JK](#). Cf. 2407.

1497. Sikio la kufa halisikii dawa. [F](#) 44.9; [MS](#) 139; [KA](#); [KS](#) sikio; [AL](#) 1583; [REK](#).

A dying ear does not feel the medicine - [F](#). Medicine is now useless.

Halisikii kamwe, hears nothing. Cf. 1946, 3509.

1498. Siku yako itafika ya kuhama duniani. [JKP](#).

Your day to leave this world will come.

1498a. Sote twenda na ulele-ngoma. [SPK](#).

We are going to die. Lit., going with the funeral drum - [SPK](#).

1499. Tunaishi mara moja, tunakufa mara moja. [NGU](#).

We live once, we die once.

1500. Tunda la wema ni wema, la ubaya ni ubaya. [EM](#) t23.

The fruit of goodness is goodness, and of evil is evil. A good person has good actions, and a bad person has bad actions.

1500a. Ucheo wa kufa hauelekei mwenye cheo. [SPK](#).

The fear of death does not benefit a noble person.

1501. Udongo utakuita. [JK](#) 136.

The clay will call you. The belief is that human beings have been created from clay and will return to clay on the place where the clay was taken from - [JK](#).

1502. Ufu haushindiki. [JKP](#).

Death is invincible. Death cannot be beaten.

1503. Ufu mpofu. [RSP](#) 80.

Death is blind.

1504. Ugonjwa ni suna, kufa ni faradhi. [KS](#) ugonjwa; [AL](#) 1841.

Sickness is hazardous, but death cannot be escaped. Praying, fasting are necessities, but wearing a nice hat or dagger is a matter of custom, not a divine prescription - [Krapf](#).

"Suna or sunna is to be distinguished from faradi, which implies necessity - [Krapf](#). Cf. 1439.

1505. Ukienda, ya roho y

Akufuata, ya macho yawachwa. [REK](#).

If you go, [the wishes] of the heart follow you, the visible things are left behind.

1506. Ukifa usiogope kuoza. [AL](#) 1885.

If you die don't be afraid to decompose. Accept the inevitable.

1507. Ulacho ndicho chako, kilichobaki ni cha mchimba lindi.

[L](#) 101; [JK](#) 140; [SACL](#) 475; [KB](#) 315; [V](#) la; [J](#) la; [FSM](#) 30.

[Only] what you eat is yours, the rest belongs to the grave-digger. Understood: the heir - [J](#).

Do not deny others the things you can't use. This is used in order to make the guest eat more - [JK](#). Cf. 2504.

1508. Upinzani wa kifo ni uzazi. [KB](#) 308.

The counterbalance of death is procreation. Cf. 1449.

1509. Utahadhari na shimo. [JK](#) 137

Beware of the grave.

1510. Wapeleka kilio matangani (or msibani). [KA](#).

You bring a wail the burial [hardship]. You come with a request for help, just when they have their hands full of trouble.

1511. Yule aliye mwema haachwi, hufiwa. [EM](#) y9.

A good person is not abandoned, the partner dies. Only death separates.

1512. Yuwenda endaye, mwenda kweli hana marejeo. [SAM](#) 27.2; [MS](#) 192.

The one who goes, goes [but] the one who goes for real has no return. This is a kind of prayer of parents for their children:

The child: Nakwenda (I am going).

Parent: Hujenda mama/baba/ yuwenda endaye, mwenda kweli hana marejeo.

Go child, one who is going goes, but one who really goes has no return - [SAM](#).

Mama/baba, mother/ father. The child is called mother if a girl or father if a boy.

1513. Zama ama uogolee. [NGU](#).

Sink or swim. Two choices. Cf. 1444, 1445.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Decision

1514. Afadhali ulifanye sasa jambo lilo utakalo kwisha. [SPK](#).

Better do now the thing you want to finish.

1514a. Asema: "sebu! Sebu!" na kimoyo (or kiroho) ki mumo. [SACL](#).199; Kiroho : [F](#) 16.27; [AL](#) 1337; [AL](#) papo; [KS](#) kisebusebu; [J](#) moyo.

Some say "No! No!" and nevertheless their heart is there. Said of somebody who cannot make a decision.

1515. Atanguliaye kupiga mara nyingi ni mshindi. [WIKON](#) 179.

One who begins the fight is often the winner.

1516. Awali ni awali, awali mbovu hapana. [J](#) awali; Vauwali; [KS](#) awali; [RECH](#) 18.

A beginning is a beginning, there is no beginning which is bad. The golden rule of life is: make a beginning. Instead of awali the word mwanzo [beginning] is used - [FSM](#) 150.

1517. Chagua na kuchagua na kuoa bata. [NGU](#).

Choosing and choosing and marry a duck [a turkey]. Indecision. Cf. 1539, 1540.

1518. Chanzo cha makubwa ni kidogo (or madogo). [NGU](#).

The beginning of great things is small [little things]. Cf. 1519, 1550.

1519. Chanzo chema, mwisho mwema. [EM](#) 33.5.

Good beginnings make good endings.

1520. Chipukizi ndiyo miti. [NGU](#).

A shoot (sprout) is a tree A child becomes an adult. Chipukizi, shoot, sprout, blade, a growing plant. Cf. 1545, 4037.

1521. Daraja si maskani. [EM](#) 45.7.

A bridge is not a dwelling place. "This means that it is important to differentiate between ephemeral and permanent matters, and to know how to deal with them" - [EM](#).

1522. Embe dodo sawa na kisukari. [KA](#).

The dodo mango is similar to the sugar banana. Learn to substitute.

Dodo, a big smooth mango. Kisukari, a small very sweet banana, more expensive and rare.

1523. Fikiri kabla hujatenda. [NGU](#); [SPK](#).

Think hard before acting.

1524. Fimbo ndefu haiui nyoka. [AL](#) 440.

A long stick does not kill a snake. One has to use adequate means to succeed. Cf. 1544.

1525. Geza, geza ndiyo mji. [MARA](#) 2.

By trying and trying a homestead comes into being. If you try you may succeed, so don't be afraid to start. Geza, (jaribu), to try.

1526. Halifai halifai lachagua kunde. [REK](#).

This is no good, the choice will just be a small bean. Of someone unable to make a choice, even in unimportant things.

1527. Juzi na jana si kama leo. [T](#) 120; [J](#) juzi; [V](#) 97; [LE](#)3 226.2; [SACL](#) 196; [JKP](#); [B](#) 1.56.

Yesterday and the day before yesterday are not like today. Days follow one another, but are not alike - [MP](#), [SACL](#). Do not judge by what happened on previous occasions.

Similar, but opposite, wording:

Juzi na juzi ni kama leo. [KB](#) juzi.. Yesterdays are like today.

Juzi na juzi si kama leo. [SPK](#). Past days are not like today

1528. Kadiria fedha uliyonayo si ile iliyoko kwa mdeni wako. [NGU](#).

Reckon with the money you have, not with the money that is with your debtor.

1528a. Kikuongoacho ki haramu, kikuongoako ni kuzimu. [SPK](#).

If that which leads you is the Forbidden; where it will take you is the underworld.

1529. Kiumambuzi kimeuma mbuzi, twatafuta kiumambuzi tutopoe mbuzi. [Steere](#) 194

The goat-biter has bitten the goat, let us seek the goat-biter to cure the goat.

Dawa ya kutopoa, antidote - [J](#). Kiumambuzi, a kind of black lizard said to be poisonous.

1530. Kupanda mchongoma, kushuka ndiyo ngoma. [F](#) 18.58; [L](#) 38; [SM](#); [KS](#) mchongoma; [MARA](#) 3; [AL](#) 962.

Climbing a thorn tree, coming down is a dance. Something in haste or anger may produce an awkward situation - [L](#). The adulterer gets in a thorny situation - [AL](#). Cf. 808, 4705.

1531. Kutema au kumeza ni hiari ya mkohaji. [NGU](#).

To spit or to swallow is the option of one who coughs. To speak or to keep silence.

1532. Kwanza kuvua, kwisha kuanua. [JKP](#).

First fish, then sun dry the fish. First things first - [JKP](#).

1533. La leo litende leo. [KA](#).

Do today the thing of today. Cf. 812.

1534. Laiti itafaa laiti. [JKP](#).

Alas! May be useful for Alas! - [JKP](#). "Cry not over spilled milk" - [JKP](#). Cf. 533.

1535. Leo ni leo. [T](#) 218a.

Today is today. Encouragement: This is your day; do it well.

La leo litendwe leo. [SAM](#) 12.1.

The thing of today should be done today. Cf. 243.

1536. Leo [ni] kabla ya kesho. [T](#) 218; [Vleo](#); [JKP](#).

Today comes before tomorrow. Never put off till tomorrow. Do not worry about tomorrow.

1537. Leo ni leo, ya kesho ni leo. [JKP](#)

Today is today, the things of tomorrow [the best time to do them] is today. Cf. 1270, 1535, 1536.

1537a. Leo tunaona, kesho si yako. [SPK](#).

We are seeing today, tomorrow does not belong to you.

1537b. Leo uko, kesho huko. [SPK](#).

Today you are here, tomorrow you are not there.

1538. Likiwika (or likiwaka) lisiwike (or lisiwake) kutakucha, [twende zetu]. [A](#) 255; [T](#) 222; [Jwika](#); [Holiday](#); [V](#) 12; [KS](#) wika; waka, [SAM](#) 13; [KA](#).

Whether the rooster crow or not, it will dawn, [let's go]. In difficult circumstances instinct and experience should help us to go ahead without further evidence of a happy ending - [V](#). Cf. 3453.

1539. Mchagua mno huangukia mbovu. [T](#) 320; [V](#) teua; [KA](#); [SACL](#). 68,11; [AL](#) teua.

Who chooses too much, falls upon the worst - [SACL](#).

1540. Mchagua nazi, hupata koroma. [F](#) 23.29; [B](#) 4.4; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) koroma. One who selects coconuts [with great care], gets an unripe one. Also, of someone who is too choosy, who cannot make up his mind, wasting time.

Mchagua samaki hupata aliyechina. [FSM](#) 97.

One who chooses a fish gets one that is overdue. Fish which has remained [in the shop] too long Kuchina, be too late. Wondering about the origin of the word, someone has suggested that the Chinese like their fish soft - [HM](#). Cf. 1539, 4724.

1540a. Mchagua silaha siye muwani. [SPK](#).

The one who chooses the weapon is not the fighter.

1541. Mfuata moyo, mwisho huijuta. [JKP](#).

The one who follows the heart will regret it in the end.

1542. Mkataa pema pabaya panamngoja. [NGU](#); [FSM](#) 114.

One who refuses a good place, has a bad place waiting. By refusing a good thing you'll be caught with a bad thing or situation. Don't be too choosy. Cf. 1539.

1543. Mpanda farasi wawili hupasuka msamba. [F](#) 29.92; [SACL](#) 593; [T](#) 304; [J](#) farasi; [KB](#) 194; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) msamba..

One who rides two horses splits asunder.

Msamba, the perineum, also called kitako - [J](#).

Mpanda farasi wawili, hujishuka miguu miwili. [V](#) 73.

One who rides two horses will come down on two legs. Cf. 1557, 1558.

1544. Mpigo wa kwanza wa mti unaua nyoka. [AL](#) 439.

The first blow with the stick kills the snake. Often your only chance. To correct evil use adequate means.

1545. Mtu huenda na uchao, hendi na uchwao. [T](#) 342; [V](#) 57; [MARA](#)2 uchwao; [SACL](#) 919.

A person goes [travels] with dawn, not with sunset. A person starting on a day's journey late in the day will be nighted, very likely in some inhospitable place, and possibly lose goods, or even life" - T. "Night is nobody's friend" - [V](#). Uchao from kucha, dawn, uchwao from kuchwa, sunset.

1546. Mwangaza mbili mbambo mwenga humuengaenga. [T](#) 353.

One who tackles two wing-bones at once, one of them eludes him/her. One thing at a time. "It is difficult to obtain a satisfactory explanation of this common proverb. It may be an illustration from something in the cutting up or dividing of a cooked fowl; or it may refer to the carrying of live fowls by the bases of their wings, feet downwards, which is less usual than the ordinary way of carrying, for a length of distance, these poor creatures by the legs, with their heads downwards. It seems that only one can conveniently be carried at the time by the other method" - [T](#). Cf. 1547.

1547. Mwangata mbili, moja humponya. [B](#) 2.53; [MARA](#) 55, mwangaza or mwangata; [FSM](#) 102; [F](#) 34.148; [L](#) 73; [H](#) 82; [T](#) 354; [MS](#) 161; [SACL](#) humpona; [MARA](#) 3.

A person who is after two things at the same time will surely see one escaping. "Grasp all, lose all." Ponya, to save, deliver, rescue, evade danger. That may be the reason why L. translates this proverb: "Two ways of escape, one will get him out." An interesting change of meaning. Cf. 2539.

1548. Mwanzo huwa na usiri, ikawa mkaragazo. [T](#) 374; [AL](#) 368.

A beginning has delays and then there is a downpour. All beginning is difficult.

1549. Mwanzo kokochi, mwisho nazi. [F](#) 34.149; [MULIKA](#) p.10.

The beginning is a bud, the end is a coconut. Something begins small, but may grow into something big.

An interesting variation: **Mwanzo ni kokochi, mwisho kazi.** [KA](#).

The beginning is a flower bud, the end is work. To start something is often easy, but the end is work.

1550. Mwanzo wa chanzo ni chane mbili. [F](#) 34.150.

The beginning of mat-making is two slips of raffia leaf. A beginning is small.

1551. Mwanzo wa mvua ni mawingu. [KS](#) mwanzo; [AL](#) 1684; [KB](#) 213.

The beginning of rain is clouds. A happening is often preceded by early signs - [AL](#).

1552. Mwanzo wa ngoma ni "lele." [B](#) 2.53; [F](#) 34.151; [H](#) 83; [FSM](#) 151; [MS](#) 168; [AL](#) 1750; [KS](#) lele.

The beginning of a drumming is a tralala. Big things have small beginnings. Before a fight there is a quarrel. Cf. Sacleux Dictionary: Nimeshikwa na ndwele ya homa, leo nenda na ulele-ngoma: I've a fever, I'll dance with the dead.

1553. Mwimbo mwema huletwa ngomani. [NGU](#).

A nice song is brought to the dance.

Mwimbo, wimbo, song. Cf. 1569, 1828.

1554. Ndiyo kwanza mkoko kualika (or ualike) maua. [SACL](#) 562; [KS](#) mkoko.

It is today for the first time that the mangrove flowers. The first day that something begins: passion, love, etc. - [SACL](#). The mkoko tree is the first tree that blooms in spring.

Mkoko: a tree growing in the sea, used for building (roofsticks); the bark is used in dyeing hides - Johnson .

1555. Nia haikuwa moja, ndipo usipate jambo. [T](#) 432; [MS](#) 60.

Your intention was not single, hence you have not been successful -T.

Nia zako zikiwa moja utapata jambo. [SACL](#) 684.

If your purpose is constant you will get somewhere - [SACL](#).

1555a. Nikikubali ni vita, nikikataa huwaje? [SPK](#).

If I accept it will be war, if I refuse what will it be? Said of a person who is faced with an impossible choice of two unacceptable alternatives - [SPK](#).

1556. Nikitia jembe mpini, shamba halinishindi. [JK](#) 121; [AL](#) 329.

When I put a hoe blade on the shaft, the field will not be too much for me. "Once you put your hand to the plough" - [JK](#).

1557. Njia mbili zaumiza. [T](#) 408; [V](#) 60; [KB](#) 250; [SACL](#) 674.

Two ways hurt. Pursuing two goals is dangerous - Sacl. Cf. 1543, 1546, 1556.

1558. Njia mbili zilimshinda mzee fisi, alipasuka msamba. Jja; [T](#) 409; [MARA](#) 62; [KB](#) 248.

Two roads were too much for old man hyena, he split in two. "Do one thing at the time" - [MARA](#). Cf. 1546, 1557.

1559. Penye mapenzi hapapotei. [T](#) 458; [SACL](#) 505; [MS](#) 64.

Where there is a purpose there is no failure.

Hapapotei, there is no loss. Cf. 1114.

1560. Safari ni hatua. [KS](#) hatua.

A journey is a step. It starts with a first step.

1561. Siweke vitendo visivyo maana;

Ukikosa pondo uvuvi hapana. [JKP](#).

Do not do anything without a purpose

If you lose the punting pole there is no more fishing.

The punting pole is the indispensable tool for transport in the shallow waters out of Lamu. Preserve your manhood carefully" - [JKP](#).

Siweke, usiweke, don't put.

1562. Tikiti ni moto wa kwanza. [T](#) 506; [KA](#).

A watermelon ripens in the first warm sun. It must be gathered before it gets too ripe to be of use. This is said to one whom you suspect is trying to put you off with vain promises: Do it now" - [T](#). If you want to succeed start early - [KA](#). Cf. 339.

1563. Umdhaniaye ndiye, siye. [ZO](#) p.50.

You think that it is someone, but it is not.

1564. Usiende pahali bila haja, ghalibu hukasirika. [A](#) 120; [T](#) 548; [SAM](#) 25.12; [MS](#) 196.

Don't go to a place without cause, you will almost always be angered. Mind your own business.

1565. Usiseme "kesho kesho" hwenda hutaona mwisho. [RSP](#) 116.

Do not say: tomorrow, tomorrow, perhaps you will not see the end.

1566. Usiweke msingi mbovu. [A](#) 120; [T](#) 558a; [SAM](#) 25.18.

Do not lay a bad foundation. Do not make a bad precedent.

1567. Viwili vyataulika, tunda kimoja utwae. [T](#) 570; [SACL](#) 887; [AL](#) 270. Of two things offered to you, take one - [AL](#).

Vyataulika. In Standard Kiswahili, vyateulika or chagulika or vyateuliwa. Tunda, pluck, pick.

1568. Wangachukua mashoka, hawatoi mti kombo. [T](#) 581.

Although they carry axes, they do not take the crookedness out of the tree. Corrections should be made early and gently. Cf. 4070.

1569. Wimbo huja ngomani. [F](#) 52.12; [B](#) 3.72; [ED](#) 86; [KB](#) 348; [KA](#); [AL](#) 313.

A song goes with the drum or dance. A singer goes to the drum to sing a song. One in need goes where help can be found. Don't separate things which belong together.

Wimbo takuja ngomani. [V](#) 146; [AL](#) 313.

The song will come as the dance goes along.

Wimbo hutokea ngomani. [MM](#).

The songs are composed at the dance - [MM](#).

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Drinking - eating

1570. Cha mlevi huliwa na mgema. [F](#) 6.1; [B](#) 3.50; [H](#) 24; [L](#) 12; [CM](#) 53; [SWA](#) 6; [MARA](#) 2.

The drunkard's [property] is consumed by the palmwine tapper.

Mgema, a person who climbs in the tree and makes incisions in the tree to get its sap in order to make palmwine.

1571. Gongo likiingia, bongo hukimbia. [EM](#) g6.

When gongo (beer) enters, the brain moves out. There are many kinds of intoxicants, e.g. status, possessions or knowledge, if it gets into the head, it corrupts the mind and this is weakness - EM. Gongo, a local dry gin. Cf. 1574.

1572. Hata mla nyasi huenda msalani. [REK](#).

Even a grass eater goes to the toilet. There is no exception for human functions.

1573. Hazina ya mlevi ni pombe. [REK](#).

The treasure of a drunkard is beer.

1574. Kadiri wafyonza pombe nayo yakufyonza akili. [KB](#) 87.

The more beer you consume, the more it will consume your brain.

Hapo pombe linapokuwa ndani akili hakuna. [MEM](#).270.

Where ale is in, wit is out.

**1574a. Maji mbwa amechafua hayanywiki,
chakula nzi ametua hakiliki.** [SPK](#).

Water fouled by a dog is not potable;

Food on which a fly has been sitting, is not edible.

A woman who has been defiled is no longer fit for marriage - [JPK](#).

1575. Mgema akisifiwa tembo hulitia maji. [F](#) 25.56; [H](#) 65; [T](#) 260; [B](#) 3.30; [MARA](#) 41; [JK](#) 124; [V](#) 87; [KB](#) 179; [SWA](#) 54. [KS](#) tembo.

If the palmwine tapper is praised for the good wine, he/she dilutes it with water.

1576. Mgema haziki nina. [T](#) 638.

The toddy-tapper buries not his/her mother. The occupation demands such regular and constant attention that the tapper cannot leave it for a single day. Cf. 1619.

1577. Mgema neema. [RSP](#) 19.

The winetapper [has] a good life. "Because there are always drunkards" - [RSP](#).

1578. Mlevi akiponyoka, mgema hukifutika. [REK](#).

When the drunkard is slipped away, the wine-tapper finds it [debt] obliterated.

Futika, (futa), wiped out, obliterated, forgiven. Ponyoka (poa), slipped away, escaped, cured.

1579. Mlevi (or kilevi) mtaka chombo, simjengee safari. [JKP](#) 270.

If a drunkard wants a ship, don't help with the voyage.

Don't give directions for the voyage. Cf. 1863, 1864.

1580. Msitukane wagama na ulevi ungalipo. [F](#) 30.105; [F](#) 49.41; [AL](#) 1415. Do not speak ill of palmwine tappers as long as drinking goes on. You may cut off your supply. Cf. 84.

1581. Mtu hunawa akala na aliyepo kanawa. [JKP](#).

When a person washes the hands before eating, the one who is there washes the hands also. "Eating" also refers to sexual intercourse where also certain rules of purity have to be observed" - [JKP](#).

1582. Mtu wa kurewa-rewa na kuanguka. [JKP](#).

A staggering person may [soon] fall. "Expect a drunkard to go from bad to worse; also said of proud people" - [JKP](#). Kurewa or kulewa, stagger. to lose understanding, to be drunk.

1583. Mwana wa yungi hulewa kaifa wa mwalimwengu. [KS](#); [AL](#) 792.

The little waterlily gets giddy, so much more a human being. The little waterlily moves [on the water], so much more a human being - [AL](#). Instability.

1584. Nyumba ya pombe haikai pombe. [T](#) 672.

In the house of beer, no beer stays. Too many customers. Cf. 1767.

1585. Penye mvinyo ndipo penye hatari. [JK](#) 138; [AL](#) 101; [MEM](#) 269.

Where the wine is there is the danger. Habitual drunkenness endangers all and everything - [AL](#).

1586. Penye ulevi ndipo penye matata. [JK](#) 138.

Where there is drunkenness, there is trouble.

1587. Riziki ya wagama-tembo mikononi mwa walevi. [JK](#) 130; [SACL](#) 550.

The livelihood of the winetappers is in the hands of the drunkards.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Duty

1588. Acha kujenga nyumba ya karatasi. [SAM](#) 1.

Stop building card-houses. Do something that is useful - [SAM](#). Cf. 1650.

1589. Akataaye kuitwa, hukataa aitiwalo. [J](#) ita; [V](#) ita; [T](#) 332; [SACL](#) 308,651.

Those who reject a call, reject what they are called for - [T](#). It is never good policy to neglect a summons. Cf. 1622.

1590. Akwitae amelijaza. [T](#) 12; [AL](#) 486; [JKP](#); [AL](#) 486.

One who calls you has [already] satisfied his/her wishes. "If someone calls you to do something profitable, you should know that that person has profited fully. A human being generally does not like to see that somebody profiteers, until he/she has enjoyed it and had enough! Never reject a summons" - [JKP](#).

1591. Akwitao usiize, enenda kapulikize. [JKP](#).

When you are called do not refuse, go and listen [to what is asked of you].

Pulikiza, sikia, listen. Cf. 1589.

1592. Akwitaye kajaza, ukikawia atapunguza. [TAA](#) 2.

The one who calls you has made it full, if you delay the caller will diminish it. You'll be the loser. The caller may change his/her mind.

1593. Aliye mbele ndiye aulizwaye pindilo. [T](#) 634b.

It is the one that is first who is asked about the bent grass stalks. It is by observing in which way the grass stalks lie that one can tell in which direction a person or animal has gone.

1594. Cha kupewa si chako. [EM](#) 32.2.

What is given is not yours. One who gives it to you can take it back - [EM](#). "This saying also means that a position of responsibility is a trust and it can be withdrawn at any moment" - [EM](#). Cf. 4754.

1595. Chanda dharau kitanda wa ujinga wajibu. [NGU](#).

The finger despised the bed of stupidity, somebody's duty. Used if somebody is expected to do something, but doesn't do it.

1596. Farasi hamwawezi, ndovu mtawalishani? [T](#) 66; [V](#) 62.

You cannot manage horses, how can you cater for elephants. Do not take more responsibility than you can handle - [MM](#). Cf. 448.

1597. Fika usikilize, usikatae wito. [EM](#) f6.

Attend and listen, don't refuse a call. "Accept a call, and when you know what it is all about, you may agree or disagree to implement it" - [EM](#). Cf. 1589, 1590, 1592.

1598. Haki haina mwenyewe. [NGU](#).

Justice has no owner. It cannot be bought. Haki, right, justice.

1599. Haki hainunuliwi. [NGU](#).

Justice cannot be bought.

1600. Haki huinua taifa. [NGU](#).

Justice elevates a nation.

1601. Haki hushinda batili. [KS](#) batili.

Justice is stronger than falsehood. Batili (Arabic), worthless, perverse, transgression.

1602. Haki mnyonge haipotei. [NGU](#).

The right of a poor person is not lost. God will take care of it. Cf. 2750, 3356, 3846, 4646.

1603. Haki ya mtu haipotei, haigawanyiki. [NGU](#).

A person's honor is not lost, nor can it be shared.

1604. Hakimu hampendelei mtu. [KB](#) hakimu; [SACL](#) 264.

The judge has no personal preferences. A judge favors no one.

1605. Hakimu huamua haki siyo watu. [NGU](#).

A judge gives a verdict on justice not on people.

1606. Huja kwa msimu mvua. [EM](#) h30.

Rain comes in season. Everything has its proper time. Cf. 1607.

1607. Jawabu na wakatiwe, na wakatiwe si zani. [T](#) 114; [MS](#) 30.

The right answer at the right time is appropriate - [MM](#).

1608. Jibu haina kifo. [NGU](#).

Responsibility never dies. You cannot avoid to do your duty.

1609. Kama huli panya na wali hupewi. [JKP](#).

If you don't eat mice, you will not be given rice [pudding]. "From a song (quasi) addressed to a cat, if you don't do your normal duty, you will receive no extras" - [JKP](#).

1610. Kila mtu ana makazi yake. [JKP](#). Every person has a station in life.

Makazi, dwelling, mode of living, residence.

Kila mtu ana pake. [SPK](#).

Every person has his/her place.

1611. Kuchagua uyoga funza. [AL](#) uyoga.

Picking mushrooms: plant lice. Among the mushrooms covered with lice choose only the intact ones. Be selective.

1612. Kucheleweshwa haki si haki. [NGU](#).

Delaying justice is not justice. To delay one's right is not justice.

1613. Kuku hufanya kioto. [JKP](#).

A hen will make a nest [to lay eggs in].

1614. Kuna matatu mfano, asubuhi na jioni. [T](#) 186.

There are three things [ever] alike, morning and evening. Marriage entails responsibilities. Matatu: three things, may be the meko, the three stones which form the kitchen range. The tending and the supplying of food on these is a part of the bargain on either side - [T](#).

1615. Kuolesha huko utakwishilia. [T](#) 188.

You will end at that floating of toy boats. Get beyond child's play - T. A favorite play of all children. Kuolesha vidau, to float small vessels. This proverb ends with the words: **Hujitahidi, hutatimiza kitu**, You don't make an effort, you will not achieve anything - [JKP](#). Cf. 1588.

1616. Kupendelea si kwema. [NGU](#).

To be partial is not good. Favoritism is not good.

1616a. Maujudi ni lazima. [SPK](#).

Existence is necessary.

Maujudi, things needed for existence, provisions?

1617. Mche akuchaye. [NGU](#).

Respect the one who respects you.

1618. Mcheza kwao hutuzwa (or hutunzwa). [F](#) 24.36; [SACL](#) 918; KB *achezaye*; [FSM](#) 99, hutunzwa; [JKP](#); [KS](#) tunza; [AL](#) 871; [T](#) 389.

A person who dances at home is rewarded [or cared for]. One should let one's own people benefit from one's art - [JKP](#).

The opposite: "The dancer at home is never given largesse." - [Racial](#) p.584, no.34. In Swahili this would be rendered by the verb hatuzwi: is not rewarded.

Kutuzwa, to be rewarded. **Kutunzwa**, to be cared for. Cf. 1630.

1619. Mla halasa hamziki mamaye. [JK](#) 128; [SACL](#) 264.

They who consume their wages, do not bury their mothers. A decent burial costs money, the official mourning lasts for seven days, and all visitors and mourners have to be fed. Not being able to give parents a proper burial is a very serious breach of a child's responsibility - [JK](#).

A different interpretation: Persons who are enlisted do not bury their mothers, because they are retained by their service - [SACL](#).

Halasa, profit in business; sailor's wages.

1620. Mlimbua nchi ni mwana nchi. [F](#) 28.87.

The one who enjoys the first fruits of a country is a child of that country. First come, first served.

1621. Moto hauna ubaguzi yeyote humwunguza. [NGU](#).

Fire has no preference, burns anybody.

1622. Mtu hakatai mwito, hukataa alichoiwiwa. [F](#) 32.123; [L](#) 66; [KA](#). People do not object alone to being called, but also to what they are called for.

Mtu hukataa shauri, siyo mwito. [NGU](#).

A person refuses advice, but not a call. Cf. 1589

1623. Mtu hauzi kabila yake. [SAM](#) 17.29.

A person does not sell his/her clan. People should be faithful to those who brought them up. Cf. 722.

1624. Mtu wa kikoa asipolipa ana kipara cheupe. [J](#).para; [T](#) 277; [MS](#) 43; [SACL](#) 371; V kikoa.

If a member of a mess [or club] does not pay, that person has a bald patch. That person is marked, everybody knows it - [MM](#).

Kikoa: a meal eaten in common, provided by each of those who join it by turns; a common table, a mess. It is resorted to in time of famine for the sake of economy -T. This custom still exists at the coast and is done merely for the sake of social gatherings - [MM](#).

Mla kikoa kwa mwenziwe asilipe, kama ng'ombe asio pembe. [SACL](#) 371.

One who eats a meal in turn at a friend's, without returning a meal, is like a bull without horns.

Mnyapara wa kikoa asipolipa hubaki kichwa cheupe. [NGU](#).

If a bald person of the club does not pay, the shining head will remain.

Mnyapara, foreman, supervisor, but could also mean, a bald person. Para, bald. Cf. 1273, 1624.

1624a. Mtu wajibu wake kutuza nchi yake. [SPK](#).

It is your duty to give [help] to your own country [your people].

1625. Mvunja kwao hakui, ila huwa yeye mbombwe. [T](#) 361; [KA](#); [SACL](#) 800; [SPK](#).

People who destroy their native land do not prosper, but will become despicable.

Mbombwe or bomwe, a maggot; a potsherd - [KA](#). Cf. 1626.

1626. Mvunja nchi ni mwana nchi. [F](#) 33.135; [ED](#) 7; [KB](#) 208; [SACL](#) 640; [T](#) 181; [KS](#) mwanachi; [JK](#) 1413; [T](#) 644.

The person who destroys the country is the inhabitant. It is the insider who does greatest harm.

1627. Mwito haukataliwi. [NGU](#).

A call is not refused.

1628. Nahodha mtaka chombo si mjinga wa safari. [T](#) 403.

A captain who desires a ship is not altogether ignorant of a voyage. If someone accepts responsibility that person should know how to handle it.

1629. Nani atamfungia paka kengele? [NGU](#).

Who will tie the bell to the cat?

1630. Ndaulia! Si ulinzi: bora ni kwenda mwenyewe. [T](#) 406.

See after it for me! is no [effectual] minding [of the crop]; that which avails is to go oneself - [T](#).

Ndaulia, ni-aulia, see for me how a work is going on - [J](#); [SACL](#).

1631. Ngozi matundu, lazima kwa mchungaji. [K](#) .245; [AL](#) 1402-3.

If there are holes in the hide, the shepherd is responsible.

Ngozi matundu, lazima kwa mchunaji. [KB](#) 245.

If there are holes in the hide the flayer is responsible.

Mchungaji, shepherd. **Mchunaji**, one who flays animals.

1632. Nisamehe, nisamehe, ilivunja vyombo vikamalizika. [REK](#).

Forgive me, forgive me, broke the pots and destroyed them. Repeated excuses are destructive.

1633. Njia ya haini hupariza. [NGU](#).

The road of the traitor is razed. Every service is refused. Cf. 1625.

1634. Paka akiwa hakimu panya hawezi kushinda kesi. [KA](#).

If the cat is judge a mouse cannot win the case. Cf. 1604; 3356.

1635. Pasua kisha ushone. [EM](#) p7.

Tear and then stitch. If a person spoils something he should repair it - [EM](#).

1636. Sultani akisahau ngoma, usimkumbushe. [AL](#) 1102.

If the chiefs forget the drum, don't remind them. Better keep away from other people's responsibilities.

1637. Ukiitwa nenda ukakatae ulichoitiwa. [NGU](#).

If you are called, go, you might refuse to do what you are called for. Cf. 1589, 1590.

1638. Ukirithi jina urithi na mambo yake. [FSM](#) 187.

If you inherit a name you must also adopt its affairs. If appointed you must fulfill all the obligations attached. Mambo has often the meaning of bad things, e.g., debts.

1639. Ulipo si kitu, unachofanya hapo ndicho muhimu. [EM](#) u20.

It's not where you are, but what you do there that matters. It is not important at what level of responsibility you work, but how you conduct your life.

1640. Usiutwae ulimwengu kuuchukua kwa kichwa. [T](#) 558; [MS](#) 84.

Don't take the world to carry it on [your] head. "Do not take more responsibility than you can handle" - [MM](#).

1641. Waaminifu ndiwo waharibifu. [NGU](#).

Trustworthy people [insiders] are also spoilers. Haribifu, spoil, destruct. Aminifu, trusting, believing. Cf. 1626.

1642. Wenye kuoja mwoe, tutakula likilimba. [AL](#) 1249.

You who marry, marry, we'll eat at your place in turns. Profiteers take any occasion to advance - [AL](#).

Likilimba, to invite for a meal in turn, as is customary in town.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Evil - good

1643. Afadhali ya mchawi kuliko msutaji. [NGU](#).

It's easier to confront a witch doctor than a slanderer.

Suta, confront a person who has spread an evil report about you. Cf 3131.

1644. Afriti hasitiki. [JKP](#).

An evil person cannot be stopped.

Afriti hafichiki. [SPK](#).

Evil cannot be hidden. Afriti, an evil spirit.

1645. Aliyemfunza chui kula watu ni binadamu. [EM](#) II.10; [KA](#).

It was a human being who taught a leopard how to eat people. "Our forefathers say that the leopard wanted to eat people but did not know how to kill them until it overheard someone telling another that if the leopard was clever, it would jump on someone and prick its claws into the person's neck. This saying means that someone, through carelessness, may teach the enemy how to hurt " - [EM](#). Human beings are the cause of much evil - [KA](#).

Chui haikujua kukamata shingo ilifundishwa. [KB](#) 45.

The leopard did not know how to grab the throat until it was taught. Cf. 1626.

1646. Bilisi wa mtu ni mtu. [F](#) 6.8; [B](#) 4.12.

The evil spirit of a human being is a human being. When a human being does evil that person is not a victim of the devil. A person is free to choose between good and evil.

Adui mkubwa wa mtu ni mtu. [SAM](#) 1.4; [MEM](#) 7.

The greatest enemy of a human being is a human being.

1647. Binadamu mbaya. [SAM](#) 5.4.

Mankind is bad.

Mtu hafunzwi uovu. [SPK](#).

No person has to learn corruption.

1647a. Bovu lapanda, uliepe. [SPK](#).

Scum floats on top, avoid it. Bad people show off, good people are not noticed - [SPK](#)

1648. Buyu kali ni dawa ya mwanamimba [mwenye mimba]. [SAM](#) 5.7; [KA](#), [MM](#).

A foul calabash is a cure for a pregnant woman. Something bad for one person may be good for another -[KA](#). Mwanamimba, an ailment of the womb, which is painful and may stop the ability to give birth.

1649. Cha mtu mavi ukiona kiogope. [NGU](#).

If you see activity of a bad person, be afraid of it.

Mtu mavi, a bad person.

1650. Chakula cha ngamia ni ngamia. [NGU](#)

The food of a camel is a camel. The food of revenge is revenge.

1651. Chawa aumae yu upindo wa ndani. [T](#) 502.

The louse that bites is in the inner skirt - [T](#).

Chawa kikumacho ki nguoni mwako. [ED](#) 74; [T](#) 146; [SPK](#).

The louse that bites you is inside your clothing. The person who slanders you or steals from you is your own servant or relative or a close friend -[SPK](#). Cf. 1668.

1652. Chenye pembe hakifichiki, ukikificha kitapasua nguo. [NGU](#).

You cannot hide something that has a horn; if you hide it, it will tear the cloth. Evil cannot be hidden.

1653. Chui inayokula ndama inakupita kukasirika. [KB](#) 46.

The leopard which devours your lamb is more wicked than you - [KB](#). The evil person does harm to the peaceful - [KB](#).

1654. Dhambi za ahera ndizo zitakapatilizwa katika ahera. [TS](#).

Mortal sins are the ones that will be punished in the next world.

1654a. Hajuliki mwema na muovu. [SPK](#).

The good person is indistinguishable from a bad one.

1655. Hakuna mchele ukosao ndume. [KA](#); [MS](#).

There is no rice without some that is not husked. Don't expect that all people are good people, even in one's family. Ndume, a grain in its husk.

1656. Hakuna mmoja alo safi nia. [JKP](#).

There is not one person with a [completely] clean intention. Alo or aliye, who is.

1657. Hakuna wawili walo safi nia. [T](#) 537.

There are not two people who have a pure [harmless] intention. Cf. 4859.

1658. Hata hanithi ni mkware. [REK](#).

Even a sexually impotent person has lust.

Hanithi, a sexual pervert; impotent. Mkware, a lascivious person, male or female, a prostitute.

1659. Heri ngumi ya usoni kuliko neno baya rohani. [REK](#).

It's better to receive a cuff in the face than to have a bad word in the heart.

1660. Huruma za mwovu ni ukatili. [NGU](#).

Mercy [coming] from an evil person is cruelty.

1661. Jambo baya likitokea nyumbani yatima hukaribiwa. [REK](#).

When evil leaves the house the orphan is welcomed.

1662. Katika kujenga wabomoaji hutokea. [SAM](#) 8.3;[KA](#).

During building, destroyers appear. On a big project, some things may be damaged, such as in widening a street, trees may be cut. Cf. 482.

1663. Kibuyu cha mgema hakivunjwi na mti. [AL](#) 1410.

One does not break the calabash of the wine tapper with a stick. Being aggressive spoils happiness. Cf. 83, 84, 1580.

1664. Kichwa ulichokitoa damu napo usiokote chawa zake. [AL](#) 1405.

Don't collect the lice of the head you bloodied. Don't expect any good of an enemy, even after his/her death - [AL](#).

1665. Kidogo cha mwenye haki [ni bora]. [NGU](#).

A little of a just person is excellent.

1666. Kijumba cha ufisadi mbele kina sumbuko. [T](#) 144a; [SACL](#) 358; [AL](#) 97.

A house of ill fame has trouble ahead. Kijumba cha ufisadi, a house of debauch - [SACL](#). Cf. #308.

1667. Kikono heri ya dhambi. [JKP](#).

Better a cut-off hand/arm than committing a sin -[JKP](#).

1668. Kikulacho ki[mo] nguoni mwako, kimefichwa kwa machoni.

[F](#) 14.14; [B](#) 1.32; [A](#) 114; [KB](#) 96; [T](#) 146; [CM](#) 37; [MARA](#) 28; [FSM](#) 181; [MS](#) 36; [BM](#) 19; [JKP](#); [RSP](#) 15.

That which bites you is in your clothing, well hidden from the eyes. "Usually said of servants, nagging wives and good-for-nothing sons: they eat your food and talk about you outside" - [JKP](#).

Kikulacho kipo miguuni pako. Tabwa dialect. [AL](#) 530.

What bites you is in your feet. Chiggers destroy your feet. Cf. 1651.

1669. Kila asherati hana mazoea. [NGU](#).

No adulterer has good character.

Asherati, debauchery, adultery, fornication. Mwashirat, immoral person. Cf. 3271.

1670. Kila mtume ni maasumu. [KS](#), maasumu..

Every [divine] messenger is faultless. Maasumu, without sin, without defects. Mtume, messenger, especially of Muhammad; Apostle, Moses, Job.

1671. Kiwi cha yule, ni chema cha yule: hata ulimwengu ukaisha. [F](#) 16.32; [T](#) 162; [V](#) 63; [AL](#) 829.

A bad thing for one person is a good thing for another, until the end of the world - [T](#). "Where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise" - [E](#).

Kiwi can have two meanings: a bad thing; and a state of being dazed, unable to see clearly - [J](#). The repetition of the same demonstrative yule-yule does not help us: "the -le and -h- forms cannot be used in conjunction to sharpen a contrast as in English" - [A](#) p.59. So, it could mean "This one and that one" but also "that same person."

1672. Kosa halitengezi kosa. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

One wrong does not repair another wrong. When you cheat somebody because he cheated you, that does not make your cheating good. Forgive and forget.

1673. Kuku na mavi, mlowe; ukimwasa aleni? [T](#) 173a; [SACL](#) 72, 373.

A chicken on the dung heap, it is her food; if you keep her from it, what will she eat? - [SACL](#). Allow people their own ways.

1674. Kutenda vyema ni kujiepusha na vibaya. [MA](#) 229.

To do good things is to avoid doing bad things. To avoid doing evil is, in itself, doing good.

1675. Kutoshiriki uovu ni wajibu mtakatifu. [NGU](#).

Not joining evil [doers] is a saintly duty.

1676. La mtu usisikilize, la uwi ulikataze. [JKP](#).

Do not listen to what people say, prohibit what is evil. Uwi, ubaya, evil

1677. Laana huja yenyewe. [EM](#) 11.

A curse comes on its own. "A curse is punishment due to somebody's bad acts. This punishment does not wait to be pronounced by the ill-treated person or the offended one as some people believe; it happens on its own" - [EM](#).

1678. Manyoya huelea, kombe huzama. [NGU](#).

Feathers float, the cup sinks. A good person floats, a bad person sinks on judgment day.

1679. Maovu mengi huwa huru zaidi usiku wa kiza. [NGU](#).

Many bad things are set free at the darkness of night.

1680. Mavi ya jana hayakosi nzi. [REK](#).

Yesterday's dung does not lack flies. People like gossip.

1681. Mavi ya kale hayanuki. [F](#) 22.23; [RECH](#) 165; 295; [B](#) 2.9; [FSM](#) 120; [KB](#) 160; [KA](#); [SM](#).

Old droppings do not stink.

Mavi ya kale hayaachi kunuka [KA](#).

Old droppings still stink. Evil misdeeds are not totally forgotten.

1682. Mcha shetani ni shetani mwenyewe. [MA](#) 310.

They who honor the devil are devils themselves. Mcha, often used with Mungu [God]: God-fearing.

1683. Mchimba kisima (or kiwi) huingia (or hutumbika) mwenyewe.

[CM](#) 53; [H](#) 64; [F](#) 24.40; [MEM](#) 281; [SWA](#) 50; [MS](#) 141; [KA](#); [KS](#) mchimba.; [RECH](#) 222; [ED](#) 31; [SPK](#); [FSM](#) 100.

One who digs a pit [with evil intent] will fall into it.

Mchimba kisima njiani huingia yeye, mwandani. [T](#) 33; [A](#) 292.

One who digs a well in the road gets into it, my friend.

1684. Mchimba kisima humtia mtuwe. [F](#) 24.41; [KA](#).

One who digs a pit will land a friend in it.

Mchimba kaburi humtia mtuwe. [H](#) 64; [KA](#); [KS](#) chimba..

One who digs a grave will put a friend in it. Cf. 1690.

1685. Mfyeka msitu mwisho hujikata mwenyewe. [FSM](#) 109.

People who cut down a forest will cut themselves in the end.

Kufyeka : to make a clearance in the wood, either for a camp, a road, or a garden. Therefore it also means to flatten things, to destroy things.

1685a. Mkiziondoa hadi mwavunja yenu biladi. [SPK](#).

When you remove the limits, you will break your country. A pun on hadi, frontier, limit. Meaning: the strength of a nation is broken by the citizens removing the limits of decency and morality.

1686. Mkono uliotia jiwe majini, ule ule utaopoa. [KB](#) 187.

The same hand that put the stone in the water will pull it out. The culprit must pay. The borrower must pay back. Cf. 4228.

1687. Mla nyama mbichi ana hofu ya kuumwa na tumbo. [MA](#) 14.

One who eats uncooked food has fear of stomach ache. Said of people who do evil: they live in fear.

1688. Mtenda viwi hwambiwa. [T](#) 324.

The evil-doer should be told [about it].

1689. Mtu mbaya ni sawa na kakakuona. [TS](#) 61/3.

An evil person is like a small pangolin. A pangolin projects its tongue and traps ants. Kakakuona, an animal like an armadillo, a kind of anteater.

1690. Mwenye nia mbovu ndiye atakaengia kisimani. [T](#) 392.

A person with ill intentions shall go into the well. -[T](#). According to the story, a man dug a pit, thinking that only an evil person would fall into it. When his own son fell into it, he had the pit filled with earth, leaving his son in the grave.

1691. Nia njema ni tabibu, nia mbaya huharibu. [T](#) 433; [F](#) 39.13; [V](#) 26; [AL](#) 476.

A good intention is [like] medicine, an evil intention corrupts. Tabibu, medicine, doctor,

1692. Pahala pa itifaki ikrahi haipiti. [SA](#) .21.1; [MS](#) 195.

In a place where good is done, bad deeds do not pass.

Itifahi, matendo mema, good deeds. Ikrahi, matendo ya kuchusha, hateful deeds - [SAM](#).

1693. Palipo [kuwa] moto, panajikunja mbwa. [AL](#) 770.

A dog comes to curl up at a fire. An evil person, after harm is done, comes to enjoy the evil - [AL](#).

1694. Palipo mwema mbaya [pia] papo. [NGU](#).

Where you find a good person there also is a bad one.

1695. Pongo hawezi kutoka ndani ya mtego. [KB](#) 266; [AL](#) 820.

The gazelle cannot escape from the trap. A person who has been in fault will relapse.

1696. Rushwa ni adui wa haki. Unyonge p.63; [KS](#) rushwa.

Bribery is the enemy of justice.

1697. Shetani ni moyo wa mtu. [NGU](#).

The devil is the human heart.

1698. Shetani wa mtu ni mtu. [KA](#).

The devil of a person is a human being.

1699. Si kila mwuaji ni mbaya. [REK](#).

Not every killer is evil.

1700. Si mzuka pekee [pana mkono wa mtu]. [NGU](#).

It's not the devil alone [the human hand is also involved]. Mzuka, spirit, ghost.

1701. Siafu hupenya akauma laini. [NGU](#).

The ant gets inside and bites a soft spot.

1702. Ubaya hauna tongo, wema hauna kibanda. [AL](#) 1011; [AL](#) tongo.

Evil has not [even] a deserted village, [where one can stay overnight], but goodness has an open house. Tongo, a deserted village or home. Kibanda, a square house.

1703. Ubaya huvuma zaidi ya wema. [NGU](#).

Evil reverberates more than good.

Mambo hayo yanavuma mjini. [J](#) vuma.

These matters are the talk of the town.

1704. Ubaya khatima yake mbaya. [V](#) 134.

Evil has a bad ending.

1705. Ubaya wa mtu ni umdhuruo, nao wema wake ni umfaao. [JKP](#).

A person's evil is what harms that person, but goodness is useful to that person..

1706. Ubaya wa roho sumu mwilini. [JKP](#).

The evil of the soul is poison for the body. Body and soul are interdependent.

1707. Uchongwao huchongewa paa mlimwengu ukamsawaa. [SAM](#) 23.2.

The sharp roof-pole is trimmed for the roof, [but] pierces a human being. Harm comes to someone who does harm - [SAM](#).

1708. Ukimwombea kifo mama kambo, kifo hicho humchukua mama yako. [REK](#).

If you ask for your stepmother's death, the death will take your mother. Wishing someone evil comes back to you for the worst. Baba kambo, mama kambo, ndugu kambo, stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother or sister.

1709. Ukuni mbaya haufichiki. [KA](#); [SM](#).

A bad piece of firewood cannot be hidden. It will not burn and will produce a lot of smoke.

1710. Ulishapo kilabu, utaona taabu. [RSP](#) 119.

If you feed dogs, you will have trouble. If you do evil you'll suffer the consequences - [MM](#).

Kilabu, Arabic for dog, is used here instead of the standard Swahili word mbwa, to make it rhyme with taabu..

1711. Umeacha mavi, washika mikojo. [KA](#); [SM](#).

You stopped touching dung for touching urine. You left one bad thing for something worse.

1712. Unabeba kichwa cha nyoka kitungani.

One who does unpleasant things, meaning "You are in the wrong place," in order to get rid of that person.

1718. Wema hufanywa na mbaya, ubaya haufanywi na mwema. [EM](#) w22.

Goodness is done by a bad person, evil cannot be done by a good person.

1719. Wema ni baba mwema. [EM](#) w23.

Goodness is the father of goodness. Goodness bears goodness. A good deed calls forth a good turn from the receiver.

1720. Wema ni tabia. [NGU](#).

Goodness is a thing of character.

1721. Wema wa mtu hauonekani usoni. [REK](#).

The goodness of a person cannot be seen on his/her face.

1722. Yai bovu hulelea majini. [REK](#).

A bad egg floats on the water. Evil is visible. It shows.

1723. Zani haina hazana: ni ukuba wa mbeleni. [T](#) 559; [SACL](#) 1038.

A crime admits of no hiding; it brings its retribution in the future - [T](#). Adultery is not a treasure [one conceals], it is a punishment for later - [SACL](#).

Hazana, hazina, treasure. Ukuba, bad smell; also, misfortune, curse - [J](#).

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Excellence - inferiority

1724. Aali hupatikana kwa ghali. [MA](#) 3.

Whatever is superior is found at great price. Advice given to youth.

1725. Adhama ya mtu hutoka kwake mwenyewe. [MA](#) 10.

Greatness and respect come from the people themselves. Implied is that you become what you want to become and that if you want to be respected, begin by respecting yourself - [MA](#).

1726. Asiyekosa ni malaika. [EM](#) 16.23.

Only angels are free from mistakes.

1727. Bao nene si chuma chembamba. [MARA](#) 2.

A thick wooden board is not [as good as] a thin one of iron. Do not judge people according to their size, expensive clothing or titles, but judge their human qualities - [MARA](#).

1728. Bata hujilia vya halali kwake. [FSM](#) 23.

A duck eats clean food. [And has nothing to be ashamed of.] What is good/clean for one person is not necessarily so for another. Do not imitate senselessly.

1729. Bei kupunguza, sio kuviuza. [JKP](#).

To reduce the price does not always result in selling the wares. "Everything has its value and must be duly appreciated" - [JKP](#).

1730. Bei ya kondoo iko mkiani. [REK](#).

The value of a sheep is in its tail. The tail is where fat is stored and shows that the sheep is healthy and well fed.

1731. Chakula chema hakihitaji kawa. [JKP](#).

Good food needs no coverlet against the flies. Good food is eaten, nothing is left for covering.

Kawa, a conical dish cover, made of plaited grass. Cf. 1733.

1732. Chambo chema ni baraka ya mvuvi. [MARA](#) 2.

Good bait is the blessing of fishermen. A generous person is well liked. A fine piece of craftsmanship sells. One who treats the workers well will see work well done.

1733. Chema (or kizuri) chajiuza, kibaya chajitembeza. [F](#) 7.3i; [H](#) 24;

[J](#) tembea; [V](#) 79; [KB](#) 40; [L](#) 13; [MS](#) 134; [SACL](#) 881; [T](#) 52; [SWA](#) 51; [MARA](#) 12; [F](#) 16.33..

A good thing sells itself, a bad thing must be advertised.

Chema chajiendesha chenyewe. [SPK](#).

A good things sells itself.

Chema chajitembeza, kibaya chajiuza. [NGU](#).

This seems the opposite of the above: A good thing is hawked, a bad thing sells easily. Bad habits are taken over more quickly.

1734. Chuma kiwe kigumu hupitishwe motoni. [EM](#) 38.18.

Iron is passed through fire to be hardened.

1735. Chura mpumbavu alinda kisima na maji yatekwa. [JKP](#).

The stupid frog guards the well and yet the water is taken. Frogs are symbolic of cuckolded husbands, since they have no control over their wives - [JKP](#)

1736. Endaye shamba mjini kwema. [MARA](#) 2.

A person going to the farm should go when the town is quiet. A person living in town often has the garden rather far from the city. That person should go early to the field, before other troubles or cares appear that would make the trip to the garden impossible. If you have a

plan, prepare yourself and make sure that you have taken care of all the problems as far as possible.

1737. Eneo la maisha si hoja, jali unachojenga hapo. [EM](#) 54.6.

The area covered by your life is not as important as what you build on it. To live a long time is not important. What matters most is how that life is spent - [EM](#).

1738. Fagio jipya hufagia vizuri. [NGU](#).

A new broom sweeps clean.

1739. Fagio kuu ni laini mkononi. [EM](#) F1.

An old broom is smooth in the hand. It takes time to get used to new tools, shoes, methods or people - [EM](#). Cf. 1819, 1822.

1740. Funika hailingani na ilo wazi. [SAM](#) 7.2.

What is covered is not comparable to what is left open. A thing well cared for is more desired and respected. Funika for iliyofunikwa. Cf. 3505.

1741. Gogo la mbuyu si la mvule. [MARA](#) 2.

The trunk of the baobab is not like the trunk of the teak.

The mvule has good timber for making furniture; the wood of the baobab is useless. Substance above appearance. Mbuyu, baobab. Mvule, East African teak.

1742. Haja huvunja haja. [SAM](#) 7.1.

Need breaks need. Sometimes a person has to demolish something needed in order to get something needed more - [SAM](#).

1743. Hakuna kizuri kisicho kasoro. [REK](#).

There is nothing beautiful without a blemish

1744. Hakuna kubwa lisiloshindwa. [CM](#) 62; [MS](#) 10.

There is nothing so great that it cannot be surpassed.

1745. Hakuna mchele usiokuwa na chenga. [REK](#).

There is no rice without small [broken] pieces. Nothing is totally perfect. Cf. 1655.

1746. Hapakosi ndege wengi penye mti mkubwa. [EM](#) h11.

In a big tree there is no lack of many birds. People will go to a great person for help - [EM](#). Cf. 712; 873; 1794.

1747. Hapana kizuri kilichohitimu kwa watu wote. [FSM](#) 44.

There is not one good thing that everybody appreciates. What is good for one is not good for another. Moreover, our own desires change from day to day.

1748. Hekima heri kuliko lulu. [JKP](#).

Wisdom is better than pearls.

1749. Hekima iko kichwani, sio machoni. [EM](#) h22.

Wisdom is in the head, not in the eyes. Wisdom is in understanding things one sees, reads or hears.

1750. Hekima si mvi. [EM](#) h23.

Wisdom is not grey hair. Cf. 552, 1819, 2829, 2944.

1751. Heshima apewe mjuwaye heshima. [MA](#) 141.

Respect should be given to one who knows respect.

1752. Heshima haiji mpaka iletwe. [NS](#) 40.

Honor does not come by itself, it must be brought in. It must be earned by deeds. Cf. 1725.

1753. Huchelewi kujisahihisha. [EM](#) h38.

You are not too late to change. Any time you have done wrong, correct yourself - [EM](#).

1754. Imara ya chombo ni nanga. [KA](#).

The stability of a boat is the anchor. In life support of family and friends is needed. Cf. 1755.

1755. Imara ya jembe kaingoje shamba. [I](#) III; [SACL](#) 679; [MS](#) 29; [AL](#) 239.

The toughness of a hoe, go and wait in the garden. The test of a person is in practical life - [MM](#).

AL adds: "kilicho bahari kakingoge ufuoni". What is in the sea, go and wait for it on the beach. Cf. 2746.

1756. Jema halipatikani kwa urahisi. [EM](#) j5.

A good thing is not easy to get. A good thing can be obtained only through serious effort and considerable difficulty - [EM](#).

1757. Jino la pembe si dawa ya pengo. [F](#) 12.4; [K](#) .83; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) pengo.

An ivory tooth is not a cure for a gap [a lost tooth]. A substitute, however grand, is not the real thing - [E](#). Cf. 3601.

1758. Johari za mtu ni mbili, akili na haya. [J](#) johari; [KS](#) johari.

The most precious qualities of a person are two: intelligence and modesty.

Johari, a precious stone.

1759. Jumla ya siku ni saba. [NGU](#).

The total amount of days is seven. Seven is a perfect number.

1760. Kama hutaweza kuvuta mtumbwi, usiuondoshe nchi kavu. [AL](#) 627.

If you are unable to guide a pirogue, don't leave dry land.

1761. Kamba hukatikia pembamba. [F](#) 13.2; [B](#) 2.15; [H](#) 48; [SWA](#) 8; [MARA](#) 2; [T](#) 517 ugwe ; [SACL](#) 334; [SWA](#) 8; Lpabovu, where rotten; [KB](#).

A rope breaks where it is thin [or rotten]. The poor and the weak are most often blamed, even if they are not in fault, while the bourgeoisie are not blamed. The chain is no stronger than its weakest link - [F](#). Cf. 4137.

1762. Kamba ikatikika, tuunge nyingine. [AL](#) 240; [NGU](#).

If the rope is broken we tie another. A misfortune should not stop the movement of life. Said in case of money lost or a wife who has left or divorced. Cf. 368.

1763. Kavu haisuki, siuze koroma. [T](#) 130; [SACL](#) 810; [AL](#) 1093.

The dry coconut does not reverberate, how much less that which is yet green - T. If the coconut you thought was ripest is proved to be unripe [being full of milk], why should you go on to shake others, which are manifestly green? - [T](#). Siuze for usiulize, don't question.

1764. Kibiriti huwaka, hakitashinda kasuku. [LE2](#) 302.2.

The match burns, but it cannot compete with resin. Modern matches are no match for our old-fashioned resin sticks. New inventions are not always as good as old standbys.

1765. Kikuu hukua kwao. [JKP](#).

Greatness grows at home. When appreciated among its own people something is big indeed - [JKP](#).

1766. Kila binadamu ana makosa. [NGU](#).

Every human being has some faults.

1767. Kilicho kitamu hakiwekwi ndani ya shavu. [KB](#) 104.

What is sweet is not stored in the mouth.

1768. Kimumunye huharibikia ukubwani. [KA](#); [SM](#).

The young gourd is spoiled when big. Kimumunye, mumunye: a gourd-like vegetable. This is cooked when young, but not when it has grown big. It becomes a gourd to carry water. Said of a youth who turned bad when grown up.

1769. Kina cha maisha ni bora kuliko urefu wake. [EM](#) k18.

The depth of a person's life is more important than its length. A person may have a short life, but may have done much for the community - [EM](#).

1770. Kiongozi dhaifu ni fedheha kwa wanaongozwa. [NGU](#).

A weak leader is a disgrace for those who are led.

1771. Kitanda cha mbao hakina bei sawa cha chuma. [KB](#) 112; [AL](#) 911.

A wooden bed does not cost as much as an iron one. Bridewealth is expensive but a prostitute is not as good as a spouse - [AL](#).

1772. Kutafuta makosa si kazi, kazi ni kuyasahihisha. [EM](#) k31.

Finding faults is not difficult, the task is rectifying them. And there are few people who can do that.

1773. Kutunga na kunadhifu ni kama kwomoa nyuki. [JKP](#).

To compose a verse and make the lines rhyme and scan, is like getting out the wild honey from the hollow tree. Nadhifu, put neatly in order. Omoa, dig out, bring to light.

1774. Kuukuu halilingani na tundu. [NGU](#).

Do not compare an old [roof] with a roof with a hole.

An old roof is better than a leaking roof, or an old pot is better than a broken pot.

1775. Kuvua maji ya kina kwataka wakurufunzi (or wakafunzi). [T](#) 201; [KA](#).

Fishing in deep water requires craftsmen. To do a skilled job expertise is needed - [MM](#).

Wakufunzi (watalaamu, waalimu, wajuzi), experts. Kina or kimo, depth, a deep place in the sea. Usually kina is used. Wakurufunzi, skilled apprentices.

1776. Macho yataweza kuacha moma bila kumwona, na kumwona nyoka mdogo aliye karibu naye. [KB](#) 142; [AL](#) 569.

It is possible that the eyes do not see the puff adder and see the little snake next to it. One must not keep oneself busy with trifles while neglecting the important matters. Moma, pili, puff adder - [J](#).

1776a. Mapema maivu, mapesi maovu. [SPK](#).

Early ripe, early rot. Often said about girls, though the prefix ma- may refer to matunda (fruits) and to maneno (words) - [SPK](#).

1777. Mbao mbi zikawa mchanga. [JK](#) 140.

Bad boards become dust. A house [marriage/family] must be built with first-rate wooden beams. Marriages have to be concluded between partners of the same social class - [JK](#). Cf. 3463.

1778. Mcheza hawi kiwete, ngoma yataka matao. [F](#) 24.35; [KA](#).

A dancer should not be crippled; dancing calls for grace. Said to people without ambition. Matao, curves, twists, bends.

1779. Mchungaji mwema hakai mbele. [EM](#) m11.

A good shepherd does not stay in front. If the shepherd is behind, it is easier to see and press the flock to move forward and also to ensure its safety. Similarly a good teacher should be behind the group of people - [EM](#).

1779a. Mjeledi humpasa farasi na hatamu humpasa punda. [SPK](#).

A harness fits as equipment for a horse, a bit fits a donkey. Beings of a higher class do not need a strong control - [SPK](#).

1780. Mkulima bora hukaribishwa kila mahali. [NGU](#).

An excellent farmer is welcomed everywhere.

1781. Mpita njia hafurahii sifa apewazo. [NGU](#).

A passerby does not enjoy the honors that are given to him/her.

1782. Mpunga haukosi mapepe. [NGU](#).

There is no rice without some empty ears [husks]. Cf. 1778, 3467, 4573.

1783. Mrembo hakosi kilema. [NGU](#).

Even a well-adorned person has some imperfection.

1783a. Mshujaa hula nguvu zake. [SPK](#).

A hero wastes his/her strength. Great individuals are generous and self-sacrificing - [SPK](#).

1784. Mtemba ni mtemba bora unatifua moshi. [REK](#).

A tobacco pipe is an excellent pipe if it raises smoke. Tifua: cause to rise, stir up.

1785. Mtu kwao, mwenye kudharau juha. [REK](#).

A person who laughs at someone who is at home, is a fool. A person who is at home is surrounded by his own people. Juha, mpumbavu, fool, stupid. Dharau, despise, mock.

1786. Mtu ni kitu, lakini si kitu. [J](#) kitu

A human being may be regarded as a thing, but a person is not [only] a thing - [J](#).

Mtu ni watu, si kitu. [MM](#).

A person is people, a thing is not. Animals are created, therefore they are creatures, but they are not [real] creatures, a human being is the creature by excellence - [AL](#), mtu. Cf. 719, 4601.

1787. Mtu si mbwa. [SAM](#) 18.33.

A person is not a dog.

1787a. Mtu wa heshima humpa yake mama. [SPK](#).

People of honor maintain their mother. To be known as people who do not give their mother what she needs, would be a disgrace - [SPK](#).

1787b. Nahodha akiwa bora huvifungasa vivili [vitani]. [SPK](#).

A skilled skipper ties [the vessel] with two (vitani, ropes).

1788. Nahodha hodari haogopi mawimbi. [TAA](#) 16.

A good skipper is not afraid of waves. Cf. 1628

1789. Ngalawa isiyo na mirengo haisaliki. [JK](#) 141.

The boat which has no outriggers does not survive. Essentials should never be missing - [JK](#).

Ngalawa: a canoe with outriggers. The oldest type of boat on the Indian Ocean, it was used for intercontinental voyages - [JK](#).

1790. Ngoma ikolee huambwa huku na huku. [EM](#) n11.

A satisfying drum is beaten on both sides. "For a drum to give its best, the drummer must use both sides of it in proper time. The meaning is that to maximize the benefit of a matter, it is necessary to examine all of its aspects" - [EM](#).

1791. Nyumba ya mchangani haihimili dhoruba. [EM](#) n28.

A house built on sand cannot withstand the storm. A matter which has no good basis can easily be destroyed. [EM](#).

1792. Paka hashibi kwa wali, matilabae ni panya. [T](#) 449; [MS](#) 62; [SACL](#) 509, 636; [AL](#) 1269; [JK](#).

The cat is not satisfied with rice, its quest is mice. You attract people by their weaknesses.

Matilaba, desire. Cf. 4094.

1793. Pale uliponunua ngoma inayolia vizuri utaparudia. [KB](#) 258.

There where you bought a good-sounding drum you will go back.

1794. Penye mafundi hapakosi wanafunzi. [F](#) 42.12; [B](#) 4 82; [FSM](#) 180; [L](#) p.112.

Where there are experts, there is no lack of learners. Cf. 873.

1795. Punje moja ya mtama ni bora kuliko almasi. [KS](#) punja; [AL](#) 106.

One grain of millet is more precious than a diamond. A grain of millet is productive; a diamond does not fill the stomach.

1796. Rahisi ghali. [EM](#) r7.

Cheapness is expensive. A cheap thing does not usually last.

1797. Rahisi haihalisi. [KA](#); [SM](#).

Cheapness does not satisfy.

1798. Rahisi huvunja upishi. [V](#) 70; [SACL](#) 770; [AL](#) 142.

To be cheap spoils the cooking. Cheap goods always prove expensive - V. To be cheap spoils good cooking - [AL](#). Cf. 1799.

1799. Rahisi siku zote haifiki. [WIKON](#) 179.

Easy always does not happen.

1800. Safisha kikombe ndani na nje. [NGU](#).

Clean the cup inside and out. Do a job well.

1801. Shibe ya nguo ni kilemba. [SACL](#) 836; [V](#) 40.

The fulfillment of the clothing is the turban. Only when you put on the turban are you fully dressed. Cf. 1802.

1802. Sifa ya nguo ni pindo. [T](#) 481; [SACL](#) 750; [MS](#) 75; Vsifa; [AL](#) nguo.; [AL](#) 667.

The beauty [value] of the cloth is the embroidered hem. Cf. 1801.

1803. Sifa za mbinguni zina malaika. [T](#) 482; [SACL](#) 802; [MS](#) 76.

The beauty of heaven is that there are angels. A description of heaven includes angels.

1804. Swifa za mti zafungwa ndani mwa yaliyochungwa. [RSP](#) 34.

The qualities of the tree are tied inside [the fruits] that have been well cared for - [JK](#).

1805. Tamu ya madafu kunywea dafuni. [EM](#) t3.

The sweetness of the coconut juice is best when the juice is taken in the nut. Something taken in its natural state is more appealing - [EM](#).

Hapendezi mwanamke illa ndani dafu yake. [JKF](#) p. 56.

A woman is not liked except for her coconut juice [in her youth]. Cf.4610.

1806. Tendea-mbwa, ajuaje fadhiliye? [T](#) 505.

Doing favors to a dog, how can it recognize its benefits? About doing good to people who do not appreciate it.

1807. Thamani ya mtu ni utu. [EM](#) t12.

The value of people is their personality.

1808. Toboa kisha ujenge. [EM](#) t15.

Make room and then build. If you point out the wickedness of something, you should also show how to rectify it - [EM](#).

1809. Tonga si tuwi. [F](#) 45.4; [KA](#); [AL](#) 458.

The juice of an immature coconut is not like coconut oil - F. An unripe coconut full of milk is not creamy juice - [MM](#). The milky juice in an unripe coconut is not the same as that of a ripe coconut - [KA](#). A young girl is not the equal of a woman in bloom - [AL](#). About things not finished. Or a student and teacher; a child and parent.

Tuwi or tui, the creamy juice obtained by squeezing grated coconut mixed with water - [MM](#).

1810. Tunda liivalo ndilo linaloliwa. [NGU](#).

It is the ripe fruit that is eaten.

1811. Ubora wa mti ni kuruge. [EM](#) u2.

The pit gives quality to the tree. A person's value derives from the heart.

1812. Ubora wa mtu sio rangi. [FK](#).

A person's excellence is not [determined] by the color of skin.

1813. Ubora wa sabuni ni povu. [REK](#).

The quality of the soap is in its foam. A well foaming soap is a good soap.

1814. Ugumu wa nyumba ni msingi. [REK](#).

The solidity of a house comes from the foundation. In a family or organization it comes from the key person.

1815. Uje, upitie mwamba, tukujue u rubani. [ED](#) 58.

And come, pass by this rock, so we may know that you are a pilot. Prove your worth by deeds.

1816. Ukiona chungu kipya, usitupe cha zamani. [CO](#) 82.7.

If you see a new cooking pot, don't throw away the old one. All new things are not always better than the old ones. Cf. 2254.

1816a. Ukitaka nyumba njema utie msingi mwema. [SPK](#).

If you want a good house lay a good foundation. Conclude a good marriage - [SPK](#).

1817. Ukitema kuni temato. [A](#) 158; [T](#) 157; [SAM](#). 10.11.

If you cut firewood, cut it well. If you do a meaningful thing do it well.

See note on to, temato #82. Cf. 1148.

Mtema-kuni chake akuonye. [SPK](#).

Let the woodcutter show you it [the wound] by cutting him/her-self. Take a warning from experienced people - [SPK](#).

1818. Ukiua nyoka, ukikate kichwa, usije kuumwa mara ya pili. [JK](#) 125.

When you kill a snake, cut off its head lest you be bitten a second time.

Kama unataka kuua nyoka mpige kichwani. [FSM](#) 76.

If you want to kill a snake hit it on the head.

1819. Ukuukuu wa kamba si upya wa ukambaa. [J](#); [MS](#) 81; [FSM](#) 191; [F](#) 47.16; [SACL](#) 322; [T](#) 530; [KB](#) kamba; [KS](#) kamba; [AL](#) kamba; [AL](#) 980.

A well-worn coir-rope is better than a new rope made from raffia - [E](#). Stay with proven things or people. New things are not always better. An old friend is preferable to a new one - [AL](#). However, an opposite translation: A worn rope is not as good as a new strap - [KB](#); [SACL](#) 990.

Si: often in proverbs expresses a preference; not to be confused with the negative copula si : it is not.

Ukuukuu wa kamba si upya wa mkano. [SACL](#) 558, 990.

An old rope is not so good as a new tendon. Mkano or mshipa: a tendon.

1820. Upepo umepinduka, la shamba lake mjini. [REK](#).

The wind has changed, the produce of your garden is in town. Change your occupation. To go and live in town is now better for you; go with the flow.

1821. Usawa ni roho. [EM](#) u25.

Equality is spiritual. Human equality is not a matter of physical body-height or weight or of the intellect. Equality is a spiritual matter - [EM](#).

1822. Usidharau kiselema. Chalima kikapita jembe zima.

[J](#) kiselema; [T](#) 551; [WIKON](#) 183; [SACL](#) 402, kisilima..

Do not despise a worn hoe, it is able to cultivate and even surpass a whole one. Do not forget old friends.

Kiselema, a hoe, or anything which has become small or worn down through much use, e.g., pencil, knife, mortar - J.

Sidharau kiselema hakipitwi kwa kulima. [SPK](#).

Do not despise an old hoe; there is none better for hoeing. A new [wife] is not always better - SPK. Cf. 2254, 3996.

1823. Usifikiri mama yako ndiye mpishi peke yake. [EM](#) u27.

Don't think that your mother is the only cook.

1823a. Usile lilofunjika, usifunje lilo zima. [SPK](#).

Do not eat [use] what is broken, do not break what is whole

1824. Wajikaza kisabuni. [EM](#) w4.

You behave soap-like. Even a small piece of soap will lather. One who behaves soap-like is one who works hard to maintain prestige even when the ability to do so is almost gone - [EM](#).

1825. Wapiga mbio ni wengi, washindi ni wachache. [NGU](#).

There are many runners but few winners.

1825a. Watatuvu hutatua. [SPK](#).

It is the intelligent people who find solutions.

1826. Watu hujifunza kutoka makosa yao. [NGU](#).

People learn from their mistakes.

1827. Wenzile, hawasalile, wanaume wenye maana:

wasile wawa, - kelele, mbio, na kufukuzana:

makini hamna tena. [T](#) 591.

A modern lament [1885]: They have gone, they are no more, the heroes, the genuine ones. There are left behind just these: noise, haste and chasing one another; there is no longer any sobriety - [T](#).

Wenzile hawasalile wanaume wenye maana, wasele walo kelele, mbio na kufukuzana. [SPK](#).

They have gone, none remained of the men of significance. There remain only the shouters, always running and chasing each other.

1828. Wimbo muwi [mtu] hamuongolei mwana. [T](#) 593; Vwi; [SACL](#) 714 omits mtu; [KS](#); [EM](#) n22.

No one ever hushes a babe with a bad song - [T](#).

Wimbo mui hauongolewi mwana. [JKP](#); [MARA](#) 2.

A child is not guided with a bad song. "Songs are much used in Africa to teach children proper behaviour." - [JK](#). If a child cannot fall asleep or has pain, the mother sings soothing songs. The Swahili believe that good songs have a good influence on the behavior of a child and bad songs a bad influence - [MARA](#).

Dua mbaya haiombolezewi mtoto. [NGU](#).

A bad prayer does not mention the needs of the child.

1829. Yote yang'aayo usidhani ni dhahabu. [F](#) 52.3; [B](#) 2.6; [KB](#) 349; [NGU](#).

Don't think that all that glitters is gold. Don't judge from appearances only - [KB](#).

Kila imetayo siyo adhabu. [NGU](#).

All that glitters is not gold.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Experience

1830. Ajuaye misonoe ni alalaye naye. [SM](#).

One who knows about groaning [of sick people] is the one who sleeps with that person.
Msono, snoring, groaning, snort; whistling to attract attention or to express derision or contempt.

1831. Akitaka kaa, mpe moto. [JKP](#).

If someone wants a piece of [live] charcoal, give that person fire.
If someone is looking for a quarrel, give that person 'hell' - [SPK](#). Cf. 1863.

1832. Aliyechomwa na mwiba huthamini kiatu. [EM](#) 10.9.

One who has been pricked by a thorn values shoes.

1833. Amekula chumvi nyingi. Jchumvi.

That person has eaten much salt. Has lived long; has much experience.

1834. Aminia uonayo, siyo uyasikiayo. [JKP](#); [SPK](#).

Trust what you see, do not believe all you hear. Cf. 1887.

1835. Anayenyolewa kwa chupa hasahau. [EM](#) 12.13.

The person who has been shaven with [a piece of] a bottle can never forget. About evil done to somebody. Cf. 1885.

1836. Asiyejua faida ya mwangaza aingie gizani. [SAM](#) 3.18; [KA](#).

One who does not know the advantage of light should enter darkness. To appreciate good things one should experience the opposites - [SAM](#). When the loss of a friend or member of the family is felt as a tremendous loss, we feel how much we depended on that person - [KA](#).

1837. Asiyesafiri, taa haing'ari. [RSP](#) 126.

One who does not travel has no shining lamp. Has nothing to tell.

1838. Atangaye sana na jua, hujua. [F](#) 5.42; [KA](#).

One who wanders much by day knows. Said of somebody who learned through experience. Cf. 1850.

1839. Atembeleaye ndugu ajua ukoo. [NGU](#).

The one who visits relatives knows the clan.
Ukoo, relationship, kinship, affinity, ancestry, family.

1840. Avaaye kiatu ndiye ajuaye msumari uchomapo. [JKP](#).

The one who wears the shoe knows where the nail pierces. "There is nothing like first-hand experience - [JKP](#).

1841. Bahari shwari haitoi wanamaji stadi. [EM](#) 23.5; [KA](#).

Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors.

1842. Bila dalili, utadhalili. [RSP](#) 28.

Without a sign, you will go astray - [RSP](#).

1843. Fahali mzee hupigana kwa maarifa. [REK](#).

An old bull fights with experience.

1844. Hakimu mjua methali hutoa mashauri ya hekima. [EM](#) h5.

A judge [counselor] who knows proverbs gives wise advice. "Proverbs are the quintessence of the teaching of tradition and customs. They are a treasure of the lessons which a society has accumulated for a long time" - [EM](#).

1845. Hali ya mtu haijui mtu, mwenye hali kaijulia. [AL](#) 562.

Nobody knows the condition of another, except that person. Cf. 2220.

1846. Isipokuwasha hujairamba. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2.

If it does not make you hot, then you have not tasted it. Cf. 1008.

1847. Jambo (or neno) usilolijua ni kama usiku wa kiza. [F](#) 12.1; [KB](#) 80; [T](#) 471, neno; [KB](#) 238; [FSM](#) 170; [KA](#).

The matter you do not know of is like a dark night. Ignorance is like a dark night. One cannot judge things unknown - [KB](#). Kiza for giza, darkness; Northern dialect. Cf. 1848.

1848. Kitanda usichokilalia, hujui kunguni wake. [F](#) 16.29; [KA](#).

You do not know the bugs of a bed you have not slept in. Cf. 1877.

1849. Koko haidari mai. [F](#) 16.34; [KA](#).

The koko is never reached by water. It grows in the water but its branches are high - [J](#); [E](#).

Said of a wise person, who always has something in reserve.

Koko, fruit of the mkoko bush as in a mangrove swamp; used as firewood, has a red bark used for dyeing. Mai for maji, water. Lamu dialect. Cf. 1861.

1850. Kuishi kwingi [ni] kuona mengi. [F](#) 17.46; [H](#) 53; [SWA](#) 29; [MS](#) 147; [MARA](#) 3.

To live long is to see much. Experience is the best teacher.

1851. Kula chumvi nyingi. [B](#) 2.28.

Eat much salt. Cf. 1833.

1852. Kupotea njia ndiko kujua njia. [F](#) 19.59; [SACL](#) 760; [B](#) 1.52; [MS](#) 41; [T](#) 193; [MARA](#) 33; [V](#) 18, ndio; [KB](#) 132, kupoteza; [KS](#) potea.

To lose the way is to know the way. Experience is gained by mistakes. To know that one is lost is the first step to improvement - [KB](#).

1853. Macho yaliona milima, hayashtukii mabonde. [JKP](#).

The eyes which have seen the mountains are not terrified by valleys. One who has seen much is not so easily astonished as the one who has never left his village.

1854. Maji usiyoyafika huyajui wingi wake. [F](#) 21.8; [B](#) 1.33; [MARA](#) 3.

You do not know the extent of waters you have not been to.

1855. Mchawi (or mganga) mpe mwana amlee. [T](#) 321; [V](#) 148; [FSM](#) 98; [F](#) 34.147.

Give a wizard [local doctor] a child to bring up. The wizard will use his craft to protect the child.

Witches and other black magicians practise evil for the lack of love and a purpose in life. Give them a child, something to care for - [SPK](#).

1856. Mchungaji ndiye mjua unono. [NGU](#).

The shepherd knows about fat. A shepherd knows which animal is fat. Cf. 1866.

1857. Mguu ulioumwa na nyoka hawishi woga: hata ukiona kamba hudhania ni nyoka. [LE3](#) 226.11.

The foot of someone bitten by a snake has always fear; even seeing a rope that person thinks that it is a snake. Cf. 1870.

1858. Mjua kwenda hakwai. [ED](#) 48.

One who knows how to go does not stumble. One who leads a good life has nothing to fear - [ED](#). Cf. 2777-8, 2780.

1859. Mla ndizi husahau, lakini mtupa ganda hasahau. [KA](#).

One who ate the banana will forget, but the one to whom the skin is thrown will not forget. That person will not forget not only on account of the insult, but also for being sent away hungry.

The difficulty with the translation is caused by the word mtupa, the thrower. The translation surmises the word mtupwa or mtupiwa: the one to whom something is thrown. A misprint? Cf. 1885.

1860. Mpofuka ukongweni, hapotewi na njia. [F](#) 29.98; [KA](#).

One who becomes blind in old age does not lose the way. If you get trouble in your old age, there are many friends and relatives to help and you are supposed to have developed your own survivors's skill - [KA](#).

1861. Mtondoo haufi maji. [F](#) 31 116; [JK](#) 135; [KA](#); [AL](#) 407; [KS](#), mtondo.

The punter's pole does not sink. An old salt is not easily killed in his element - [JK](#).

Mtondoo, a big tree (*Calophyllum inophyllum*). Has many uses in shipbuilding, e.g., masts, fishing tools. Its fruits are used to make lamp oil and mascara. Cf. 1484-5, 1849.

1862. Mtoto akibebwa hutazama kisogo cha mamaye. [F](#) 31.117; [FSM](#) 136; [KS](#) kishogo.

When a baby is carried on its mother's back, it looks at the nape of her neck. A child follows its mother's footsteps - [MM](#). A child follows the instructions and character of its mother.

Kisogo, kishogo, nape of the neck Cf. 3656.

1863. Mtoto akililia wembe, mpe. [F](#) 31.118; [SWA](#) 55; [B](#) 3.39; [L](#) 65; [RECH](#) 624; [H](#) 80; [V](#) 15; [KB](#) 201 kisu; [KS](#)wembe;[T](#) 143; [A](#) 138;[AL](#) 448.

If a child cries for a razor give it. One learns the hard way.

Wembe, razor, also kisu. Knife is used. Mtoto, child or kijana, youth. Cf. 3711.

1864. Mtoto akitaka musa usimkataze. [PM](#) 303.10.

If a child wants a nut, don't withhold it. If a child wants to try something too big for it [e.g., breaking a nut with its teeth] allow it. The child will experience the limit of its own strength.

1864a. Mtu hujua atokako haisi aendako. [SPK](#).

People know where they came from; they are ignorant about where they are going.

Isi, old present negative form of jua. Siisi, I don't know

1865. Mvaaji kiatu ajua kinapombana. [NGU](#).

The one who wears the shoe knows where it pinches.

1866. Mvuvi anajua pweza alipo. [F](#) 33.136.

A fisherman knows where to look for cuttlefish (octopus). Cf. 1344.

1867. Mwana mtamba kule hupita mzee wa kale. [T](#) 365; [SACL](#) 606.

The child that travels far excels the elder of old time [in experience].

Mtamba from kutamba, to strut proudly, walk in a swaggering, conceited way, leap, dance - [J](#); a traveler - [SACL](#).

1868. Mwenda bure si mkaa sure, huenda akaokota. [F](#) 35.154; [B](#) 1.49; [FSM](#) 156; [AL](#) 171; [SAM](#) 11.23.

One who travels without an aim is not like the one who sits without an aim, for the traveler usually picks up something. Activity is better than doing nothing. Cf. 4730.

1869. Mwenda pwani usimwambie hadi arudipo. [NGU](#).

Don't tell a'nything to a person who goes to the coast, until he/she returns. Let that person experience first.

1870. Mwenye kuumwa na nyoka akiona jani hustuka. [F](#) 35.161; [B](#) 1.27; [T](#) 390; [V](#) 42; [SPK](#); [H](#) 74; [L](#) 59; [J](#) ung'ongo; [JK](#) 144; [ED](#) 52.

Someone who has been bitten by a snake is startled seeing a [moving] leaf. A very popular proverb. Instead of jani, leaf, also ung'ongo, palm-leaf, is used; ukuti, liana; kamba, a rope; kenge, lizard. The Kenya section of Leslau's African proverbs has the following: "A man who has once been tossed by a buffalo, when he sees a black ox, thinks it's another buffalo." Cf. 1857.

1871. Mwenye shoka hakosi kuni. [F](#) 36.167.

The person who has an axe does not lack firewood. With know-how or experience one always finds means of earning a living - [MM](#). Cf. 285.

1872. Mwizi hushikwa na mwizi mwenziwe. [F](#) 37.172; [B](#) 2. 45; [T](#) 394; [MS](#) 56; [A](#) 39; [V](#) 125; [MM](#).

A thief is caught by a fellow thief.

1873. Mzungu wa kula haufundishwi mwana. [F](#) 38.183; [KS](#) mzungu; [NGU](#).

How to eat is not taught a child. It comes naturally.

Mzungu, skill, instinct; teaching given during initiation of youth. Instead of mzungu also ujanja, the art, cunning, is used. Cf. 2979-80.

1874. Neno la mbali ni usiku wa kiza. [T](#) 415; [V](#) 48; [MS](#) 59.

A far-off matter is a night of darkness - T. A matter you postpone is like a dark night - [V](#).

T compares this proverb with 1847 and 2038.

1875. Neno moja la mwenye hekima lapita kumi ya mpumbavu. [REK](#).

One word of a wise person surpasses ten of a fool.

1876. Ng'ombe hajui thamani ya mkia wake mpaka umekatwa. [FSM](#) 172.

A cow does not know the value of its tail until it is cut off. Children often do not value their parents until it is too late.

1877. Nilale usiku chumbani, nikajua tundu paani. [RSP](#) 97.

Let me sleep a night in the room and I shall know the hole in the roof. Experience is the best teacher. Cf. 1382, 1880.

1878. Njia ya siku zote haina alama. [F](#) 40,18; [JK](#) 145.

An everyday path has no signpost. Experience makes things easy - [MM](#).

1879. Nyani akishindwa kuukwea mti, una kilema. [EM](#) n21.

If a monkey fails to climb a tree, the tree must have a defect.

1880. Nyumba usiyolala ndani huijui ila yake. [F](#) 40.24; [NGU](#).

You do not know the defect of a house you have not slept in.

Nyumba usimolala hujui kama inavuja. [KB](#) 253; [SPK](#).

You don't know whether the house you did not sleep in, leaks. Cf.1848.

1881. Ota sana uufikiapo moto karibu. [EM](#) 7.

When you are near the fire, warm yourself up thoroughly. If you get an opportunity profit from it.

1882. Panapo shida, maarifa huongezeka. [REK](#).

Where there are problems, ingenuity increases.

1883. Rahisi ya mwewe. [NGU](#).

Effortlessness of the hawk. The hawk takes its prey so easily.

1884. Shilanga mambo maarifa. [NGU](#).

To use the long handled hoe is a matter of experience.

Shilanga, ngwamba:1. a long handled hoe; 2. hard labor.

1885. Shoka husahau, mti hausahau. [JK](#) 118, 129; [MM](#).

The axe forgets, the tree does not forget. "This proverb usually refers to the relationship between older people and their children or pupils, whom they punish, forgetting later what they have done. But the young do not forget" - [SPK](#).

Aliyetenda amesahau, lakini aliyetendewa hajasahau. [FSM](#) 123,13; [MM](#).

One who harmed has forgotten, but the one to whom harm was done has not yet forgotten.

1886. Tako ndilo lijualo kiti kizuri. [NGU](#).

It's your behind that knows a good chair. Cf. 1848 and see also the section Secrets.

1887. Tamba uone, kama hukutamba huna uonacho. [FK](#).

Travel far to see; if you do not travel you see nothing. Cf. 1867.

1888. Tamu ya muwa aijua muonja. [FSM](#) 185.

The sweetness of sugar cane is known by the taster. Cf. 1383, 1848.

1889. Tendo husahauliwa na mtenda, mtendwa hasahau. [EM](#) t11.

An action may be forgotten by the doer, but not by the receiver. Cf. 1885.

1890. Tukisikia hatuelewi, tukijifunza tunajua. [EM](#) t19.

If we hear we don't understand, if we learn we know. If you want to master a certain skill, e.g., ploughing, it is not enough to be told how to do it; you should learn ploughing by ploughing - [EM](#).

1891. Udhaifu wa wenye nguvu ni nguvu wa wadhaifu. [EM](#) u30.

The weakness of the strong is the strength of the weak. If a person with a certain shortcoming discovers that a better placed colleague also has similar shortcomings, that person becomes encouraged and more self-confident and could do greater things -[EM](#).

1892. Udhaniye ndiye, siye. [NGU](#).

You think that is the one, but it is not. Barking up the wrong tree.

1893. Uendapo kama duma, hutakosa nyama. [RSP](#) 93.

If you go [as fast] as the cheetah, you will not lack food. An able person will always find a way - [JK](#).

1894. Ukajionee, kuambiliwa kuna uwongo. [AL](#) ona.

Go and look for yourself, to be told is deceitful. Cf. #1887.

1895. Ukisitaajabu ya mussa utaona ya firauni. [F](#) 46.12; [H](#) 102; [FSM](#) 188; [MS](#) 138; [B](#) 2.27; [T](#) 526; [AL](#) 383.

If you are amazed at Moses' deeds, you will be more amazed at Pharaoh's. Moses declared himself to be a prophet, but Pharaoh declared himself to be God - [E](#).

Afadhali ya musa kuliko ya farao. [T](#).

It's better to fall in the hands of Moses than to fall in the hands of Pharaoh -[T](#).

Sistaajabu wanaadamu mambo [ya mungu]yaliyo duniani. [CM](#) 62; [T](#) 494.

Wonder not, earthlings, at the matters (God's works) in the world.

A parody on it: **ukistaajabu ya chawa huona ya kunguni.** [T](#) 526.

If you wonder at a louse's, you will find a bug's -[T](#).

1896. Ukungiao jichoni hujui. [L](#) 100; [V](#),jicho.

What goes into your eye is not visible to you - [L](#). What comes into your eyesight is not [necessarily] known to you - [V](#). Ukungiao for ukuungiao, what enters you. Cf. 1897, note on grammar.

1897. Omitted.

1898. Utakiona cha mtema kuni. [T](#) 561.

You will see the thing of the wood-cutter. You will experience [the fate] of the wood-cutter - [T](#). It is used to warn somebody that if one does not change one's ways, there'll be trouble. Ona cha mtema kuni, to get trouble.

1899. Utapojuu maisha, yatakuwa yamekwisha. [RSP](#) 51.

When you have gained some experience in life, it [lifel is over.

1900. Uzoefu ndio mama wa maarifa. [MULIKA](#) I p.10; [MEM](#) 195.

Experience is the mother of knowledge.

1901. Viatu vya zamani vyaijua njia. [EM](#) v1.

Old shoes know the way. If one is used to an old tool, it works better than a new one - [EM](#).

1902. Wajitia sogoro kwa yote, jinyoe kisogo chako. [REK](#).

When they pretend to be experts of everything, you better shave the nape of your neck. Be alert.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Fate

1903. Ajali haikimbiliki. [BM](#) 18.

There is no escape from fate. Death, sickness, good or bad fortune often come without warning.

1904. Ajali haikingiki. [KA](#); [MS](#).6 haina kingi.

Fate cannot be warded off. Haikingiki or haina kingi, has no shield.

1905. Ajali haina kinga likufikalo shukuru. [MEM](#) 232.

Fate [death] has no prevention; if it comes, give thanks. Cf. 3432.

1906. Ajali haina kinga wala kafara. [J](#) ajali; [RECH](#) 6.

There is no prevention or sacrifice of avail against fate. Ajali, fate, death.

1907. Ajali muhuli. [RSP](#) 132.

Fate is but a respite - [RSP](#). Muhuli, muhula, space of time, interval - [J](#)., [SACL](#).

1908. Ajengaye siye alalaye. [MARA](#) 2.

The person who builds [a house], is not [necessarily] the one who sleeps in it. That person may die, fall ill or leave the house for other reasons. So if you do a good work or finish a fine project, you will not necessarily profit from it. Others may spoil your work out of jealousy.

1909. Ameshikwa na dhiki. [MA](#) 53.

So and So is in difficulties.

1910. Ameshikwa na ultima. Julitima; [T](#) 26.

That person has got a run of ill-luck. Someone has got into the grip of unemployment, etc. - [J](#). Ultima or ulitima or uritima: the last round in a game of cards. Portuguese: ultimo? - [J](#). Ultima also means shortage of money - [MM](#).

1911. Ameshikwa ni malimwengu. [T](#) 26.

Someone has been caught by the changes of the world.

1912. Asiyehabati habahatishi. [J](#) bahati; [F](#) 4.31; [KB](#) 24; [SPK](#).

One who is not fortunate must not take any risks.

Mwenye bahati habahatishi. [WIKON](#) 229.

A lucky person does not trust to luck.

Asiyehabati habahatiki. [F](#) 4.31.

An unlucky person never becomes lucky or successful.

But [MEM](#) 118 has a little different version: **Mwenye bahati hubahatisha, asiyehabati habahatishi.**

One who is lucky takes a chance, one who is not doesn't.

1913. Bahati haingoji bahati. [NGU](#).

Good fortune does not wait for good fortune. Cf. 1914-15, 1920-21, 1930, 1938.

1914. Bahati humnadia wa mbele na kumfanya wa nyuma. [KA](#).

Fortune calls upon the first and harms the one who is behind.

And the opposite: **Bahati humwacha wa mbele na kumfuata wa nyuma.** [EM](#) 24.6.

Fortune leaves the foremost to fall on the hindmost.

1914a. Bahati hwenda kwa wawi, wema wakalia ngowa. [SPK](#).

Good luck goes to the wicked and the good cry with envy.

1915. Bahati ina miujiza, lakini haina ahadi. [B](#) 2.17.

Good fortune has miracles, but no promise. Do not rely just on luck.

1916. Bahati mbaya ikimwandama kiumbe kumbanduka ni shida. [KA](#).

If bad luck pursues a person, it is hard for that person to get rid of it.

Andama, fuata, to follow. Banduka, acha, to leave.

1917. Bahati ni chudi. [SAM](#) 4.1.

Luck is effort. Work and effort are the roots of success. Chudi, chadi for jadi, diligence.

1918. Bahati ya mjomba si ya mpwa. [AL](#) 1117.

The good fortune of the uncle is not [necessarily] that of niece or nephew. Cf. 3337.

1919. Omitted

1920. Chema hakidumu. [SAM](#) 6 3; [MS](#) 125.

A good thing does not last. Cf. 1921.

1921. Chema hakikai, hakina maisha. [T](#) 10; [V](#) 93; [MS](#) 18; [JK](#).

A good thing does not last, it has no duration. Said by the poet when his best friend departed - [JK](#).

1922. Dhambizo hazifutiki, ajaliyo huandiki. [JKP](#).

Your sins cannot be wiped away, you do not write [i.e., determine] your fate. "Be careful to act; once written down (in the doomsday records) no word can be erased" - [JKP](#).

1923. Hainyeshi, bali humiminika, siyo? [WIKON](#) 133.

It never rains, but it comes down in buckets, doesn't it?

1924. Hana nyuni. [SACL](#) 702.

Someone fortunate. One who has no bad forecast. As in Roman times, future events [success of a journey, etc.] are augured by the way birds fly. Nyuni, ndege, bird.

1925. Hayo yote yataisha, hata wivu, ni filimu tu. [AL](#) 1779; [KB](#) 77.

All will pass by, even envy; it's like a film. Cf. 1990.

1926. Heri kuwa mbichi kuliko kuungua. [V](#) 10.

It [food] is better to be raw than burned. A bird in the hand is better than ten in the bush - [V](#).

An interesting variation: **Bora kuwa mbishi kuliko kuungua.** [FSM](#) 27.

It is better to be obstinate than to be burned. Before accepting a new idea it is better to be obstinate, to argue the pros and cons, in order not to be burned.

1927. Huja zenu hufaani, yandishiwe azalini. [JKP](#).

What is the use of your arguments, it was written at the beginning of time.

Huja, haja, need, want, request, appeal.

1928. Hujui yatakayo kukuta. [JKP](#).

You do not know what will encounter you [is in store for you].

1929. Jaha nda mwenye kolewa. [T](#) 113; [SACL](#) 179; [JKP](#).

Glory [good luck] is for whom it is written [destined]. "If you are unlucky, God wants you to be so, resign yourself" - [JKP](#). Nda, ni ya, is of.

1930. Kaa akiinua gando mambo yamekatika (or yapisie kae). [J](#) gando; [AL](#) 370; [KS](#), gando; [SPK](#); [SACL](#) 249; [T](#) 121; [KA](#); [AL](#) 369.

During the time that the crab raises its claw, things have passed a long time ago. If a crab catches another creature with its claws, that's it. That creature cannot get free. If you know how, you can do a thing quickly and easily - [KA](#). Kae, kale, long time ago. Yapisie, yapitiao, what has passed by.

Hadhari haifai: hayaondoi amri ya mungu. [T](#) 121.

Caution is useless: it does not annul the decree of God. Cf. 409.

1931. Kama ilivyo kwa kuku ndivyo ilivyo kwa kanga. [AL](#) 1632.

What happens to the chicken will also happen to the guinea fowl. All creatures are subjected to the same destiny. Cf. 3510.

1932. Kianzacho vema si lazima kumaliza vema. [NGU](#).

What is well started does not necessarily end well.

1933. Kidaka huanguka na nazi ikawa palepale. [V](#). kidaka.

The totally unripe coconut falls down while the ripe one stays tight. A young child can die and the old ones stay alive.

1934. Kila kitamu hakikosi uchungu. [NGU](#).

Every pleasure has some bitterness.

1935. Kila mbwa ana siku yake. [NGU](#).

Every dog has its day. Of health and sickness, hunger and thirst.

1936. Kila mnofu una mpaka wake. [AL](#) 1639; [KS](#) mpaka..

Every piece of boneless meat has an ending. All joy has an end.

1937. Kila mtu huenda njia zake. [JKP](#).

All people walk their own paths.

1938. Kila shetani ana rafiki yake. [JK](#) 125; [AL](#) 855.

Every devil has a companion. An accident never comes alone - [JK](#).

1939. Kila siku ni udhia, mwanaadamu huchoka. [JKP](#).

There is trouble every day, a person gets tired. Udhia, trouble, annoyance, harassment, vexation, pain, grief.

1940. Kilichompata ngwena na kiboko ni chicho. [AL](#) 1622; [KS](#) ngwena.

What caught the crocodile also overtook the hippopotamus. People in high places are not immune to what's common to all - [AL](#).

Ngwena or mamba, crocodile. Chicho, kicho, that also.

1941. Kitu chema hakikai duniani. [JKP](#).

A good thing will not stay in this world.

1942. Kiumbe lakwe ni fungu. [JKP](#).

The creature's lot is parcelled. A person has a certain amount of joy and suffering.

Fungu, portion, piece, share, lot.

1943. Kulala (or kutwa) na kucha ni mwaka: hupita mambo mangapi? [B](#) 2.49; [MM](#).

The setting and rising [of the sun] is [like] a year; how many things go by?

Usiku mwaka. [EM](#) u28; [KS](#) mwaka.

A night is like a year. A lot can happen in one night. This expression is often used by many as a good night warning, to which is answered: Sote tulimo, We are all in it.

1944. Kuonana kwaolewa. [T](#) 189.

Meetings are ordained [by God]. When one meets a friend, and the occasion has turned to the profit or pleasure of the parties, on leaving one reminds the other that it was not by chance

they met - T. [A Swahili way of saying au revoir. It is regarded as imprudent to refer to a definite meeting. It is considered wiser to leave it to God to write, i.e. prearrange the next meeting of two friends] - [SPK](#).

1945. Kupata si kwa werevu, [na] kukosa si [kwa] ujinga. [T](#) 192; [MS](#) 40; [A](#).173; [SAM](#) 11.20; [JKP](#).

Gain is not acquired by cleverness, nor is destitution the result of ignorance - JKP. Said of people who become rich or poor - [MM](#) Mali ni ya Mungu, prosperity comes from God - [JKP](#). Cf. 2370.

1946. La kuvunda halina rubani. [F](#) 9.1; [SACL](#) 465; [L](#) p.III; [MARA](#) 11; [KS](#) vunda; [J](#) rubani; [F](#) 7.4; [B](#) 2.30; [SPK](#).

A vessel running aground has no [need for a] captain. - F. A shipwreck arrives notwithstanding the best captain - Sacl. In time of disaster people are usually without a leader - [SPK](#). It is also said of somebody who does not want to take advice - [MARA](#) Kuvunda here stands for kuvunja, more commonly used on the mainland - F. For an interesting play on words, see 1497, 3508.

1947. Lango la baraka hufunguka mara moja. [EM](#) 15.

The gate of blessings opens only once.

1948. Leo kwangu kesho kwako. [EM](#) 17.

It is at mine today, and at yours tomorrow. Good or evil can go from one to another. Don't be jealous and don't mock. Cf. 681.

1949. Liandikwalo halifutiki. [T](#) 219; [A](#) 114; [SAM](#) 13.4; [V](#) 138; [SWA](#) 69; [MS](#) 116; [KB](#) futika; [SACL](#) 64, 239; [MARA](#) 2; [JK](#) 137.

What is written cannot be rubbed out. Muslims believe that God records every deed or happening of every human being. That record is written when a person is born and with all things that will happen to that person - [MARA](#). Cf. 409.

1950. Liandikwalo ndilo liwalo. [F](#) 20.5.

What is written [by God] is what is. It must come - [T](#).

1951. Lijaliwelo kuwa, halina uzuio. [T](#) 220; [KB](#) jalia; [SACL](#) 178. lijaliwelo; [AL](#) jalia.

What has been ordained to be, has no hindrance.[no stopping].

Lijaliwelo, lililojaliwa, lijaliwalo from jalia, to allow - [KB](#).

1952. Liwalo lolote, na liwe. [T](#) 225; [A](#) 282; [KB](#) 141; [L](#) p.237; [V](#) 56.

Whatever it is, it be so. Let come what may - [MM](#).

Lambiwalo liko liko na likiwa haliko, li njiani laja. [SPK](#).

That of which it is said: "it is there, it is there!" Even if it is not there. It is on its way. It is coming

1953. Liwapokuwa likuwa. [JKP](#).

When it is to be, it will be.

1954. Loziwelo kuwa huwa. [T](#) 226.

What has been directed to be, is. Loziwelo from kuoa: to behold, to accord, to dispose - [T](#).

Landikwalo litakuwa. [SPK](#).

What has been written down will happen.

1955. Mabua mawili hayaelekani. [T](#) 226a.

Two [corn] stalks never correspond [in height]. If you reap a good harvest after this year's cultivation, next year you may fail - [T](#). Things never come out the same.

1956. Mambo mawili ya maisha ni kupata au kukosa. [NGU](#).

There are two things in life, obtaining and lacking.

1957. Mambo ni kangaja huenda yakaja. [KA](#); [SM](#); [AL](#) 1629.

Matters [of life] are like weeds, they disappear and come back. Life and death, good and bad luck, follow each other.

1958. Mawimbi hayamngojei yeyote. Swahili, Mar.1968, p.106.

Waves never wait for anyone.

1959. Omitted.

1960. Mkaa (or mlala) pema pabaya panamngoja. [AL](#) 1645,1646.

One who dwells [sleeps] in a nice place must expect to live in a bad one. Good fortune is followed by misfortune - [AL](#). Cf. 2534.

1961. Mkataa (or mkimbia) ole (or wele) wamngoja mbele. [T](#) 272; [KB](#) kataa; [SACL](#) 334, wole.

One who refuses [runs away from] his/her fate, finds that it waits ahead.

1962. Mkusudiwa halile, riziki nda olewao. [T](#) 274; [ED](#) 37; [JK](#) 137; [MM](#) aoleweo; [SACL](#) 568, 312, k'alile; [JK](#) haili; [ED](#) aolewao.

The person for whom it was intended [by a human being] does not eat it, but the one for whom it is ordained does. God writes the final destination on the food. Death may come suddenly. Thank God for the food you eat.

1963. Mngalegeza demani, chombo ki juu ya mwamba. [T](#) 288; [V](#) 113; [SACL](#) 166.

Although you slacken the sail, the vessel is on the reef. Shut the stable door when the steed is stolen. Cf. 175, 2402.

1964. Mngamba mwakaza dama, kuna kiwingu joshini. [T](#) 287; [SACL](#) 424; [JKP](#).

Although you tighten the sail, there is a squall to seaward. "You think you have all your business under control, but there is a storm brewing up. Never cease being alert" - [JPK](#). You maintain that you will stand up to the rough sea to confront the danger, although you have no power over it. "On people who engage in a futile struggle against superior forces" - [JPK](#). Mngamba, munge-amba, you would say - [T](#), [SACL](#). Mwakaza, mngakaza, mjakokaza, you would tighten - [T](#). Cf. 175, 2401.

1965. Mny ama asiye na bahati huzaa wakati wa mawindo. [KB](#) 192.

The unlucky animal calves at the time of hunting. The unlucky person may feel happy while bad luck is closing in.

1966. Mtu hupata ajaliwalo, silo alitakalo. [SAM](#) 17.31; [MS](#) 120.

People get what has been destined for them; not that which they want. Cf. 1984.

1966a. Mvua haina hodi. [SPK](#).

Rain does not wait to be invited

1967. Mvua yakupija, nii. [JK](#) 126.

It always rains on you - [JK](#). Said of someone who is never lucky.

Nii: an ideophone for pouring rain, soaking a person through. Associated with -nya, rain. [JK](#). Yakupija for yakupiga.

1967a. Mvua ya mwaka kikaka hupanda shamba na taka. [SPK](#).

New year's rains precipitate and raise the weeds on the fields. After Swahili new year (in March) the fields have to be planted at once - [SPK](#).

Mwaka wa kakakaka panda shamba na haraka. [SPK](#).

When the rainy season approaches there is a flurry. Plant your fields in a hurry.

1968. Mwaka ni majira, leo mvua kesho jua. [TAA](#) 18.

A year has seasons, today rain, tomorrow the sun shines. Life of a human being is full of changes. Don't think that the good or bad things you have now will not change - [TAA](#).

1969. Mwenye bahati kalale. [JK](#) 126.

The lucky fellows, let them go to sleep - [JK](#). Said of somebody always lucky, who has nothing to worry about.

1970. Mwenye bahati humpa swifati. [SPK](#).

People praise a lucky person. Lucky people will be flattered without deserving it - [SPK](#).

1970a. Mwenye heri kaa pori. [SPK](#).

Blessed person stay in the wilderness. Normally, the Swahili will not stay in the bush, especially not at night. A lucky someone can do whatever is wanted - [SPK](#).

1970b. Mwenzo kipata bahati, silale mlango wazi. [SPK](#).

When your friend has a stroke of luck do not go to sleep with your door open. Cf.822.

1971. Na liwe jawabu lolote. [AL](#) ote.

Let the case be and do what it will. Let be whatever may happen.

1971a. Naswibu hwenda kwa wawi, wema wakalia ngoa. [SPK](#).

Luck goes to the wicked, the good can only cry with envy.

1972. Nyota huanguka palepale. [EM](#) n31.

Stars fall on the same plot. Luck follows the same people - [EM](#).

1973. Riziki hufuata kinywa. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

Life's necessities follow the mouth. The explanation given is that your necessities for living, like food, are yours and nobody can taken them away from you. They are for your mouth only.

1974. Riziki i mikononi mwa waja. [KA](#).

Life's necessities are in the hands of the people. Obtaining good things follow good behavior.

Good people get it, bad people don't - [KA](#).

1975. Riziki, kama ajali, huitambui ijapo. [T](#) 465; [MS](#) 70; [A](#) 170; [SAM](#) 22.2; [K](#).269; [AL](#) 20.

One's providences [God's gifts] are like one's fate, [for] you do not recognise it when it comes. Good luck or bad luck cannot be foreseen - [KB](#). Riziki, food, the necessities of life.

1976. Riziki nda olewao. [SACL](#) 668.

Necessities of life are given to a person for whom they have been destined. Cf. 1962.

1977. Riziki ya mwanadamu imo maishani mwake. [SAM](#) 22 3; [MS](#) 197.

The necessities of life are in a person's life. As long as God gives life so long will a person find food and necessities - [MM](#).

1978. Siku moja upate kilango cha jaha. [JK](#) 136.

One day you may find the small door of Fortune.

Kilango cha jaha: the gate of Paradise - J. Jaha, honor, glory, prosperity - [J](#).

1979. Siku ya ajali huijui. [NGU](#).

You don't know the day of misfortune.

1980. Sura nzuri haina bahati. [NGU](#).

A beautiful face has no luck. Said of a beautiful wife with an ugly husband.

1981. Tabibu hazui ajali. [RECH](#) 6; [SACL](#) 41, 853; [V](#) ajali

The physician cannot prevent death. A physician cannot prevent destiny.

1982. Ukiona sahani moja katika salala, zamani ilikuwa ikitiliwa chakula. [AL](#) 186; [KB](#) 304.

If you see a plate on the rubbish heap [remember] formerly food was put on it. Have respect for old age - [KB](#).

1983. Ulichojaliwa What has been destined for you

Hakipunguziki cannot be reduced

Wala hawawezi nor can people

Kukuongezea. [JKP](#). increase it for you

Destined for you by God! - [JKP](#).

1984. Ulipendalo hupati hupata ujaliwalo. [F](#) 47.19; [KB](#) jalia; [SACL](#) 178.

What you desire you do not get [always]; you get what is ordained for you.

[T](#) 538 and [SACL](#). have ujaliwelo instead of ujaliwalo. Ujaaliwelo also is used. Cf. 1966, 2428.

1985. Usinitie fali mbaya [or ukuba]. [J](#) fali; [KS](#).

Do not bring bad luck to me. Ukuba, nuksi, laana, baa, bad luck, curse, disaster.

1986. Usishindane na kari, kari ni mja wa mungu. [E](#) 49.40.

Do not argue with Kari, Kari comes from God. Do not argue with your fate.

Kari from karimu/karama, a special gift of God, an honor - [Krapf](#). Cf. 4481.

1987. Usubi aweza kupenya moto (or mote). [Steere](#), p.194; [AL](#) 355.

A sandfly can get through fire, [everything]. A sly person manages to enter everywhere.

Probably the original proverb had mote[everything] instead of moto, fire. Cf. 1417.

1988. Vyako ni ulivyokula. [REK](#).

Yours is what you ate. The rest can be taken away.

1989. Wafile maji, na pondo kiima-ima. [T](#) 574; [SACL](#) 757; [AL](#) 1752.

They drowned there where the punting pole could stand [in shallow water]. About any troubles from which, under ordinary circumstances, there would have been an easy escape - [T](#).

Wafile, wamekufa, they died. Kiamu dialect. Pondo-ima, pole upright. Pole standing straight up - [Krapf](#). Part of a verse:

Mwenye kushiriki moyo asourudi mtima,

Hufa maji pondo-ima, na kondoka na kilema. [T](#) 387; [SACL](#) 612.

One that gives full play to one's passions and does not restrain the heart, will die by drowning in shallow water, and die with disgrace.

1989a. Wole wako hukatai, wole wako huepuki. [SPK](#).

You cannot refuse to accept your fate, you cannot avoid your destiny.

1989b. Yapitayo hayabadiliki (or hayageukani), na yajayo hayaelimiki (or hayajulikani). [SPK](#).

The past cannot be changed and the future cannot be known.

1990. Yote yataisha, hata kuona uwivu. [KB](#) 350.

Everything ends, even jealousy.

Ila yote itaisha na roho mu kuungua. [KB](#) 77.

All defects will pass by, even envy [heartburn]. Cf. 1925.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Fear

1991. Achaye asende. [SPK](#).

The one who is afraid should not go.

1991a. Akutetaye anakuogopa. [NGU](#).

The one who opposes you is afraid of you.

1992. Aliyetishwa na nyoka usiku akiona kamba hushtuka. [NGU](#).

Someone frightened by a snake is startled at night seeing a rope.

1993. Angurumapo simba, mcheza [ni] nani? [F](#) 3.28; [B](#) 1.68; [CM](#) 42; [KB](#) 23; [KA](#); [KS](#) nguruma.

Who dares to mock the roaring lion? People often laugh at or mock people in power in their absence, but not when they are present - [KA](#).

Angurumapo simba nani achezaye? [RECH](#) 40.

Who will dance to a lion's roaring?

Saa simba anaanguruma hakuna mchezaji, wote huibunja. [AL](#) bunja.

There is no dancer when the lion roars, all hole up.

Simba avumapo wote hunyamaa. [JKP](#).

When the lion roars, all [animals] are quiet.

1994. Chura hupenda maji lakini si maji moto. [EM](#) 40.22.

A frog likes water but not hot water. Said if something gets too dangerous.

1995. Furaha ya kima mbwa asiwepo. [FSM](#) 40.

The monkey is happy when the dog is not there. The monkey likes to play joyfully on the ground, which it cannot do when an enemy is there.

1996. Hakuna mzee atakayesema alikuwa mwoga utotoni. [NGU](#).

There are no senior persons who will say that they were cowards as children.

1997. Kabunda mchezea pembeni. [AL](#) 493.

The small kabunda-fish plays in a corner away from the others. A certain kind of person who is afraid to show up in public.

1998. Kima akicheka kaiona ngome karibu. [FSM](#) 71.

If the monkey laughs it knows that a stronghold is nearby. If weaker persons can laugh in the face of stronger people, it is because they know that help or easy escape is near.

1999. Kitu cha kuogopa ni kuogopa. [NGU](#).

The thing to fear is fear. "Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." President Franklin D. Roosevelt. First Inaugural address, 4 Mar., 1933 (Oxford Dictionary of Quotations).

2000. Kitumba cha nyoka hakiishi woga. [AL](#) 1439; [AL](#) nyoka.

Even a dead snake causes fear. One is never careful enough with dangerous matter - [AL](#).

Kitumba or mzoga, corpse, remains.

2001. Kucha kwingi kwachonga utumwa. [SAM](#) 10.13.

Too much fear creates slavery. A timid person is easily misused by others.

2002. Kujilinda si kushindwa. [JKP](#).

"To be careful is not the same as to surrender" - [JKP](#).

2003. Kujiudhi haifai roho haina thamani. [JKP](#).

No use troubling yourself, life has no price. "Time is too precious to be wasted in anxiety" - [JKP](#).

2004. Kuku akila cha ungo anamdharau mpetaji. [AL](#) 964.

The chicken that eats from the winnowing basket despises the winnower. One who seduces the wife of a neighbor despises his neighbor and exposes himself to revenge - [AL](#).

2005. Kunguru mwoga hukimbiza madoa yake uchafu. [PM](#) 84.

The timid crow avoids soiling its white collar. Don't interfere in matters that don't concern you. Cf. 2006.

2006. Kunguru mwoga hukimbiza ubawa wake. [F](#) 18.57; [KS](#) kunguru.

The timid crow withdraws its wings from harm - [E](#).

Kaa mwoga hukimbiza gando lake. [FSM](#) 60.

The timid crab withdraws its claws. A prudent person is careful to avoid danger. Used to give courage to timid persons who do not trust their own ability. Cf. 257.

2007. Kwa mwoga huenda kichoko [na] kwa shujaa huenda kilio. [F](#) 19.64; [H](#) 56; [B](#) 3.56; [MS](#) 148; [KA](#); [MARA](#) 3.

With a coward goes laughter, with a hero goes wailing. The coward escapes the war and goes laughing, while the hero goes fighting and leaves wailing and suffering - [KA](#).

Kwa shujaa kwaingia kilio. [NGU](#).

Mourning goes to the brave.

Kwa mkali kwaenda kilio kwa mwoga kwaenda furaha. [FSM](#).86.

Weeping goes to fierce persons, but rejoicing goes to the fearful.

Asiyependa amani, kilio hakimtoki. [MEM](#)100.

One who dislikes peace is always crying. Cf. 2005, 2006.

2008. Lingurumalo halilii ila hutisha. [NGU](#).

What growls/roars does not devour but scares.

2009. Mche usiyemjua mpaka umjuapo. [MA](#) 304.

Fear the one you don't know until you come to know that person.

2010. Mchea bahari, hapendi safari. [RSP](#) 38.

One who is afraid of the sea does not like traveling. Cf. 2014.

2011. Mcheka bahari si msafiri, na mtaka shari simwepi. [B](#) 1.38.

One who laughs at the sea is not a traveler, and I do not avoid a person who means evil.

Mchelea bahari si msafiri. [T](#).255; [V](#) mchea

One who fears to go to sea is not a traveler. Cf. 2010.

2012. Mchelea haki hatendi ukweli. [KA](#).

A person who is afraid of doing the right thing, doesn't act correctly. A person in order to do lawfully must love the law and not fear it.

2013. Mchomwa mwiba hawi mtembezi. [A](#) 282; [SAM](#) 14.7, miba; [JK](#) 144; [AL](#) 1089.

A person who has a thorn in the foot is not a good walker - Sacl. It is useless to count on a person who is impaired - [AL](#). Cf. 51.

2014. Mchungia bahari si msafiri. [ED](#) 43; [JK](#) 145.

One who carefully examines the sea is not a traveler. This is said of people who after much preparation suddenly abandon everything. Cf. 2011.

2015. Mficha uchi (or uke) hazai. [F](#) 25.50; [FSM](#) 106; [MARA](#) 3.

One who hides nakedness [vagina] will never have a child. Often used in reference to greed and stinginess, which are barren in social relations. If a woman hides her pregnancy, she might hurt her child; or, if somebody does not reveal hurts and bothers, that person can not be helped. Cf. 4625.

2016. Mimi umande simwogopi shemeji. [AL](#) 782; [TS](#) 51/15.

I'm like the dew, I'm not afraid of my brother-in-law. I conquer my fear of dew, that wets my clothes, I will also courageously encounter my brother-in-law, whom according to custom I must not meet. This is said to give oneself courage to face danger or a difficulty.

2017. Msuluhishi haogopi jeraha. [EM](#) m28.

A peacemaker must not be afraid of a wound. A peacemaker is one who reconciles two quarrelling people. In doing this, that person may be beaten by one or both of the parties and sustain a wound. If a peacemaker is afraid of being so wounded, he/she should not attempt this task - [EM](#).

2018. Mtembezi mpe mwezi, mpe kiza mwizi. [JKP](#).

Give the traveler bright moonlight, but give the thief darkness.

2019. Mtembezi wa usiku haogopi kichaka. [NGU](#).

A person who walks at night is not afraid of dark areas. Kichaka: dense clumps of trees, the bush.

2019a. Mtu aliyewashwa ndiye achaye moto. [SPK](#).

The one who was once burnt fears the fire.

2019b. Mwanamaji akimbia wimbi? [SPK](#).

Will the sailor flee from the waves?

2020. Mwanguo ndio mliowe msimuogopi. [KS](#) mwanguo.

Don't be afraid of the singing of the mwanguo [bird].

Mwanguo or kipwe, the Senegal bush shrike, a bird with many songs and believed that its singing near a house foretells a disaster.

2020a. Mwasha moto hahofu taa ya kombe. [SPK](#).

The stoker does not fear the oil-lamp. The person who lights the fires in the ovens and keeps them going is not afraid of the little flame in the dish-lamp - [SPK](#).

2021. Mwenye kovu usidhani kapoa. [F](#) 35.158; [B](#) 1.70; [L](#) p.112.

One with a scar, don't think that person healed.

Instead of usidhani (don't think), usimtaraji (don't expect) is used by AL; KA; KS, kovu and simhasibu (don't expect) by [ED](#) 55; [JK](#) 132.

Mwenye kovu haliwai [na] kidonda. [T](#) 382; [SACL](#) 477; [V](#) 41; [JK](#) 132, haliwai donda lake; [AL](#) 1416.

A person with a scar does not forget the wound. "The wound in the mind remains" - [JK](#).

It is hard to forget one's spurned love and humiliation - [SPK](#). Liwaa, liwala, be soothed, quietened, forget. Cf. 50.

2022. Mwenye kukimbia hawazi giza wala haoni jua. [V](#)kimbia.

One fleeing does not think of darkness or feel the sun. Cf. 238.

2022a. Mwenye kuumwa na nyoka hamaliziki uboka (or woga). [SPK](#).

The one who was bitten by a snake does not finish being afraid.

2022b. Mwoga hufa na hajafa. [SPK](#).

Cowards die while they have not yet died.

2023. Mwogope mnyonge kuliko mchawi. [NGU](#).

Fear a weakling more than a wizard.

2024. Mwogope mnyonge kuliko mwenye nguvu. [NGU](#).

Be more afraid of the weakling than of the strong one.

Mnyonge, weak, humble, abject, low, debased person.

2025. Ng'ombe mwenye tume ndiye achinjwaye. [KA](#); [KStume](#); [AL](#) 1619. The cow that is frightened will be slaughtered. Scrupulous judges condemn a defenseless person - [KS](#). The shy girl will be seduced - [SPK](#).

2026. Ogopa ni ngao pia. [SAM](#) 20.1; [MS](#) 156.

Being afraid is also a shield. Cf. 2006.

2027. Palipo waoga, mashujaa wa papo. [NGU](#).

Where there are cowards the brave ones are also present.

2028. Pasipo na cha kupoteza, hapana cha kuogopa. [EM](#) p6.

When there is nothing to lose, there is nothing to fear. That makes a person free to do or to say what one likes.

2029. Penye kovu huumia upesi. [EM](#) p11.

A scar is easily wounded. A scar bleeds easily. A person who has been wounded spiritually or mentally will easily be wounded again if something reminds him of the experience that caused the wound - [EM](#). Cf. 1870.

2030. Shujaa hufa mara moja. Mwoga hufa mara elfu moja. [NGU](#).

The brave dies once. The coward dies one thousand times.

2031. Shujaa hutambulikana wakati wa magumu. [KB](#) 287.

Courage proves itself in difficulties. Cf. 1755.

2032. Siogopi unene wa mbuyu. [V](#)unene.

I am not afraid of the thickness of the baobab. It has very soft wood.

2033. Sitaacha kula mkate kwa kuogopa kiungulia. [KA](#); [SM](#).

I won't stop eating bread for fear of heartburn. Don't stop doing a good thing for fear of criticism or slander.

2034. Ujasiri si kupigana na akishindaye. [SAM](#) 23.3.

Courage is not the same as fighting someone stronger than you. Running away from a fight is not always a sign of fear.

2035. Uko chui, onyesha kucha zako. [KB](#)314.

[If] you are a leopard, show your claws.

2036. Upepo tua nina mwana baharini. [KS](#) tua.

Storm calm down, I've a child at sea. A wish, a prayer.

2037. Usijigeuza chano watu wakakufulia. [SAM](#) 25.16.

Don't turn yourself into a wash table so that people want to do their laundry on you. Have a mind of your own; don't allow everything. Also used when hospitality is misused - [MM](#).

2038. Usiku wa kiza mangazimbwe: mtumbuu huwa papa. [SACL](#) 483; [T](#) 552.

On a very dark night, with very poor vision, a sprat becomes a shark.
Mangazi-mbwe, dark night. Fig., inscrutable person. Cf. 1847, 1852.

2039. Uso wa samaki hausikii viungo. [E](#) 50.47.

The face of a fish does not react to the pickle. It remains unchanged by cooking.

2040. Uume ni wa leo na kesho. [B](#) 1.38; [T](#) 539.

Courage is of today and tomorrow.

2041. Wakati wa hatari, kila mtu hulilia roho yake. [JK](#) 130.

In time of danger, all will cry for their own life.

2042. Watoto, watoto hawahofu (or hawauchi) moto. [RSP](#) 142.

Children, children, they do not fear the fire.

2043. Zindiko la mwoga ni kemi. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

The salvation of a coward is shouting. We should ask for help when we are facing obstacles too big for us.
Zindiko, hifadhi, kinga, preserve, protect, save, shield. Kemi, kelele, ukelele, a shout. Cf. 283.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Foolishness - wisdom

2044. Afuatae upotevu si mwerevu. [MA](#) 80.

One who follows destruction is not bright.

Upotevu, loss, impoverishment, wastefulness, immoral life.

2045. Aibu, kujikwaa kisiki mara mbili. [NGU](#).

It is a shame to fall twice over the same stump. It is a shame to make the same mistake twice.

2046. Ajaposhikwa mafungo huenda tena. [T](#) II.

Although some get their clothes caught, they go again. After a narrow escape -[T](#).

2047. Akili [ni] mali. [F](#) 1.8; [T](#) 7; [J](#) akili; [B](#) 1.12; 52; [CM](#) 50; [RECH](#); [V](#) 34; [SACL](#) 50; [KB](#) 9.

Wits are wealth. Brains are an asset -[SPK](#).

Akili ni bora kuliko mali. [MA](#) 25; [Holiday](#).

Understanding surpasses wealth. Also: Meditation is a source of wealth, i.e. the treasures of Paradise] -[SPK](#).

2048. Akisema mwendawazimu, msikiaji awe na akili. [MA](#) 62.

When a mad person talks, the listener should have some wits.

2049. Alimaye pwani havuni. [MA](#) 33.

One who cultivates on the beach does not harvest.

2050. Alitoka kichele kuzimu hakuna nyota. [J](#) kichele; [WIKON](#) 249.

So and So went out stark naked in broad daylight, after the sun was up and the stars had disappeared - [J](#).

Mara akatoka mbio na kupotea porini kichele kuzimu hakuna nyota. [Wikon](#).

Suddenly he came running out and got lost in the bush stark naked in broad daylight. Used to express loss of senses.

2051. Alivunja jahazi kwa kitumbua. [Steere](#) p.194.

So and So wrecked the ship for [the sake of] a pancake. Cf. 2091.

2052. Amerudisha tende manga. [T](#) 25; [J](#) tende; [V](#) 99.

So and So has sent back dates to Arabia. Cf. 1393, 2061.

2053. Asiyeh nadhari siandamani naye. [A](#) 207; [SACL](#) 63; [MS](#) 12; [SAM](#) 3.17; [AL](#) 1128; [T](#) 32.

Do not associate with a brainless person. Meant as a warning against bad company.

Mtu asiye akili, sifuatane naye. [V](#) 20.

I don't associate with a person who has no common sense.

Hana nadhari ni ng'ombe. [JKP](#).

A person who has no understanding is stupid like a cow - [JKP](#). "A cow will eat first, then call her calf. That is considered stupid" - [JKP](#).

2054. Asiyejua maana haambiwi [maana]. [F](#) 4.33; [MULIKA](#) 10; [V](#) 55; [KS](#) maana.

Someone who does not recognize reason is not told the reason. A person who cannot appreciate a rational explanation cannot expect to be given one - [E](#).

Asiyejua maana usimwambie maana. [NGU](#).

Don't tell the meaning to someone who does not understand the meaning.

Asiyejua maana haaminiwi. [NGU](#).

One who does not know the meaning is not trusted. Cf. 2056.

2055. Asiyekucha ng'ombe, ng'ombe ni yeye. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#); [SM](#) asiyeogopa.

One who is not afraid of a bull, is itself a cow [a dumb animal.] Be afraid of a brainless person. If you do not keep away from those people, you will become like one of them.

A careless person is called ng'ombe (a cow) in Swahili. Cf. 657

2056. Asiyona kwa yeye na akionywa haoni. [T](#) 36; [A](#) 114; [V](#) ona; [SACL](#) 711.

If you do not see for yourself, you will not even see, if you are warned.

2057. Asiyethamini chake ni mjinga wa vya wenziwe. [REK](#).

If you do not value your own goods, you are also ignorant about other people's belongings.

2058. Ateteae mtuku ni tangauko la bure. [T](#) 38a; [MA](#) 77; [SACL](#) 616, 916, mtupu.

One who supports a worthless person has trouble for nothing. To reason with a good-for-nothing person is a loss of time - [SACL](#).916.

Said of someone who wastes efforts in service which is not appreciated - [MM](#).

Ateteaye utupu ni sumbuko la bure. [AL](#) 583.

One who argues with a nobody gets involved in useless troubles.

Tangauko for masumbuko, trouble, effort, bother. Mtuku, wa-, a vile despicable person. Vita dialect. Mtukutu, a restless, troublesome person - [J](#).

2059. Bure ni kilio pasipo sikio. [JKP](#).

It's useless to cry when there is no one listening [lit., no ear].

2060. Chakula unachotupa mwingine anakitamani. [AL](#) 57.

The food that you throw away is desired by somebody else. Spoilage is unwise, foolish.

2061. Chumvi sileteni baharini. [RSP](#) 43.

Do not bring salt to the sea. Do not make things worse by adding bitterness - [RSP](#). Cf. 2052.

2062. Duni mimi. [NGU](#).

A fool am I. Said if something is missing or gone wrong.

2063. Fumbo humfumbia mjinga mwerevu hung'amua. [J](#) fumbo; [V](#) fumbo; [SACL](#) 230, 664, 208; [F](#) 8.4; [B](#) 2.60; [KB](#) 53; [NGU](#); [KS](#). akatambua.

A metaphor mystifies a simpleton, but the intelligent person perceives it. The problems of this life are to test the intelligent - [SPK](#).

2064. Hata mpumbavu huweza kumshauri mwenye hekima. [EM](#) h14.

Even a fool may sometimes give a wise person counsel. "The moral is that you should not despise anybody's ideas, for you may learn something, even from a person who is belittled" - [EM](#).

Cf. 2063, 2067.

2065. Hawawashi moto pori yenye kuungua. [AL](#) 615; [JKP](#).

One does not put fire in the wild area that is afire. A fool acts without discrimination - [JKP](#).

2066. Heshima, heshima, vimeuma visima. [JKP](#).

Prestige, prestige, the wells are dried up. People will ruin themselves to show their noblesse, lest others think them mean. Meanwhile the wells are not repaired" - [JKP](#).

2067. Heshima kwa mpumbavu ni upumbavu. [MA](#) 142.

Respect for a stupid person is stupidity. Cf. 1751.

2068. Hujenga ghorofa kuzimuni. [MA](#) 52.

So and So builds skyscrapers. Of somebody who does not make his dreams possible.

2069. Hutia iye mpunga shinani la mlilana? [JKP](#).

How can one plant rice at the foot of a mangrove? "Mangroves grow in salt water, rice in fresh water" - [JKP](#). Iye as suffix; e.g., wataka- iye, what do you want. La for mwa.

2070. Ingawa ni usiku butu, mnofuni usithubutu. [REK](#).

Although the night is dull, don't trust the boneless steak.

Mnofu, boneless meat. Butu, dull, not sharp. Cf. 2119.

2071. Jinga likikwewevuka, akili hakuna tena. [JKP](#).

When the fool becomes intelligent [in the eyes of society], then there is no more intelligence. "When a society no longer recognizes fools as fools, then no one is intelligent" - [JKP](#).

2072. Jua lako. [NGU](#).

Know what is yours.

2073. Kajigeuza chachandu kujipalia makaa. [SAM](#) 8.1.

So and so changed into an octopus, heaping live coals upon itself. Said if somebody over-self-incriminates about something that person did. Don't be a fool, jumping into things.

Chachandu, pweza, cuttlefish, octopus, a fish that jumps in the boat of a fisherman, when caught. Cf. 2134.

2074. Kapu lililoboka haliwekwi kitoweo. [EM](#) k2.

A basket without a bottom is never used to put food in it. This means that you should not leave your valuable article with a person who is grasping: you will lose it - [EM](#).

2075. Kawa pweza, kujipalia makaa. [NGU](#).

Be an octopus and cover yourself with charcoal. Cf. 2073, 2134.

2076. Kichwa cha nyoka hakibandiki mtungi. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

The head of a snake cannot be loaded with a pot. Cannot carry a heavy pot. A fool should not be put in charge of an important matter - [MARA](#). Mtungi, a stone pot. Cf. 3957.

2077. Kila afugaye nyoka, lazima kumwuma. [JKP](#).

Whoever rears a snake, will be bitten. It is useless and harmful to show kindness to a person of evil character - JKP.

2078. Kilicho ndani usikiamini. [NGU](#).

Don't trust what is inside [what is hidden]. Cf. 2119.

2079. Kinara cha mwalimu hakwei zuzu. [NGU](#).

A fool does not climb the lighthouse of the teacher. A fool does not attain the leadership of the teacher.

Zuzu, a fool, inexperienced. Mnara, tower, lighthouse. Kinara, a small lighthouse, a candlestick.

2080. Kiombe mwanzo hajuti, majuto huja kinyume. [JKP](#).

No mortal regrets early in life, regrets come in the end. Cf. 2095.

2081. Kosa ndilo lenye aibu, si adhabu yenye aibu. [NGU](#).

Shame belongs to the crime, not to the punishment. A mistake is shameful not the punishment.

2083. Kuchinja mbuzi kwa ajili ya kinofu. [T](#) 199; [A](#) 195; [SAM](#) 10.12; [AL](#) 59.

To slaughter a goat for the sake of a chop. When a person takes great trouble for the sake of a small gain.

2084. Kugombana na udongo, unakishtakia (or utakielezea) kisuguu. [AL](#) 761-2; [AL](#) kisuguu.

You quarrel with the soil, are you going to take your complaint to [tell] the anthill?. About having a dispute with someone and then looking for support from a member of that family. Earth and anthill are close relatives; to dispute and tell the other ensures that the case makes the round in the family.

2085. Kuku yenye kuwa kwao inadondoa paka ya pori. [KB](#) 124.

A chicken at her own place invites the civet cat. When at home one feels secure and more audacious.

2086. Kula nyange ni kuzidiwa. [NGU](#).

Doing foolish things is getting in difficulty.

Nyange, kelele, making noise, ringing a bell; being foolish. Zidiwa, being in difficulty.

2087. Kuni huzaa jivu. [REK](#).

Firewood begets ashes. About doing something not useful.

2088. Kununua ng'ombe wayo. [T](#) 187; [A](#) 300; [SAM](#) 11.18.

To buy a cow by its hoof mark. Buy a pig in a poke. Cf. 2091, 2119.

2089. Kutaka lisilokuwa, ni maana ya ujinga. [JKP](#).

Wanting the impossible is caused by ignorance.

2090. Kutojua humlaza nyoka jikoni. [REK](#).

Ignorance puts a snake to sleep in the kitchen.

2091. Kuuza kapu kwa miwaa. [SAM](#) 11.22.

Selling a basket for palm leaves.

Hana wenyeji, mngwame, mwuza kapu kwa miaa. [T](#) 84; [SACL](#) 647.

Mngwame [King of Vumba] has no subjects, seller of matting bags for the palm leaf slips -[T](#).

This king of Vumba was a very rich and hospitable man, he became a hawker of matting bags, but failed so badly that all he could get for them were the slips [miyaa] with which they were made" - [T](#). Cf. 2088, 2119.

2092. Kuwashia taa pofu ni kuharibu mafuta. [MARA](#) 35; [SM](#).

To light a lamp for a blind person is waste of lamp oil.

Kummulikia kipofu, utamaliza mabua shambani. [REK](#).

By giving light to a blind person you'll finish all the millet stalks in the field. Trying to explain something to a fool is waste of time. Cf. 2124, 2127.

2093. Kuzimisha moto kwa mafuta wilaya. [MA](#) 237. Putting out fire with parafin.

Said of someone who claims to reconcile people by reviving hostilities. Mafuta wilaya or mafuta Ulaya, oil from Europe.

2094. Mafuu hapatilizwi. [F](#) 20.1; [NGU](#).

Silliness is not revenged. A mentally sick person is not punished.

Mafuu, a person not responsible for his or her actions.

2094a. Majuto hayeshi. [SPK](#).

Regret never ends.

2095. Majuto ni mjukuu, mwishowe huja kinyuma. [F](#) 22.12, [J](#) juta; [T](#) 232a; [L](#) 42; [MARA](#) 38; [V](#) 30; [KB](#) 152; [NS](#) 36 and [SACL](#) 489, huja nyuma; [KS](#) majuto; [NGU](#); [ED](#) 29; [SPK](#).

Regrets are like a grandchild, they come a considerable time after the event.

Majuto huja kinyume. [V](#) 30; [KB](#)151; [SACL](#) 489; [SPK](#).

Regret comes afterwards.

Majuto ni mwana haramu. [MA](#) 269.

Remorse is like an illegitimate child. Questions of conscience come after the supposedly evil deed is accomplished.

2095a. Makosa yaelezeka. [SPK](#).

Mistakes can be explained.

2096. Mamba hutoka majini na kulamba umande. [KB](#) 155.

The crocodile comes out of the water to lick dew. This is said of somebody who leaves opulence for trifles.

2096a. Mbuzi hutaka kuvunja zizi. [SPK](#).

A goat wants to escape from the kraal. A stupid girl wants to run out on the street, to the boys - [SPK](#).

2096b. Mbuzi mume hakamwi. [SPK](#).

The billy-goat is not milked.

2097. Mfumbata moshi. [T](#) 258; [A](#) 292; [AL](#) mfumbata.

A grasper at smoke. Building on sand. Cf. 3521-2.

2098. Mgawo unajulikana kadiri utakavyopewa majani. [AL](#) 596.

You will know your share by the amount of leaves you receive.

Majani, leaves, grass; in this context, shares.

2099. Mikononi mwa mjinga shoka ni mshindo basi. [JKP](#).

In the hands of an ignorant an axe makes only noise. "It cuts no wood" - [JKP](#).

2100. Mjibu mjingwa sawa na ujinga wake. [NGU](#).

One who answers a fool is also a fool.

2101. Mjinga akierevuka, mwerevu yu[po] mashakani. [F](#) 26.63; [MARA](#) 3; [Swhl](#), Mar.1968, p.107.

When a fool becomes enlightened, discovering that he/she has been cheated, the wise person must look for an abode - [JK](#), Myths and Legends, p.147.

2102. Mjinga asifia ujinga wake. [KB](#) 183.

The ignorant praise their own ignorance. Fools do not recognize the degree of their ignorance - [KB](#).

2103. Mjinga hajijui. [NGU](#).

A fool has no self-knowledge. Fools do not know that they are fools.

2104. Mjinga humnyonga mamake aliye kaburini. [REK](#).

Fools strangle their mothers who are in their graves.

2105. Mjinga mpe kilemba utamwona mwendowe. [MARA](#) 2.

Honor a fool and you see it in his walking. Struts about, looking down on others. Even people in power should take this into account. Cf. 2057, 2076, 3957.

2106. Mke azaaye mchana haulizwi amezaa nini. [REK](#).

A woman who gave birth in daytime is not asked what she birthed. Asking for something obvious, feigning ignorance.

2107. Mkia hauongozi kichwa. [REK](#).

The tail does not direct the head. Ongoza, drive forward, lead, guide.

2108. Mkubwa alikosa figa, ukuni alibeba. [AL](#) 189.

The chief did not have stones for a fireplace [a stove], but carried firewood. Even a person high up does foolish things.

2109. Mkulima hautii nazi mpunga. [NGU](#).

Farmers do not plant coconut trees in rice fields.

2110. Mlaji ni mla leo; mla jana kala nini? [F](#) 28.83; [FSM](#) 120; [J](#); [E](#); [JK](#) 128; [MARA](#) 3; [MS](#) 49, kala nini; [KS](#), mla; [L](#) 111; [T](#) 278; [SACL](#) 570; Vmla .

The real eater is today's eater, what has the eater of yesterday eaten? You can't eat your pie and have it - [J](#). The eater is today's eater, what will yesterday's eater eat now. Put some money aside - [JK](#). "The glutton thinks only about the present food, that of yesterday having passed through" - Krapf dictionary, mlaji. Important is to-day's food, not yesterday's - [SACL](#). Cf. 186, 3518.

2110a. Mpumbavu anasema, mwenye elimu hasemi. [SPK](#).

The fool is talking, the scholar is quiet.

2111. Mtikisa mbuyu hujitikisa mwenyewe. [EM](#) m29.

One who tries to shake a baobab tree only shakes oneself. A baobab is a very big tree and there is no person who can shake it. There are things that cannot be changed.

2112. Mtu si mjinga asemaye sikufahamu. [MA](#) 383.

A person who says "I don't understand" is not stupid.

2113. Mtukuze mjinga ujitengenezee. [NGU](#).

Praise a fool and put yourself in order. Or as someone said: "Prepare your way to heaven."

2114. Mtwangia jaani, huondoka na mtitigo. [KA](#); [SM](#).

A person who is threshing on a rubbish heap leaves dizzy. Such a person does a useless job. Mtitigo, msukoshuko, dizziness. Twanga, crush, grind, thresh.

2115. Mwashata mwezini hasidi wa mafutaye. [SAM](#) 19. 39.

One who lights a lamp during full moon is the enemy of oil. Said if somebody is doing useless things. Cf. 2092.

2115a. Mwenye akili hakosi mali. [SPK](#).

A clever person will lack no wealth

2115b. Mwenye akili tukufu ni kama kwambiwa neno. [SPK](#).

The person of superior intelligence, it is as if that person has been told already. A word to the wise is enough - [SPK](#).

2116. Mwerevu kanga, mwenye kuacha maji akaoga mchanga. [CM](#) 36; [T](#) 590; [SACL](#) 706.

Woe to you, guinea fowl, that leaves the water and bathe in the sand. Instead of mwerevu, cunning also wele-wako, woe to you is used. Wele or wole or ole. Cf. 1961.

2117. Neno kijinga na mtu mjinga. [NGU](#).

A foolish word and a fool go together.

2118. Ni kama nguvu ya mayonda, zitakwishilia (or hufilia) nyangwani. [T](#) 427; [ED](#) 61; [SPK](#).

It is like the strength of apes, it spends itself on the fields. As long as the apes keep to the thick tropical growth of mangroves, which skirt these creeks and flats, they are not to be come at; but once out in the open, they fall easy prey to the leopard or to the hunter - [T](#). The proverb is used to describe people who do not use their talents well.

2119. Nyama ya usiku haina mafuta. [V](#) 82; Vnyama; [KB](#) 251; [FSM](#) 173.

Meat [bought] at night [in darkness] has no fat. Buy a pig in a poke. Cf. 2096.

2120. Penye ujinga werevu ni ujinga. [EM](#) p16.

Where there is ignorance, cleverness is ignorance. It is folly to be wise where ignorance is bliss.

2121. Pweza ndiye ajikaangaye na mafuta yake. [EM](#) p25.

It is the octopus that fries itself with its own fat. Said of a person who harms himself by his betrayal.

2122. Samaki akioza mmoja, usitupe tenga. [NGU](#).

If one fish is rotten don't throw away the basket.

2123. Si busara kukimbia mvua kwa kujitumbukiza mtoni. [NGU](#).

It is not very clever to run away from the rain and jump in a river.

2124. Simwashilize chongo taa. [ED](#) 68.

Do not light a lamp for a one-eyed person. Be careful to whom you give information or do kindness - [ED](#). Cf. 2092.

2125. Sishindane na wakati. [JK](#) 125.

Do not fight against time. Do not do the impossible.

2126. Siukate mkono usio na kitu. [EM](#) s22.

Do not cut off a hand that [can offer you] nothing. Do not harm or blame a person who fails to help you - [EM](#).

2127. Siwashe taa nyumbani mwa kipofu. [JK](#) 120.

Do not light a lamp in a blind man's home. Used also about telling secrets. Cf. 2092.

2128. Sizidi kilio matangani, sipeleke tende umangani. [JKP](#).

Do not add weeping at a funeral service; do not send dates to Arabia. Cf. 2051.

2129. Tokomile hatoi wali kumbini. [EM](#) t16.

The tokomile dance is not played in initiation rites. Every matter has its proper time; e.g., a death dance is not played at a marriage ceremony - [EM](#).

Tokomire, a dance of the Wazaramu people - [KS](#).

2130. Tusisukume gari lisilo na magurudumu. [EM](#) t22.

Let's not push a car without wheels.

2131. Ujinga ni sumu ya maisha. [REK](#).

Ignorance is the poison of life. Stupidity poisons life. Ujinga, foolishness, ignorance, stupidity.

2132. Ujinga wa kuuza si ubaradhuli wa kununua. [J](#); [V](#) ujinga.

Being foolish in selling is better than being duped in buying. The meaning is that if you buy what you do not need you'll sell what you need. You can sell with one eye but you need two eyes to buy without being cheated.

2133. Ukiwa mwerevu sana jiwekee ujinga kidogo. [REK](#).

If you are very clever cover yourself with a little ignorance.

2134. Umejigeuza pweza, unajipalia makaa? [E](#) 47.21.

Have you changed into an octopus heaping live embers on yourself? A cuttle fish (octopus), when roasted on the fire, may spasmodically pull coals over its own body.

The expression kujipalia makaa means: to put oneself into trouble by doing something unlawful or foolish.

Ni mimi pweza mwenye mikia minane? [KS](#).

Am I an octopus with eight tails? A busy mother might say that. Cf. 2073.

2135. Upande wa pili wa mto wavutia. [REK](#)

The other side of the river is attractive.

2136. Upumbavu wa mamba, anakimbia mvua katika mto. [AL](#) 612.

How stupid of the crocodile, to escape the rain it jumps into the river. Cf. 2096.

2137. Usiamini hali ya anga. [REK](#).

Don't trust the weather.

2138. Usigombe na mkwezi, nazi imeliwa na mwezi. [E](#) 48.31. [KA](#); [AL](#) 1413 14.

Don't argue with the palm climber, the coconut has been eaten by the moon. Don't accuse the harvester, he did not spoil the nuts. Mkwezi, one who climbs in the coconut tree to pick the nuts. Kuliwa na mwezi (idiom) or imeharibika, it is spoiled, rotten.

2138a. Usihadaike u mtu mzima. [SPK](#).

You are a grown-up, now do not have illusions.

2139. Usijitie hamnazo kucheza ngoma utakazo. [TAA](#) 30.

Do not endanger yourself going to forbidden dances. Hamnazo: carelessly.

2140. Usimtie mjinga pa nahodha mwema, mwenye kulichung a tanga, ajue kupima. [JKP](#).

Don't appoint an ignorant person instead of an able captain, the one who observes the sail and knows how to estimate [the wind].

2141. Usinifanye punda wa dobi. [T](#) 554; [V](#) punda.

Don't make a laundryman's donkey out of me. Don't make a fool out of me. See "The story of the washerman's donkey." (Steere's Swahili Tales, p.l.)

2142. Usione giza kwako ukaamua kufuata mwangaza wa jirani. [REK](#).

Don't despise the darkness at your place, before deciding to follow the light of your neighbor. Don't follow another person's star.

2143. Usione nyumbu, pahali pa mbu. [RSP](#) 92.

Do not see a wildebeest instead of a mosquito.

2144. Usioteshe majani nyayoni. [NGU](#).

Don't try to grow grass on the footpath. It won't grow.

2145. Usipo na nywele, chanuo ni ya (or nda) nini? [JKP](#).

If you have no hair, what use is a comb? "A woman without virtue, a man without merit should not be flattered" - [JKP](#). Cf.3006-8.

2146. Wajinga ndio waliwao. [NGA](#) p.29.

It's the fools who get eaten. Used when a person feels tricked.

Wajinga ndio waliouawa. [FK](#).

It's the fool who gets killed.

Vya wajinga ndivyo viliwavyo, twapondee. [AL](#) 1241-2.

The goods of the fools are eaten, let's profit.

2147. Wakimbia kufiwako wenda kuliwako nyama. [KA](#); [MS](#).

You run away from a simple burial and go to a place where your corpse is eaten. If you try to run away from ordinary difficulties, you'll find yourself in even greater problems.

2148. Watengeneza kwa wenzako, kwako kunaporomoka. [SAM](#) 27.2.

You are repairing the house of your companion, while your own house is falling in ruin. Timid people easily go full out to serve other people, forgetting their own needs - [SAM](#).

Wanaosha mwitu minazi ikifa ngara. [MM](#).

You are watering wild trees [in a forest] while your coconut trees are dying of drought.

2149. Wazimu una ncha arobaini. [T](#) 589.

Madness has forty phases [endings, variations]. Cf. 3136.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Freedom

2150. Afadhali kufa kama kuishi utumwani. [KS](#) kama.

It's better to die than to live in slavery. Kama or kuliko, more, over, better (comparative).

2151. Akija asije [kwangu] fauwa. [J](#) fauwa; [KS](#), fahuwa.

Whether that person comes or not, it is all the same to me.

Fauwa, also fahuwa (Arabic) or sawa sawa, it is all the same.

2152. Anayekulisha humpiga mamako ukimwangu. [REK](#).

The person who feeds you beats your mother while you are looking. Of a person totally in the power of somebody else.

2153. Dimbwi huru si uhuru. [EM](#) 49.17.

An open pool is not freedom. Freedom without limits is like a free pool; freedom must have limits and order to maintain peace - [EM](#).

2154. Omitted.

2155. Gereza si kuta. [EM](#)g1.

A prison is not walls. "A prison is not necessarily a place with visible walls. A person may live without being free even if he is not in a physical prison" - [EM](#).

2156. Hiari yashinda utumwa. [F](#) 11.19; [B](#) 2.29 hushinda;; [B](#).2.47; [H](#) 44; [L](#) 26; [SWA](#) 7; [MEM](#) 95; [KS](#) hiari.

Choice is better than compulsion. Hiari or hiyari, freedom, free choice, liking. Cf. 2160.

2157. Kanga hazai (or hatagi) ugenini (or ujani or utumwani); both = captivity). [F](#) 14.3; [B](#) 3.72; [AL](#) 1555; [V](#) 109; [SACL](#) 326; [JKP](#); [T](#) 125.

The guinea fowl does not breed or lay eggs in strange surroundings or captivity. "The guinea fowl is the symbol of a noble woman" - [JKP](#); [T](#).

Kasuku hazai utumwani. [KB](#) 88.

The parrot does not breed in captivity - [KB](#).

2158. Kila mtu ana hiari katika yake dari. [JKP](#).

People are free [to do as they wish] in their own house. Dari, ceiling, roof.

2159. Kuku hapekui ugenini. [NGU](#).

Chicken do not scratch about in a strange environment. Cf. 2157.

2160. Mja (or abidi) hana hiari. [T](#) 26.62; [MA](#) 1.

A servant of God has no choice. Implied is that what God has destined for you is what you get. It is said whenever something good or bad happens to someone. The use of this proverb is two-fold: a person often has no choice when his/her conscience is clear about a way of action, and whatever plans one makes for the future, one cannot foresee superior forces.

Mja and abdi are often translated as servant of God. Cf. 2157.

2161. Mkataa kwao ni mtumwa. [MEM](#) 240.

One who does not like his home is a slave. Another translation: One who is not accepted at home is like a slave. Where can that person go?

2162. Mkate mkavu wa nyumbani ni bora kuliko nyama ya shuwa ya pengine. [F](#) 27.69.

Dry bread in one's home is better than good meat somewhere else.

Nyama ya shuwa, grilled meat.

2163. Mtu akifika chengo cha mtu, humtegemea. [J](#) chengo.

If a person goes to another's place, that person becomes dependent.
Chengo, house, a dwelling place, a village, a camp - [J](#).

2164. Mtu huzaliwa huru, lakini siku zote ni mfungwa. [NGU](#).

A person is born free, but is tied up all days.

2165. Mwiba wa kujidunga mwenyewe hauumi. [T](#) 647.

A thorn with which you prick yourself [on your own accord] does not hurt. Self-imposed tasks are cheerfully borne. Ndunga or toboa: pierce - [SACL](#).

Mwiba wa kujichoma hauna (or hauambiwi) pole. [JKP](#); [KA](#); [SM](#); [SPK](#). Understood: there is no pity for the people who stab themselves on purpose. "An aggressive character who gets into trouble will reap no sympathy" - [JKP](#). Nobody feels sorry for you if you put yourself in a bad and dangerous situation. E.g., a young person who rebels against his/her parents has no peace. A girl who gets herself into trouble is not pitied - [SPK](#). Cf. 2166.

2166. Mzigo wa kujifungia hauna uzito. [KB](#) 229; [AL](#) 158.

The load you bind for yourself is not heavy. A profitable job is easy to put up with.

2167. Tegemea wapendao uhuru watakuwa huru. [NGU](#).

Support those who love freedom, they will be free.

2168. Uhuru ukiondoka utumwa hutawala. [NGU](#).

When freedom leaves slavery rules.

2169. Uhuru ukizidi nchi huteketea. [REK](#).

If freedom increases the country will be destroyed. Freedom must be tempered, regulated.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Friendship

2170. Adui au rafiki hana alama. [NGU](#).

Enemy or friend has no mark [of identification]. They look alike.

2171. Adui ukimtahadhari mara moja, rafiki umtahadhari mara elfu moja. [MA](#) 16.

If you are careful with your enemy once, be careful with your friend a thousand times.

2172. Adui wa giza taa. [NGU](#).

The enemy of darkness is a lamp [light].

2173. Akufaaye kwa dhiki ndiye rafiki. [H](#) 95; [B](#) 2.26; [SWA](#) 60; [MS](#) 158; [RSP](#) 64.

Akufaaye kwa taabu, ndiye sahibu. [SM](#).

The person who helps you in need is a friend.

2174. Akupaye kisogo si mwenzio. [J](#); [RECH](#) 222; [SACL](#) 407; [V](#) kishogo.

Whoever turns the back on you is not your friend.

Instead of kisogo nyongo is used also. [A](#) 292; [T](#) 69.302. and mgongo. [SAM](#) 16.19. and maungo. [MM](#). All have the same meaning.

Kisogo or kishogo, the back of the head. The expression Kumpa mtu kisogo means to ignore somebody totally, to leave that person out of the conversation.

2175. Akupe ndao simdharau, akukataao msahau. [JKP](#).

Don't despise the one who loves you, forget the one who turns you down. "Advise to young lovers" - [JKP](#).

2176. Akupendaye mshike. [JKP](#).

Stay with the one who loves you.

2177. Akusaidiaye shidani, ndiye kweli ni wako mwandani. [RSP](#) 63; [SPK](#).

The person who helps you in need is truly your friend. Cf. 2173.

2178. Akutendaye mlipe. [JKP](#). Pay [back] the one who mistreats you.

Tenda has a simple meaning of to do, but most often it has the meaning of to do something evil to somebody.

2178a. Ambaye hashikamani nawe, si wako mwandani. [SPK](#).

The one who does not stick with you is not your friend.

2179. Anayekupenda si mtumwa wako. [AL](#) 1027.

The one who loves you is not your slave. Friendship must not take away one's freedom - [AL](#).

2180. Apataye si mwenzio. [AL](#) 1189; [JKP](#).

A person who gets [wealth] is not your friend [any longer]. "When you were both poor, you were friends together. Money put the other person in a higher class" - [JKP](#).

2181. Apend waye hana ila. [JKP](#).

The person who is loved has no faults. "Love is blind" - [JKP](#).

2182. Asiyena marafiki hana maadui. [REK](#).

One without friends has no enemies.

2183. Asiyefahamu urafiki si rafiki. [MA](#).

One who does not understand friendship is not a friend.

2184. Asiyefawa na wake hufawa na mwenziwe. [KA](#); [SM](#).

Those who are not helped by their own people are usually helped by the people of their friends. Asiyefawa or asiyesaidiwa.

2185. Asiyekuwapo machoni, na moyoni hayupo. [F](#) 4.36; [H](#) 96; [MS](#) 159; [KA](#).

Someone who is not in sight, is not in the heart.

Karibu muhibu, machoni, moyoni. [RSP](#) 55.

Nearby is beloved, before the eyes, in the heart. Cf. 2211.

2186. Asiyekuwepo machoni na lake halipo. [KA](#).

The person who is not in sight, finds also that his portion is not there. Said if someone does not appear in time. See also the sections Alertness and Hurry.

2187. Badili starehe usibadili marafiki. [NGU](#).

Change your life style, but do not change friends.

Starehe, comfort, peace, calm. Used also when entering a room and people are standing up, you say, starehe, please don't get up.

2188. Bila samahani, tuishi kama zamani. [EM](#) 27.14.

Never mind, let us live as hitherto. Forget the evils of the past [even our own] and live in friendship. This is said by friends who have offended each other - [EM](#).

2189. Bora kuwa mwiba kwa upande wa rafiki yako kuliko sauti yake ya mwanngwi. [MEM](#) 134; [MULIKA](#) 1,p.10.

It is better to be the thorn in the side of your friend than to be your friend's echo. A real friend should warn a friend in case of wrongdoing.

2190. Bora siku ya kuunga urafiki kuliko ile ya mlimo. [KB](#) 34.

A day devoted to friendship is more precious than one given to work. Cf. 2206.

2191. Cha bei yafaa wawili; wa tatu ni mlozi. [AL](#) 993; [TS](#) 22/1.

Two people are enough for something valuable; a third one would cast a spell. In business, friendship, and love it's better to limit oneself for fear of becoming superficial. A third might bring confusion.

Urafiki wa wawili unapita watatu. [TS](#) 22/1.

A friendship of two is better than one of three. Cf. 2214, 2253.

2192. Cha mwenzio mavi ukikiona kiheshimu. [NGU](#).

If you see bad activity of your friend respect it. Don't talk about it, stay away.

2193. Chakula kilicho mbali usipokipata, unaweza kupata kwa wengine. [TS](#) 23/13.

Food that is beyond your reach, you can get from others. Friends sharing and helping.

2194. Cheko la rafiki lina bei ghali. [KB](#) 39.

The smile of a friend costs dearly. To keep up friendship by means of gifts.

Hesabu fupi hufanya urafiki mrefu. [MEM](#) 290.

Short reckonings make long friendship.

2195. Chui umkutapo kwako, umfanye rafiki yako. [RSP](#) 84.

If you find a leopard in your house, make it your friend.

2196. Hapana kisichochukiza katika msiba wa rafiki. [NGU](#).

There is nothing that annoys in the misfortune of a friend. A friend's misfortune does not cause dislike.

2197. Heri adui mwerevu kama rafiki (or mwenzi) mpumbavu.

[J](#); [B](#) 2.39; [SACL](#) 41, 278; [KB](#) 72, kuliko; [T](#) 88; [V](#) 110; [AL](#) 1436.

It is better to have a clever enemy than a blundering friend. Without any remorse one can leave an enemy - [AL](#).

Heri adui mwerevu kuliko adui mjinga. [MS](#) 152.

It is better to have a clever enemy than a stupid one. An interesting variation. A person might guess what a clever enemy might do, but a fool does not follow logic.

Adui shujaa ni bora zaidi kuliko rafiki mwoga. [MEM](#) 8.

A courageous foe is better than a cowardly friend. Cf. 2198.

2198. Heri kuliwa na simba kama kuliwa na fisi. [V](#) 110.

Better be eaten by a lion than by a hyena.

Here simba, a lion stands for an enemy; fisi, hyena stands for a treacherous friend. Cf. 2197.

2199. Iweke mizizi ya juhudi. [JKP](#) 683.

Plant the roots of generosity. "If you want friends be one" - [JKP](#).

2200. Jeraha ya rafiki yamini. [NGU](#).

The wound of your friend is a solemn oath. It concerns you by solemn agreement. Whatever hurts your friend hurts you.

2201. Kama watu hukupenda, kaa. [JKP](#).

If people [in a certain place] like you, stay [with them]. "The best place to settle is where you have friends" - [JKP](#).

2202. Kisiki hafi mjane ndege asipotua kwake. [AL](#) 1033; [LE2](#) 302.6; [AL](#) kisiki.

A tree stump does not die deserted without a bird perching on it. Nobody dies without love; everyone knows love, even if only for a fleeting moment in one's life. A prostitute or a Don Juan finds a mate - [AL](#).

2203. Kuanzisha urafiki si kazi, ngwamba ni kuupalia. [EM](#) k23.

Striking a friendship is not difficult, the challenge is to maintain it. Ngwamba, hard work

2204. Kufarakana hakuvunji kujuana. [KB](#) 119; [SACL](#) 216.

Separation needs not to destroy friendly relationships.

2205. Kuku akiacha wana yuna mai matumboni. [T](#) 172; [AL](#) 950.

If a hen leaves her chicks she has eggs inside her. If a friend leaves you, it is because your friend has found other attractions. A mother who is not involved with her family has lovers - [AL](#).

Mai for mayai, eggs. Yuna or ana, she/he has.

2206. Kulima ni raki, njia ni rafiki. [T](#) 178; [AL](#) 178.

Cultivating means slaves, counsel means friends - [T](#). Working the soil is slave-work, but on the way back the conversion is friendly.

Work before pleasure - [AL](#).

The whole verse is: **Kulima ni raki, njia ni rafiki.**

Kulima kwa mtu pweke ni kujihiliki:

Majibiwi na manyasi hayakusanyiki. [T](#).

Cultivating is slaves, way is a friend.

Cultivating to a person who is alone is killing:

the burmbakes and weeds are not to be got together - [T](#).

Njia, a course of action, right course; hence, counsel, advice; and justice - [T](#). Cf. 2192.

2207.. Kulingana kama ...

To fit together like ...

Kama pete na kidole. [V](#) 121; [J](#); [KS](#) pete

Like ring and finger.

Kama chanda na pete. [T](#) 51; [SACL](#) 967.

Like finger and ring.

Kama ulimi na mate. [T](#) 51; [SACL](#) 967; [KS](#) ulimi.

Like the tongue and the saliva.

Kama uta na upote. [T](#) 51; [SACL](#) 967; [AL](#) upote.

Like the bow and the bowstring.

Kama kinoo na wembe. [V](#) 121.

Like the whetstone and razor.

Kama kupe na mkia wa ng'ombe. [J](#) kupe; [KS](#) kupe.

Like a tick and a cow's tail.

Kama sahani na kawa. [T](#) 509; [V](#) 121; [J](#) kawa; [RECH](#) 178.

Like a dish and its cover.

Kama kitanda kupata mkeka. [J](#) mkeka; [V](#) 40; [T](#) 426.

Like a bed getting a mat. i.e., To make a bed complete; the finishing touch. Cf. 2246.

2208. Kuoneana mashaka kwaua urafiki. [NGU](#).

Having doubts towards each other kills the friendship.

2209. Kupendana kama pete na kidole, huachana kwa usiku. [AL](#) acha.

Loving each other as ring and finger, separating for sleeping. Cf. 2246.

2210. La kale jeraha, huwa ndugu saha. [JKP](#).

An old sore/wound becomes a true friend. "Some old people like complaining about their ills and ailments, but also they like to boast about old wars and heroic deeds" - [JKP](#).

Ndugu saha, a brother/sister indeed.

2211. Lisilokuwapo moyoni halipo machoni. [F](#)20.9; [B](#) 1.52.

What is not in the heart is not in the eyes [eyesight]. You don't care for those you do not love. Cf. 2185.

2212. Maji na sukari. [AL](#) sukari; [TS](#) 24/22.

Water and sugar. This is said of two people that are inseparable. Cf. 2207.

2213. Maji na tumbawe: mama na mwanawe. [RSP](#) 3.

Water and the coral rock [are together like] mother and child. Cf. 2207.

2214. Marafiki kumi, miti kumi yenye kuoza. [AL](#) 1023.

Ten friends are like ten rotten trees. It's better not to squander your friendship. Cf. 2191, 2253.

2215. Marafiki makubwa lazima waachane. [NGU](#).

Great friends must leave each other.

2216. Mfuko wa mwenzio usiutupe mkono. [REK](#).

The load of your friend don't throw it from your hand. Don't deny help.

Mfuko, bag, bundle. Tupa mkono, throw away, cast off, abandon.

2217. Mfupa wa mbuzi wa mwenzio ni mtamu. [REK](#).

The bone of your friend's goat is tasty. Even a little gift of your friend is sweet.

2218. Milima haikutani, bali wanadamu hukutana. [B](#) 2. 2; [JK](#) 123; [PM](#) 84.

Mountains do not meet, but people meet. Used to soften a departure. This can be said for "It's a small world," but more often "Do not forget to visit your old friends", which is a must - [JK](#).

2219. Miwili miwili, furaha kamili. [RSP](#) 99.

Two bodies, perfect happiness. Verses of a wedding song - [MM](#).

2220. Moyo wa mwenzio ni msitu wa giza. [RECH](#) 113.

The heart of your friend is a dark forest. It is impossible to fully understand even a friend.

2221. Mpe kisogo si mwenzio. [KA](#).

The one who turns his back on you is not your friend.

Akupaye kisogo si mwenzio. [J](#).

One who turns his face away and looks somewhere else is not a friend.

2221a. Msi nacho si mwendiwe, mwenye nacho ende nawe. [SPK](#).

The one who has nothing is not your friend. Let the one who has something go with you.

2222. Msitu ni mpya na komba ni wapya. [T](#) 314; [REK](#).

The forest is new and so are the lemurs. If one comes back to an old familiar place, everything is changed, both place and people. New lords, new laws.

Komba, the galago, a small racoon-like animal, lemur.

2222a. Mtu asiye na sadiki yu kama yamini bila shamali. [SPK](#).

A person without a true friend is like a right hand without a left hand.

2223. Mtu asiyekuwa na mke, sahibu yakwe huwa shemejiye. [T](#) 334; [SACL](#) 835; [AL](#) 1872.

An unmarried person's friend is like a brother-in-law. "The strength of Oriental friendship is proverbial. Its affection equals or surpasses that arising from natural ties, which, on the other hand, are apt to hang very loosely" - [T](#).

2224. Mtu na rafikiye ni kama kombe, haziachi kuchakacha. [T](#) 345; [SACL](#) 128.

People and their friends are like shells always clattering. About friends disagreeing.

Chakacha, rustle, as of grass when one goes through the forest - [J](#).

2224a. Mungwana ni hudama. [SPK](#).

A noble person is a servant.

2224b. Mungwana ni kadiri. [SPK](#).

A noble person is a measure. A noble person is moderate, modest, composed, thus setting an example - [SPK](#).

2225. Mungwana ni kamba, hufa na uao. [JK](#) 133.

A noble person is [like] a rope, and dies with the raft. A good rope does not snap, it survives the raft it was made to serve - [JK](#). A noble person has a high sense of responsibility - [MM](#).

Uao, usually uwao or ubao = plank for raft, hull. Cf. 2247

2225a. Mwacha rafiki vitani ataijuta nyumani. [SPK](#).

If you desert your friend in a battle you will regret it later.

2226. Mwenye mzaha hachukizi watu. [NGU](#).

A comic does not offend people. Mzaha, fun, joke, ridicule, derision. Fanya mzaha, do in fun.

2227. Mwenzi anayekuonya anakupenda. [NGU](#).

Your friend who admonishes you, loves you.

2228. Mwili wa mwenzio ni mkondo wa mwili wako. [AL](#) 991.

The passage made by the corpse of your friend is the one you'll pass too. A good friend does not desert a friend in difficulties. Mkondo, riverbed, gulfstream, passage. Cf. #731.

2229. Mzigo wa mwenzio ni kanda la usufi. [L](#) 78; [F](#) 37.179; [H](#) 86; [MS](#) 107; [B](#) 2.49, sufi; [MARA](#) 3.

The burden of your companion is [only] a load of kapok [to you]. We make light of other people's burdens.

2230. Neno la mwenzako, unipe kiti nikae; neno lako unasimama hata wima. [AL](#) simama.

Regarding your companion [you say] give me a chair; but regarding your own affairs you are standing straight. The meaning is that misfortune of others is minimized.

Neno la mwenzako, unipe kiti nikae; neno lako, unakaa hata chini. [AL](#) 1219.

For the case of your friend [you say], give me a chair to sit down; but for your own case you even sit on the ground. Misfortune of another is nothing, but your own is like a burial.

2231. Nifae mvuani nikufae juani. [F](#) 39.14; [SACL](#) 212, nitakufaa; [KA](#); [KB](#) 302.

Do me a favor during a rainy season and I shall do the same to you during the dry season.

A promise of mutual help in times of difficulty.

Uniponye wa jua, nitakuponya wa mvua. [NS](#) 74; [V](#) 74; [MEM](#) 181.

Save me from the sun and I'll save you from the rain.

2231a. Njia ni rafiki. [SPK](#).

On the road is where you meet friends.

2232. Nyumba, ijapo ndogo, mpenzi hakosi nafasi. [AL](#) 996.

Even if the house is small a friend finds a place.

2233. Panzi mwana mwaka-moyo, hifa kwa wewe vina nini? [T](#) 453.

If I, the impetuous grasshopper, die for you so what? Do not waste your time and energy when not appreciated - [MM](#). "The grasshopper child with burning heart" is considered a little daring fellow, who might jump into the fire, trying to extinguish it, but it is useless, and nobody cares. Cf. 3992.

2234. Penye mbaya wako na mwema wako hakosi. [F](#) 42.13; [AL](#) 1683; [AL](#) 1683.

Where you find one who does you evil, there also is one who does you good.

2235. Rafiki akukosoaye si adui akusifuye. [EM](#) r3.

A friend criticising you is better than an enemy who praises you.

2236. Rafiki huwa adui na adui huwa rafiki. [EM](#) R4.

A friend may become an enemy and an enemy may become a friend.

2237. Rafiki mpime kwa vitendo. [NGU](#).

Measure friends by their deeds.

2238. Rafiki mwema si ndugu mbaya. [NGU](#).

A good friend is better than a bad relative. But in great need a bad relative may help you. Cf. 3625.

2239. Rafiki wako wa kudumu na wa msimu. [EM](#) r5.

There are permanent friends and seasonal ones.

2240. Rafiki wanakufahamu unapofanikiwa na unawafahamu unapoanguka. [EM](#) r6.

Friends know you when you are prosperous and you know them when you are in adversity.

2241. Rafiki yako ndiye adui yako. [FSM](#) 181.

Your friend is your enemy. Friends know so much about you that they can harm you deeply. Cf. 1668.

2242. Rahisi kumpoteza rafiki kuliko kumpata tena. [EM](#) r9.

It is easier to lose a friend than to find him/her again.

2243. Salamu nyingi, mchanga wa pwani ni haba. [T](#) 472; [JK](#) 143.

Many compliments, the sand on the sea-shore is too little. Not a proverb, but a polite phrase of greeting in a letter.

Salamu nyingi kama mchanga. Vsalamu.

Many greetings as there is sand.

2244 shikamana kama pete na kidole. [SACL](#) 745.

Hold together like the finger and the ring. Cf. 2207.

2245.. Simkimbie sahibu akiwa na taabu. [JKP](#).

Do not desert your friend when your friend is in trouble.

Simkimbie, usi-m-kimbie, do not run away from a person.

2246. Tulingane sawasawa, kama sahani na kawa. [T](#) 509; [J](#); [RECH](#) 176; [Y](#) 121; [SACL](#) 336, 475; [KS](#) kawa; [JK](#) 125.

Let's be to each other as a dish and its cover. Let's live harmoniously together like the coffee, which takes the shape of the cup. Used in wedding songs - [JK](#). Cf. 2207.

2247. Twafa na uwao kamba. [T](#) 513.

We die, like the cordage with the hull - [T](#). For better or for worse, our lot is cast and our choice is made; unto the bitter end. When the hull goes down, the rigging follows it.

Uwao or ubao, timber. Cf. 2225.

2248. Uchungu wa mwenzako hauwezi kukudhuru. [REK](#).

The pain of your companion cannot harm you. It is not your pain. Cf. 2229.

2249. Uchungu wa rafiki ni wako. [AL](#) 989; [AL](#) rafiki.

The pain of your friend is yours.

2250. Uhalili hufilisi, ukarimu hustawisha. [REK](#).

Special friendship brings disaster, generosity prospers.

Halili.a beloved person. Filisi, make bankrupt, ruin.

2251. Unapata kipya, unakataa cha zamani. [AL](#) 671; [AL](#) zamani.

You obtain a new thing and reject the old one. New things are always nice. Cf. 2569, 3439.

2252. Urafiki katika shida wengi wanauhepa. [REK](#).

Friendship during hardship is avoided by many. When a friend is in trouble many ignore the demands of friendship. As the joker said: "A friend in need is a good person to avoid."

Hepa from epa, avoid, get out of the way.

2253. Urafiki wa wawili unapita wa watatu. [AL](#) 994.

Friendship of two [people] is better than that of three. Cf. 2191, 2214.

2254. Usiache mbachao kwa mswala upitao. [F](#) 48.29; [J](#); [KS](#) mswala, [MARA](#) 3. Don't leave your old mat for a [better] prayer mat which you see, in passing. Do not desert your old friend for a new one who may not be permanent - [J](#).

Mbacha, an old mat. Msala or Mswala, a new praying mat. The verb kuswala has the meaning of a way of praying by bowing down with the hand on the knees during Muslim prayers (five times a day).

2255. Walio hai hawaachi kuonana. [KA](#).

The living will surely meet again. Even after long separation, the chances are that they will meet again. Said when people leave each other or are away for a long time. Cf. 2218.

2256. Walio mbali kwa mbali huonana kwa nyaraka. [T](#) 579; [B](#) 4.62; [MS](#) 80.

People who are far apart are wont to meet by letters. A favorite phrase in letters. Cf. 2258-9.

2257. Wandani wawili, nia iwe moja. [JKP](#).

Two friends, let their purpose be one.

Wandani, wa ndani, intimate friends, of the inner side. Bosom friends.

2258. Waraka hauishi maneno. [T](#) 582; [MM](#)barua.

A letter never finishes words. There is always more to say and a letter is not a good enough apology.

2259. Waraka u nusu ya kuonana. [T](#) 583; [B](#) 4.30; [F](#) 51.6; [KS](#) waraka; [SACL](#) 852; Vtaa Erifu; [SAM](#) 4.1.

A letter [a written message] is half a visit. It bridges the pain of separation. If you cannot go and see your friend, at least you can write a letter - [SPK](#).

2259a. Wengi huwa kama paka urafiki wa mradi. [AL](#) 2572; [EM](#) w24.

Many people are like a cat, friendship for a purpose. About people who become friends in order to profit.

2260. Wenzi wako siwacheke, akushikao mshike. [JKP](#).

Do not laugh at your friends, be loyal to the one who is loyal to you.

2261. Yu ndugu machoni. [FSM](#) 94.

That person is an eye brother. A friend or relative not available when needed, or who is not doing nice things behind your back.

2262. Zawadi huimarisha urafiki. [NGU](#).

Presents strengthen friendship.

2262a. Zawadi ni mbolea ya urafiki. [EM](#) z1.

Presents are fertilizers for friendship. Presents strengthen friendship - [EM](#).

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Gifts

2263. Achia koko, wanguwe koma. [ED](#) 6; [JKP](#).

Let go of a kernel, so that you may have the edible part. Give something so that you may get something bigger in return. Koma, the edible fruit of the dwarf palm.

2264. Akupaye mfupa kakuwazia. [NGU](#).

The person who gave you a bone thought about you. A small gift, a kind thought.

2265. Akupaye mfupa ni rafiki yako. [NGU](#).

The one who gave you a bone is your friend.

Anayekuwazia ni nduguyo. [NGU](#).

The person who thought about you is your relative.

2266. Aliyejaliwa kajaliwa, ukimwombe akose, mungu anampa. [NGU](#).

Even if you pray for a person that person may not get it. God gives to a person. The one who is destined will be favored. It is useless to pray for gifts. God has all destined.

2267. Aliyemnyima mwenzake nyama ya senji, mbuluku akamnyima nyama ya mbogo. [KB](#) 20.

To the person who denied a companion meat of the large rodent, the little antelope has refused the meat of the buffalo. Help denied will turn against you.

2268. Ametoa nguo jogoo, mkewe hakuzipata. [B](#) 26; [T](#) 27.

The rooster has discarded clothes, [but] his wife did not get any. Of people spending their property on others, but not on their family. Cf. 2269.

2269. Ametoa sadaka na wanawe wafa njaa. [MA](#) 57.

That person has given to charity while the children are starving. Of people who neglect their own while spending money on others.

2270. Apakuliwaye hajui kiishapo chakula. [REK](#).

The one who is being served does not know when the food is finished. The cook served the food from the kitchen and those at the dinner table don't know how much food is left for those served afterwards or for a second helping. Pakulia, to serve food.

2271. Apewaye ndiye aongezwaye. [F](#) 4.30; [KA](#).

The person to whom is given will be given more. For someone to whom things have been given, it is possible to increase his/her possessions. A poor person has no means to produce anything - [KA](#). Used to invite people to share.

2272. Omitted.

2273. Bure ghali. [FSM](#) 29.

A free thing is expensive. Nothing is free: people often give free things only to bind others to them. Beware. Cf. 2275, 4647.

2274. Bure haisongi. [ED](#) 9.

For nothing does not restrain. People do not usually refuse free things - [MM](#). But also: people who receive something for free want more of the same.

2275. Bure yaumiza. [NGU](#).

For free hurts. It enslaves, ties, taking away freedom. Cf. 1594, 2275, 2279.

2276. Cha kupewa hakikataliwi. [NGU](#).

A gift is not refused.

2277. Cha kupewa hakina nyongezi. [AL](#) ongea; [AI](#) 1256.

A gift has no encore. It is not supplemented. Therefore don't put your future on expectation. One who expects too much will be disappointed. Nyongezi or nyongezo, increment.

2278. Cha kupewa hakina thamani kubwa. [REK](#).

A given thing is of little value. It is not something obtained after a great effort.

2279. Cha kupewa kitamu. [MA](#) 91.

A gift is sweet. People like free things. Cf. 2275.

2279a. Changumi chakowe, ckakowe sumu yangumi. [SPK](#).

You take my things, but you do not give me yours. Lit., yours is poison for me - [SPK](#).

2280. Fadhila ni utumwa. [KS](#) fadhila.

Generosity generates slavery. Said of someone who is becoming dependent by receiving gifts. Fadhila or fadhili, generosity.

2281. Jumbe (or yumbe) asiye na uji haamkiwi. [B](#) 1.62; [T](#) 118; [JKP](#); [SPK](#).

The headman who has no porridge is not greeted. Nobody will come to pay respects in the morning. Election candidates must offer meals - [SPK](#) Machaza, left-over rice. Cf. #2302.

2282. Kichango, kuchangizana. [SAM](#) 17.27; [NGU](#).

Everyone should contribute when a collection is made. People should work together.

2283. Kila kupata si kuchuma. [NGU](#).

Not everything acquired is earned.

2284. Kilichotupwa ni mali ya jalala. [NGU](#).

What is thrown away is the property of the rubbish heap. Jalala or jaa, rubbish heap.

2285. Kitu ni futa la moyo, humpa umpendae. [T](#) 158.

A [tangible] thing is the oil of the heart; you give to whom you love - [T](#). Liberality is the expression from the heart by the warmth of friendship, just as oil from the berry - [T](#).

2286. Kondoo wa bure haangaliwi meno. [REK](#).

You do not look at a sheep that someone has give you. "Never look a gift horse in the mouth."

2287. Kumpa mwenzio si kutupa, ni akiba ya mbeleni. [B](#) 1.41; [SACL](#) 915; [JKP](#); [KS](#) tupa; [T](#) 190; [SACL](#) 525,526.

Giving to your friend is not throwing away, it is a reserve for the future."Said by a generous person to his critical wife" - [JKP](#).

Kumpa aliyekupa sio kupa, ni kulipa; kumpa asiyekupa sio kupa, ni kutupa. [JKP](#).

Giving to one who has given you something, is not giving but paying; Giving to one who does not give you something is not giving, it is throwing away.

Tupa mbele, okota nyuma. [AL](#) 1066; [AL](#) nyuma.

Throw it ahead and collect afterwards. A service given prepares for the future.

Kumpa mja si kazi apendapo ramahani. [SPK](#).

Giving to a servant [of God] is no trouble since God wishes it.

2287a. Kupanana si utuku. [SPK](#).

Giving is not trading.

2288. Kupata kukulekeapo, ufurahi na kupata. [JKP](#).

When a gift comes your way, just enjoy and get it. Lekea from elekea, point to, be directed towards.

2289. Kupata si kila siku. [NGU](#).

It's not every day you obtain [something].

2290. Kutoa ni kutega. [AL](#) 1067.

Giving is setting a trap.

2291. Kutoa (or kupa) ni moyo usambe ni utajiri. [F](#) 19.60; [L](#) 39; [B](#) 1.41, 3.43; [H](#) 55; [MS](#) 140; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) moyo; [MEM](#) 148.

Giving is a matter of the heart, don't say it is a matter of wealth. It is wrong to regard a good deed as motivated by a bad purpose - [SPK](#). Usambe or usiambe for usiniambii, don't say, don't tell me. Usiseme is also used instead of usambe

2292. Kutwaa si kuleta. [V](#) 27.

Taking is not [the same as] bringing. Taking is not giving - [V](#).

2293. Mali ya urithi haina baraka. Kiswahili March, 1973.

Inherited wealth has no blessing. Easy come, easy go.

2294. Maskini ana huruma kwa mtaka msaada [kuliko tajiri]. [REK](#).

A poor person has mercy on one who needs help [more than a rich person]. Cf. 2291.

2295. Mikono yake kijiko. [EM](#) m 17.

That person's hands are like a spoon. A man with hands like a spoon is one who does not hide what he has, that is one who is generous - [EM](#). For a different explanation, cf. 3845.

Cf. 2515, 3389.

2296. Mkono mtupu haulambwi. [F](#) 27.73; [MS](#) 165; [FSM](#) 118; [H](#) 69; L 51; [RECH](#) 543; [T](#).86a; [SWA](#) 20; [J](#) lamba; [KB](#) lambwa; [NGU](#); [KS](#) ramba.

An empty hand is not licked. The Swahili eat with their hands. After eating and before washing their hands, they lick their fingers as a sign of respect for food - [MM](#).

"The masharifu, i.e. the sharifs or noblemen, the descendants of the Prophet Muhammed, have the habit of holding out their hand to be kissed by the faithful, as soon as they land in an East African port. Only a very powerful man can afford to neglect this invitation to submission: Mkono usioweza ukata uubusu, The hand you are unable to cut off, kiss it" - [SPK](#) p.9.

Kulamba or kuramba, to lick. Cf. 2281, 2302.

2297. Mkono ulikupa maji, ule ule utarudisha kopo. [AL](#) 1079.

The hand [that] gave you water, that same hand returns the cup.

2298. Mkono utoao ndio upatao. [KA](#); [SM](#).

The hand that gives is the one that will receive. Cf. 2296.

2299. Mla ng'ombe na watwana, mlifi ni mwungwana. [T](#) 281.

The one who eats beef with ill-bred men [should know that] it is the gentleman who pays.

Mla ng'ombe ameshiba sana, mlifi ni muungwana. [SPK](#).

The eater of beef is well sated, the one who pays is the gentle person Cf. 4430.

2300. Mpaji na mpokezi, mtahamali, nani? [SACL](#) 605.

A giver and a receiver, who is [more] burdened? - [SACL](#).

Mtahamali, a person who takes charge of a load, a porter.

2301. Mshenzi mpe mpya nguo asahau kwao. [T](#) 313.

Give the strangers new clothes so that they may forget their homeland - [T](#).

Mshenzi, one from the interior - [T](#).

2302. Msikiti usio na maji hausaliwi. [B](#) 1.62; [SACL](#) 790; [JKP](#); [T](#) 118; [A](#). 207.

A mosque which has no water is not prayed in. Understood is that a mosque must have water fountains, or a well or a large tub, for ablutions before prayer.

2303. Mtego bila [ya] chambo haunasi [hata chango]. [J](#) chambo; [JK](#) 144.

A trap without bait catches nothing; not even a worm.

Bila chambo hunasi samaki. [FSM](#) 26.

Without bait you catch no fish.

2304. Mtu akimpa maskini kichache, mungu humruzuku kingi. [V](#). 44; [SACL](#) 783.

When a person gives [even] a little to the poor, God will give that person ample blessings.

2305. Mtu hachagui zawadi. [SAM](#) 17.27.

A person does not choose gifts. This is also said by a needy person, who hopes to be given help.

2306. Mtu kiomba sadaka, umpe aloyataka, nakupe mungu jazaka. [JKP](#).

When a person asks you for something, give it to that person, and may God give you your reward. Jazaka for jaza, a reward.

2307. Mungu akupe lako. [JKP](#).

May God give you yours. "Said when someone admires a friend's new garment or other acquisition" - [JKP](#).

2308. Mungwana akitendwa jema hulipa jema. [AL](#) 1074.

If a noble person is done a favor, he/she returns a favor.

2309. Mwendo kikuhitajia, ulicho nacho ridhia. [JKP](#).

When your friend needs what you have, give it.

2310. Mwenye kilio hulua, nami nikawa msaadae. [T](#) 380.

Someone cries and I become a help. There may be two explanations: Someone shouts for something needed and I just happen to have

the very same thing; or in the sense of: Do not look a gift horse in the mouth - [T](#).

2310a. Mwenye kutoa huchoka. [SPK](#).

The one who gives will be tired. One day even a generous person will say no to a beggar, or even the government. - [SPK](#).

2311. Mwenzako akikualikia kuku miguu hukwelekea. [T](#) 622.

If your neighbor invites you to a chicken dinner the [chicken's] legs will point to you. If you take gifts you bind yourself.

2312. Omitted.

2313. Mzigo wa chungu ni chembe moja [ya mchele]. [T](#) 397; [B](#) 1.32; [SACL](#) 914; [AL](#) mzigo.

The load of an ant is one grain [of rice]. This might be said by an inferior, who has been given a present by a superior, for the smallness of which the latter apologized - [T](#). Cf. 1206, 3825, 4497, 4515.

2314. Mzoea udalali duka haliwezi. [KS](#) zoea; [AL](#) 585.

Someone used to auctions will not necessarily be a good shopkeeper. Every procedure asks for a special know-how. Udalali, the business of auctioneer. The word dalali, in some Bantu languages (e.g., Sukuma) has the meaning of free [bure]. In this sense the proverb could be understood as : Someone who is used to getting things free cannot manage a shop.

2315. Ndovu akitamba ni masika. [T](#) 411; [SACL](#) 860; [KS](#) tamba.

When the elephant travels, it is the hot season - [T](#). When you stop being generous your friends are leaving you. When there is scarcity of herbage the animals migrate to greener pasture.

Masika: "the season of the greater rain, when the hot north monsoon gives way to the cooler south. Corresponds to autumn in northern latitudes" - [J](#).

2316. Ng'ombe atoaye maziwa ndiye kipenzi cha mfugaji. [NGU](#).

The cow that gives milk is the sweetheart of the breeder.

2316a. Pesa na zawadi huondoa utaadi. [SPK](#).

Money and presents remove wrong (or enmity).

2317. Siachi huru nikiwiwa. [T](#) 480.

I do not set free, while I am in debt. Be just before you are generous - [T](#). An excuse for not being generous.

2318. Ukaramu wa maskini hupotea kwa roho. [REK](#).

Generosity of the poor is a failure of the soul. The poor's desire of being generous cannot be fulfilled.

2319. Ukimpa mwenzio zawadi, furaha ujaze fuadi. [JKP](#).

When you give your friend a gift, let joy fill your heart. "Do not fret about it" - [JKP](#).

Fuadi or moyo, heart.

2320. Ukimpa popo, mpe na wenye huzuni. [AL](#) 888.

If you give to the bat [the announcer of grief], give also to the ones who are grieving.

2321. Ukiona masikini, au mtu musibani, muawini usihini. [JKP](#).

If you see poor people, or those struck by disaster, help them, do not hold back.

Hini or nyima, deny, refuse. Muawini, or mwawini (from auni), assist, aid help. Musibani, msibani (from sibu), also, shidani, calamity, disaster, misfortune.

2322. Ukipata bure, toa bure. [NGU](#).

If you got it free [for nothing], give it free.

2323. Ukipata mali nyingi, usisahau ndugu yako. [AL](#) 1057.

If you become rich, don't forget your sibling.

2324. Ulichokula ndicho ununuacho. [FSM](#) 192.

What you ate is what you bought. Things freely given to you have to be paid for. Free gifts are often given to bind the benefactor to the donor. Jihadhari na vya bure, beware of free things.

2325. Upatu wa maridadi wakusanya kila pembe. [KS](#) upatu.

An ornate collection plate gathers from every corner.

Upatu, a plate on which gifts are placed. Kusanya, collect, gather, bring together, amass.

2325a. Usimpe mtu ukiwiwa kitu. [SPK](#).

Don't give [presents] to anyone as long as you owe something.

2326. Uso wa kufadhiliwa u chini. [F](#) 50.46.

The face of one who receives favors is cast down.

2326a. Watambuaao fadhali ni mmoja kwa alifu (or elfu). [SPK](#).

Those who recognise a favor: one in a thousand.

2327. Wengine hutoa na kusamehe, wengine hupokea na kusahau. [EM](#) w25.

Some give and forgive, others get and forget.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

God and religion

2328. Abadani: mungu huijua. [SPK](#).

'Never', only God knows that.

2328a. Abiria kwanza, thumma swifu mungu. [SPK](#).

Cross the river first, then praise God. It is not good praising a ford till a person is over. [SPK](#).

2328b. Adui akutayarishia shimo la upotevu, mungu akikuonya njia ya uwokovu. [KB](#) 3.

Your enemy plots your downfall, while God shows you the road of salvation.

2329. Afanyaye tambiko, hutabika kwa mzimu wake. [NGU](#).

One who brings a sacrifice usually offers it to his/her own ancestor. Mzimu, spirit of an ancestor.

2330. Ajuaye ni mungu. [JK](#) 139.

The one who knows is God. God knows the unspoken secret - [MM](#).

2331. Aliyongolewa na mungu hapotoki. [SAM](#) 3.12; [MS](#) 180.

A person saved by God is not crooked. The upright person [saved by God] cannot be made crooked by anybody else - [MM](#).

2332. Allahu jirani yetu kama ndugu mli kule. [JKP](#).

God is our neighbor when our brother is absent - [JKP](#).

Allahu: almighty God. Allahu akba, great almighty God.

2333. Amevua shingo yake mbele ya mungu na moto wa kesho siku ya kiyama. [SACL](#) 840; [V](#) 397.

Before God someone has saved his/her neck from tomorrow's fire on the day of the resurrection. Said of somebody giving freedom to a slave.

2334. Amri ina mungu. [A](#) 99; [AL](#) 1700.

A command is with God. The na in ina stresses association rather than possession - [J](#).

2335. Amwasie azizi muumba umwongoe. [FSM](#) 14.

Put the person who revolts against the loving Creator back on the right path. A person who revolts stands in the need of prayer. It is a dangerous business to revolt against authority.

Azizi, the strong one by excellence.

2335a. Amwoleelo dayyani mutwana likamujiri. [SPK](#).

That which God the Judge has written for a person, that will happen to the slave (i.e. the mortal).

2336. Anayemshtakia mungu kawesha mahakimu. [SAM](#) 3.15.

Someone who accuses God is in for the final judgment. A person who accuses God as the cause of his/her sufferings, is angry and dangerous. Beware, because that person is capable of doing anything - [SAM](#). But also: If you put your case in the hands of God, you have finished your case [you need no other judge] - [MM](#). Of somebody who relies on God - [MM](#).

2337. Anipa mungu kwa kadiri yangu. [JKP](#).

God gives me [a load to carry] to the extent of my strength.

2337a. Apendao makuduri. [SPK](#).

What He (God) wishes is destiny. Anything God decides becomes our inescapable fate.

Atakalo litajiri. [SPK](#).

What He (God) wills, will happen.

2338. Asiyeweza kutuumba, kutuumbua hawezi. Jumba; [T](#) 38,asoweza; [MS](#) 13; [SACL](#) 953, asioweza.

One who cannot create us cannot uncreate [deface] us.

Muumba ndiye muumbua. [T](#) 358a; [A](#) 180; [SAM](#) 18.37.

The Creator is the [only] defacer. A human being cannot create or undo creation.

Muumba na huumbua. [JKP](#).

The creator destroys also. "Nothing is eternal" - [JKP](#). Cf. 1715.

2339. Atandao ndiye atanduwao. [ED](#) 5.

The one who spread them [the clouds], also takes them away.

2340. Baraka ya mungu humtononesha mtu. [T](#) 45; [SACL](#) 901; [MS](#) 15.

The blessing of God makes a person better or rich. Tononesha: getting better, richer, more at ease - [SACL](#). Tononosha, making fat, getting new health and strength. - [J](#).

2341. Dhamiri ni dira. [EM](#) 48.14.

The conscience is a compass. It assists a person to know which way one is heading in spiritual life - [EM](#).

2342. Dhamiri safi ni tandiko laini. [EM](#) 48.15.

A clear conscience is a soft mat [or pillow] - [EM](#).

2343. Fimbo ya mnyonge hulipwa na mungu. [NGU](#).

God will pay for the oppression suffered by the poor person. The evil person will be punished. Fimbo, a stick.

2344. Fimbo ya mnyonge mlifi mungu. [NGU](#); [KS](#) mlifi.

God provides a stick for the poor. God supports the poor and will punish those who harm the poor.

Mlifi = mlipaji, the one who pays. Cf. 3153, 3757.

2345. Fimbo ya mungu haina mlilo. [NGU](#).

God's stick is noiseless.

2345a. Fundi wa mahaba ni yupi nambia,

Fundi wa mahaba moyoahikia. [SPK](#).

The teacher of love, tell me where is he,

The teacher of love, his heart is impassioned.

A good teacher ought to be involved (engaged) in his subjects. This refers to the religious teacher, who teaches the love of God, and so his heart will be full of just that passion. - [SPK](#).

2345b. Hafuti mwana adamu jambo akikutabiwa. [SPK](#).

No human being can wipe out a matter that has been 'written' over a person. Our fate (ole, makutubu) was written down in Heaven before our lives began - [SPK](#).

2346. Hako mwenye kuharibu, ila yeye alwahabu. [JKP](#).

There is no one who can destroy except God the Giver. Hako or hayuko, there is no one.

2347. Haramu harabu. [NGU](#).

Unlawfulness is destructive. One who is unlawful [of Islamic law] is a spoiler. Cf. 4172.

2347a. Haya mini imani. [SPK](#).

Virtue comes from faith.

2347b. Heri apendalo mungu. [SPK](#).

Good is what God wills, what God wishes is best.

2348. Humshurutishi mtu kuamini. [NGU](#).

You cannot force a person to believe.

2349. Huona haonekani, husema hasikiani, mungu. [JKP](#).

He sees, but cannot be seen; He speaks but cannot be heard, God.

2350. Jema, jivi lakwelea: siwe pweke usosali. [T](#) 115.

The matter, whether right or wrong, is clear to you: you are not the only person that does not perform one's devotions - T. Said to one who tries to be excused from the obligations of religion.

It is not knowledge, but will, that makes a person religious - [T](#).

2351. Jisaidie mungu akusaidie. [KA](#); [SM](#).

Help yourself and God may help you. Don't wait for help. Start doing.

2352. Kalamu ya mungu haikosi. [SAM](#) 8.2.

God's pen does not make any mistakes.

2352a. Kalamu yake hujiri, huwa alilokadiri. [SPK](#).

His [God's] word comes true, because it is what He has destined.

2352b. Kalamu ya mungu haipingiki, maandiko yake hayafutiki. [SPK](#).

God's pen cannot be stopped; His writ cannot be wiped away.

2353. Karamu ya miraji ni sumu, na kitoweo chake ni ngumu. [T](#) 127.

The feast of Miraji [ascension of the prophet Mohammed] is poison and its relish is hard. A feast on a fast-day is poison, and its relish is strangled meat - [T](#). Quite a translation! Could this proverb refer to the Prophet's vision of hell, on his ascension, where there was a lot of ugly eating going on? - [JKM](#) p.77. But there may be a double meaning: Miraji wa Amira, a noble in the old times, who used his banquet to poison his guests. Miraji's feast, Gifts of the Greeks? - [T](#).

2354. Kila atendayo heri ndiyo aliyohitari. [JKP](#).

Everything [God] does is good, for it is [God] who chooses. Hitari or hiari, choose.

2355. Kila dini ni ya kweli, sawa na nyingine. [NGU](#).

Every religion is true and equal to the other.

2356. Kila jahili salamu. [NGU](#).

Every evildoer (or fool) is safe [in the hand of God]. Jahili, merciless, cruel; foolish, ignorant.

2356a. Kila kitu hupotea illa uso wake. [SPK](#).

Every thing will perish except God's face.

2357. Kila lahaua hufuatwa na adhabu ya mungu. [J](#) lahaua; [KB](#) lahaua.

Every blasphemy is followed by God's punishment. Lahaua (Arabic), an abbreviation of "there is no power nor strength but in God" - [J](#).

2358. Kila mtu lazima asaliwe, hata mudhinibu. [JK](#) 139.

Every person must be prayed for, even a sinner - [JK](#).

Kila mtu lazima asaliwe hata ikiwa afanye madhambi makubwa. [JKP](#).

"Every person must be prayed for as long as he/she commits only minor sins. Do not interfere with a person's life as long as he commits only minor sins" - [JKP](#).

This second translation of JKP is quite different. Both are grammatically correct, depending on how you translate hata. Hata, according to Johnson, has two meanings: 1. until; 2. even if.

2359. Kila mtu ni kwa ajili yake mwenyewe, lakini mungu ni kwa sisi sote. [NGU](#).

Everyone for oneself, but God is for all of us.

2360. Kila uchao mungu anaumbwa. [NGU](#).

God creates every morning.

2361. Kinga ni kwa mungu. [JKP](#).

Protection comes from God.

2362. Kiumbe hasemi likawa, isipokuwa manani. [T](#) 160.

A mortal person speaks not so that it comes to pass, only God, the Beneficent.

Manani or Al-Mannan, The Beneficent; one of the 99 names of God.

2363. Kivunjacho damu ni nyama. [REK](#).

What spoils blood is meat.

2364. Kiwekwacho na mungu, mwan'adamu hawezi kukiondoa. [SACL](#) 1020; [AL](#) 1474.

What God has established, a human cannot take away. One does not contradict authority - [AL](#).

Aliandikalo mungu haliwezi kufutika. [SPK](#).

What God has written cannot be wiped out.

2364a. Kucha mungu ni kwepuka wovu na kiburi na tabia mbovu. [SPK](#).

Fearing God is avoiding evil and pride and wicked character.

2365. Kucha mungu si kilemba cheupe. [F](#) 17.40; [B](#) 1.59; [T](#) 168; [KB](#) 116; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) ucha; [MARA](#) 2.

Paying respect to God is not the same as the wearing of a white turban. It is the action that makes a person pious, not the dress.

2366. Kucha mungu si machezo. JKP.

Fearing God is not a game - [JKP](#). Worship is not witchcraft. Kucha Mungu: to fear God; to fear going against God's commandments - [KS](#).

Machezo: 1. witchcraft (Kamusi sanifu); 2. games - J. Michezo, plays, games.

2367. Kufagia usiku kunakimbiza baraka. B 1.40.

Sweeping at night chases away the blessing. Sweeping at night is considered bad. People only sweep at night in an emergency, e.g., death, to be ready for early morning visitors, i.e., a funeral - [MM](#).

2368. Kufumba macho na kusujudu sio kusali, kusali kumo moyoni. REK.

Closing the eyes and prostrating is not praying, praying is in the heart.

2369. Kumchira mtoto ni kumvunja. J chira; AI, chira.

Not following the taboos is to harm a child. This is said when parents disregard the taboos prescribed from birth to weaning of a child. This is considered as harming the child; e.g., sexual relationships of the parents during this period are supposed to afflict the child with a kind of rickets called ngongea or chiwa - [AL](#).

2370. Kupata kuna mungu. T 191; A 99; SAM 11.19.

Receiving depends on God. Cf. 1945.

2371. Kupindua kiatu chini juu ni kumtukana mungu. P 230.

To put a shoe upside down is to show disrespect for God. By facing the footsole up to heaven.

2372. Kuwa au kutokuwa kumo mikononi mwa mungu. Mtu ni kujitahidi. NGU.

To be or not to be is in the hands of God; a person must do one's best.

2373. Kuzunguka mbuyu si dawa ya shetani. TAA 5.

Going around the baobab tree is not a cure against the devil. It is not easy to convince a person to drop a bad habit. A person may say I have changed, but in practice is still going on as usual - [TAA](#). There is a belief that the devil lives in baobab trees.

2374. Kwa mungu bora ni ajjuaye. MA 240.

With God the better person is the one who knows him/herself.

2375. Kwa mungu hakuna dhaifu. T 206; B 1.75.

With God no person is abject.

2376. Kwa mungu hakuna kule, wala hakuna jambo zito. T 207.

Kwa mungu k'aya kule, wala haku yambo zito. T 207.

With God nothing is far nor difficult.

2377. Lilia kupata kukosa kuna mungu. NGU.

Cry to obtain, but not obtaining is the doing of God. To get things is the work of God.

2378. Lipitalo duniani, mungu aliamurulo. JKP.

Whatever happens in this world, God has ordained it.

2379. Omitted.

2380. Malipo duniani, hesabu ahera. SAM 13.2.

Payment on earth is the reckoning of the hereafter. God returns one's good or evil deed often while one is still on earth - SAM.

Malipo leo, kesho hesabu. KS hesabu.

Payment today is tomorrow's reckoning.

Malipo ni duniani, ahera kwenda hesabu. MS; KS hesabu.

Paying is done on earth, in the netherworld comes the reckoning.

Malipo huja baadaye. SPK.

Payment comes afterwards.

2380a. Malipo mungu hulipa. SPK.

God pays all payments. God rewards and punishes.

2380b. Mambo hutenda jabari sisi sharti hukubali. SPK.

God (in His aspect of Jabari, the compeller) is the one who acts, we have to accept.

2380c. Mambo ya mbele, giza la wele. SPK.

Matters of the future [are in] darkness of destiny.

2381. Mambo yote (or vitu vyote) mtenzi [ni] mungu. [V](#) mtenzi; [T](#) 239 Mungu or Rabana [Lord].
All things are God's doings. All things are in God's hand. ÷

Mambo pia kwa manani, umbile kwa yake shani. [SPK](#); [T](#) 220.
Even things belong to the Beneficent, the creation is to His glory.
Pia: denotes a totality, everything, everyone.

Mambo aliyoandika hayawezi kufutika. [SPK](#).
Things He has written cannot be wiped out. God's hand can be seen in all events - [SPK](#).

2382. Mema mungu atwegeshe, kama mkono na kanwa. [JK](#) 143.
May God bring good things close to us, as hand and mouth.

Maovu atuambaze, kama ya mbingu na nchi. [JK](#).
May [God] cause evil to stay away from us, as far as sky and earth. This is a commonly quoted type of prayer - [JK](#).

Maovu yasikuambae. [SACL](#) 57.
May evil pass far from you.

2383. Mja akiteswa hafanyi machungu; hupiga shahada, kashukuru mungu. [SACL](#) 539.
A suffering servant of God does not become embittered, he recites the [Muslim] Creed and gives thanks to God.

2384. Mja hatindi rehema ali hai duniani. [KA](#).
A human being does not lack God's mercy while living on earth. So don't lose courage.

2385. Mja hatwai daraka ya kuondoa na kuweka. [T](#) 264; [SACL](#) 712.
A servant of God does not assume the responsibility of removing and establishing - [T](#).
The mortal does not assume the responsibility of events - [SACL](#).

2385a. Mola wako umtii, hakuwachi, hachukii. [SPK](#).
Obey the Lord, who does not desert nor hate thee.

2386. Mpaji na kupa ni mungu. [J](#) pa; [KS](#) mpaji.
The real [only] giver is God. Mpaji: giver; is said especially of God.

Mpaji asiyepewa. [AL](#).
The Giver who is never given.
The complete text is:

Mpaji wa kupa ni mungu, usiaminie mwanadamu. [B](#) 1.71; [SACL](#) 59; [T](#) 303; [L](#) 113; [KB](#) p.447.
The giver of giving is God, do not put your trust in man.

2387. Mpozi ni mungu. [J](#) poa.
God is the [real] physician.

2388. Mtu anawaza, mungu anawazua. [AL](#) waza; [AL](#) 1900.
A person has his or her ideas, but God thinks differently. "Man proposes, God disposes."

2389. Mtu hawezi kuumba, na kuumbua hawezi. [JKP](#).
A person can neither create nor destroy. "Our fate is ruled by God" - [JKP](#).

2390. Mtukana kinyamale mwakuzi ni mungu. [SAM](#) 18.32.
The abused person who keeps silent, God is the judge.
Kinyamale for anayenyamaza: the person who is silent. Mwakuzi for mwamuzi: the judge - [S](#).

2391. Mungu akikupa kilema, hukupa na mwendo wake. [JK](#) 139.
If God gives you a lame leg, He also gives you a way of walking with it. The belief in Allah inspires not only fear but also faith and confidence, peace of mind, and a clear sense of purpose in life. God may be severe, he is also compassionate, understanding, and just - [JK](#).

2391a. Mungu akitaka kitu hukiambia uwe tu kikawa. [SPK](#).
If God wants a thing, he merely tells it, Be, and it becomes.

2392. Mungu akiziba hapa, huzibua hapa. [JK](#) 139.
When God blocks a passage here, he opens one there. If God takes something away, He will give something else - [JK](#).

2393. Mungu akuwekavyo ndivyo ukaavyo. [NGU](#).
As God puts you, so you stay.

2394. Mungu amemwenezea kila mtu riziki yake. [J](#) enea.
God has put the means of living in everybody's hand.

2395. Mungu ampa (or humpa) amtakaye. [NGU](#).
God gives to whom He wants.

2396. Mungu anaona kweli lakini hungoja. [NGU](#).
God sees the truth but waits [His time].

2397. Mungu anasingizwa mengi. [NGU](#).
God is much blamed for many things.

2398. Mungu anena, jilinde, nami nitakulinda? [T](#) 289; [JK](#) 145.

God says, look after yourself; shall I then look after you? Do not take unnecessary risks expecting God will protect you - MM. Each for oneself and God for us all - [JK](#).

2399. Mungu haachi mjawe. [JK](#) 138.
God does not let his servant down.

2400. Mungu haachi pindize. [T](#) 290.

God never fails in his appointed times. A semi-pious expression used in remarking on coincidences in time: the same thing happened last Wednesday, etc. - [T](#). It points out the laws of the universe, not only on coincidences - [MM](#).

2401. Mungu hakuumba mtu mbaya. [T](#) 291.

God did not create an evil person. When a bad person should not blame God because God has created a person with brains to think and choose what is good and what is evil - [MM](#).

2402. Mungu hamfichi mnafiki. [F](#) 32.131; [B](#) 4.83. [AL](#) 1427.

God does not hide a hypocrite. Sooner or later hypocrisy will come out.

2403. Mungu hamkoseshi mja wake yote. [SAM](#) 18.34.

God never refuses everything to his servant. Cf. 3447.

2404. Mungu hana siri ya mtu. [NGU](#).

God has no secret of a person. God knows all, does not need humans to tell him.

2405. Mungu hapi kwa mvua, hanyimi kwa jua kali. [T](#) 292; [SACL](#) 698; [AL](#) 1705.

God does not give by rain; and does not deprive by fierce sun - [T](#). God does not give [without measure] as by a torrential rain; he denies not [also, withering everything] as by a fiery sun - [SACL](#). Troubles may become blessings, and benefits curses. Faith does not judge by appearances - [T](#). From a poem:

Hapi kwa mvua nyingi; hanyimi kwa jua kali;

Hapi kwa kuza na kuwa, wala kwegesha mahali;

Hupa kwa nguvu zake dyalali. [SACL](#) 719.

God does not dispense his gifts as a rain, He does not take them away as the burning sun which destroys everything; If He gives, it is not a trading of gifts, nor has He ambition or need of us: God almighty gives out of His power and omnipotence.

2406. Mungu hapigi vita mara mbili. [JKP](#).

God does not strike twice. God causes no two disasters for the same people at the same time - [JKP](#).

Vita: war, fighting. Piga, strike, beat. This verb is much combined with many different nouns, denoting activities.

2407. Mungu hasahau saa. [JK](#) 137.

God does not forget the hour. Implied is: the hour of our death, the hour for prayers and other duties, which humans forget - [JK](#).

2408. Mungu hatoani. [KB](#) 206.

God betrays not.

2409. Mungu hatoi upesi, wenye kupewa ni wengi. [AL](#) 1753.

God does not give quickly, [even so] there are many who receive. Some who are unlucky accuse destiny of being partial.

2409a. Mungu hatuliwai. [SPK](#).

God does not forget us.

2410. Mungu hufufua nyama kitangani. [T](#) 293; kitangani (mat) or kichangani (earth, soil).

God resuscitates meat from the mat. Never despair - [T](#). God can do miracles - MM. Said to a patient as a consolation - JKP. Kitanga, a small circular mat to lay out food on, or goods for sale.

2411. Mungu hupa alalaye na akaaye kitako. [T](#) 294.

God gives to the one who sleeps and to the one who sits.

Mungu hupa awindaye, mungu hupa alalaye. [SPK](#).

God gives to the hunter, God gives to the sleeper. Good luck comes to those who work and to those who do not - [SPK](#)

2412. Mungu husaidiwa. [KB](#) 207.

God expects our co-operation. Cf. 2398.

2413. Mungu kasema: niombe nikupe. [SAM](#) 18.35.

God spoke: Ask me and I'll give you.

2414. Mungu kimsahau umejisahau. [MA](#) 334.

If you have forgotten God, you have forgotten yourself.

2415. Mungu mgeuzi. [JK](#) 119; [FSM](#) 141.

God changes things. Do not lose hope. God can change everything. Nobody's condition is stable. God gives health and sickness. So a healthy person should not close the eyes to less fortunate people, because some day that same person may be in need of help.

2416. Mungu mkazi wa ulimwengu (or sama) shida na raha hutuma. [T](#) 296; [SACL](#) 770, 908; [SPK](#).

God, the establisher of the world, sends adversity and prosperity. It is God who puts [us in] the world and who gives everyone trials and joy - Sacl. God who resides in Heaven sends us hardship and happiness - [SPK](#). Mkazi from kukaza, to tighten - [J](#).

2417. Mungu na uwinda. [T](#) 295.

God and work - [T](#). Uwinda: hunting, searching. It is used metaphorically: Do not just pray to God, but do something yourself: look and search for food or work - [MM](#).

2418. Mungu ndio mjuvi wa siri. [V](#) Mungu.

God is the one who knows the secrets.

2419. Mungu ndiye mganga mkuu. [NGU](#).

God is the great healer.

2420. Mungu ni mkidhi haja. [J](#) kidhi.

God is the Granter of needs. A title of God.

2420a. Mungu ni mungu wa kweli. [SPK](#).

God is a God of truth.

2421. Mungu ni muumba wa viumbe pia. [KS](#) pia.

God is the creator of animals also. Respect for living things.

2422. Mungu si athumani. Semi 28; [ZO](#) p.243; [KA](#); [KS](#).

God is not like Athumani [or John Doe]. The meaning is that God has no favoritism, bias or special liking. The greatness of God cannot be compared to that of any human being - [ZO](#).

Mungi si mfaki.

God is not an old person.

2422a. Mungu yu safi hupenda usafi. [SPK](#).

God is pure and loves cleanliness.

2423. Muomba mungu hachoki. [T](#) 358i; [JK](#) 126; [KB](#) 166; [KA](#).

The person who prays to God does not tire. Do not lose hope praying and try different ways of solving your problems - [MM](#).

2424. Mwamini (or mcha) mungu si mtovu. [F](#) 33.139; [B](#) 2.64; [ED](#) 51; [KS](#) mcha; [JK](#) 139.

The person who trusts in God lacks nothing.

2424a. Mwanzio wa maaswio hi kuzibwa masikio. [SPK](#).

The beginning of rebellion [against God, i.e., evil] is that one's ears are blocked. Evil is the disobedience of divine laws. A person starts out on the path of evil by refusing to listen to reason - [SPK](#).

2424b. Mwenye hai tapata riziki. [SPK](#).

A living being will receive its daily food. The Lord will provide - [SPK](#).

2424c. Mwenye kupewa sumu hakufa, mwenye kupika ndiye wakufa. [SPK](#).

The one who was given the poison did not die, the one who concocted it, is the one to die. God will find the culprit - [SPK](#).

2425. Mwiko ni kuamini. [NGU](#).

Taboo is a matter of faith.

2425a. Mwokozi ni mungu. [SPK](#).

God will save us.

2426. Mzazi kanuni ndiye mungu. [KB](#) 227.

The perfect parent is God. In procreation and education of children, the parents are the cooperators of God.

2427. Neema za mungu hazizuiliki. [NGU](#).

The blessings of God cannot be stopped.

2428. Neno ulikataalo ndilo mungu apendalo. [T](#) 416; [SACL](#) 334; [V](#) 61; [KB](#) kataa.

The matter you refuse, is [perhaps] the very thing God wills - [T](#). Cf. 1984.

2428a. Nyumba ya mungu haifungwi. [SPK](#).

God's house is not shut. Said to comfort a friend who has been struck by misfortune - [SPK](#).

2429. Pato kuu ni la mungu apao wawi na wema. [T](#) 453a; [SACL](#) 738.

Great gain is from God, who gives to the bad and the good. Cf. 2370, 3904, 4476.

2430. Omitted.

2431. Roho haina thamani. [T](#) 46,6.

The soul has no price [is priceless]. One should go to any length to save a soul - [MM](#).

2432. Salamu ya mja ni kuitunga. [JK](#) 138.

Salvation for the mortals is to watch out - [JK](#). Kuitunga or kujitunza, to be careful, cautious.

2433. Siku twazigeuza kati ya watu. [JK](#) 138.

We [Allah] change the days among men - [JK](#).

2434. Toba ni vitendo. [SAM](#) 23.2.

Repentance is deeds. Words are not enough to prove a change of mind.

2434a. Tumeambiwa kaeni, hatukwambiwa gombeni. [SPK](#).

We have been told [by God] "live" [in peace], We have not been told: "quarrel!"

2435. Tunatembea kwa imani, sio kwa kuona. [NGU](#).

We walk by faith not by seeing.

2435a. Uche mungu, siche mtu. [SPK](#).

Fear God, fear no human.

2436. Ukicheza na mbwa utaingia msikitini. [NGU](#).

If you play with a dog, you'll enter the mosque [for purification]. Playing with a dog makes a person unclean - Koran.

2437. Ukikinai kidogo, mola atakupa kingi. [KA](#); [SM](#).

If you are content with little, God will give you much more. Ukikinai or ukitosheka, be satisfied.

2438. Ukitaka kula mfu, kula wa kunona. [REK](#).

If you want to eat meat, eat the best part. Cf. 2439.

2439. Ukitaka kula nguruwe, chagua aliyenona. [F](#) 47.14; [B](#) 3.24; [H](#) 103; [SWA](#).58; [KA](#).

If you want to eat pork, choose a fat pig. Muslims are forbidden to eat pork. If you do a bad thing, do it big. The punishment is the same - [MM](#). Finish what you do completely and totally - [KA](#).

2440. Ukosapo, zidi kuomba. [SPK](#)

When you are in need, never stop praying.

2441. Usharifu ni moyo. [EM](#) u26.

Being a sharif is a matter of the heart. Nobility must come from the heart.

Usharifu, descendant of the prophet Muhammad - KS. Nobility, excellence, respectability - [J](#).

2442. Utahara wa jumaa utake hamisi. [ED](#) 83.

After the purification of Friday, try for Thursday. One should try to strive for a good life every day. The [ritual and mental] purity of Friday, pronounce it [wake up] on Thursday - [JK](#). The proverb intends to instruct that one has to wake up early if one wishes to lead a devotional life, and prepare oneself for it - [JK](#). Jumaa for ijumaa, Friday, day of prayer and rest. Hamisi for alhamisi, Thursday, last day of the week. JK 138 mentions utamke, pronounce, and uamke [wake up] instead of utake [you try].

2443. Utajiri ni raha ya leo duniani, mateso ya kesho ahera. [SAM](#) 26.20.

Richness in the world today is comfort, but is suffering in the world here after tomorrow. With the understanding that wealth is not used

properly - [MM](#).

2443a. Utapata ujaaliwelo, hupati ulipendalo. [SPK](#).

You will get what is destined for you, you do not get what you love.

2444. Uwe taa duniani, umwombe rahamani. [JKP](#).

Be a lamp in this world, pray the merciful God. Rahamani: name of God, the Merciful.

2445. Wino wa mungu haufutiki. [SAM](#) 27.4.

God's ink is indelible. Cf. 1949.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Gratitude

2446. Ahsante ya punda ni teke. Swahili, Sept.1966.

The gratitude of a donkey is a kick. A euphemism for 2457.

2447. Aisifuye mvua imemnyea. [F](#) 1.5; [H](#) 3; [Wikon](#) 242; [L](#) 2; [B](#) 3.74; [NS](#) 27; [AL](#) 1027; [J](#) nya; [V](#) mvua; [MARA](#) 3; [RECH](#) 410; [L](#); [H](#).

One who praises rain has been rained upon. Has benefited by it, or has been refreshed by it.

Good fortune is praised by those who have experience of it - [SPK](#).

2448. Alisifuye jua limemwangaza. [H](#) 3.; .2.15.

The sun has shone on him who praises it.

2449. Aliyekupandisha simpige teke. [JKP](#).

Do not kick the one who helped you up. "Do not look down on your humble origins" - [JKP](#).

Aliyepandisha wengine ngazini, hupigwa teke menoni. [SPK](#).

The one who has helped others climb the ladder, gets kicked in the teeth.

2450. Aliyepandisha wengine ngazini, hupigwa teke menoni. [JKP](#).

The one who has helped others to climb the ladder, gets kicked in the teeth.

2451. Asante tupu haijai chungu. [NGU](#); [FSM](#) 19.

An empty 'thank you' does not fill the pot.

2451a. Asokumbuka fadhila si mtu ni hayawani. [SPK](#).

One who does not remember a kindness is not a human being but an animal.

2452. Baada ya wema adhabu. [AL](#) 1301.

After being kind one receives punishment. After receiving kindness, the ungrateful respond with evil.

2453. Chujio hutenda mema, mabaya huliangukia. [AL](#) 1298.

The sieve does good, [even though] bad things fall upon it.

2454. Daraja lililokuvusha usilitukane. [EM](#) 44.4.

Do not despise a bridge on which you have crossed. Do not despise somebody who has helped you. Cf. 2461.

2455. Fadhili ukitenda, singoje kulipwa. [MA](#) 112.

If you do a favor, wait not for repayment.

2456. Fadhili ya nyuki ni moto. [J](#) fadhili; [V](#) II; [SACL](#) 218, 701; [KS](#) fadhili; [AL](#) 1305-1306.

All the thanks a bee gets is fire. Reference to smoking them out of their hives to get their honey. However, V understands moto [fire] as the sting: The gratitude of the bee is a sting. Even though the bee's sting is painful, the honey is much desired. When someone is undeniably wrong in keeping something back from others and for this reason is judged a bad person, drastic measures are justifiable to obtain what would in the long run be the best for the larger number of people" - [PA](#). Cf. 2457, 2898.

2457. Fadhili za punda ni mashuzi; na msihadhari ni ng'ombe. [F](#) 8.1; [J](#) shuta; [RECH](#) 87; [T](#) 65, first half of proverb; [MS](#) 93, [SACL](#) 218, 595, msi nadhari; [KS](#) fadhila.

The gratitude of a donkey is the breaking of wind; and the witless person is [but] a cow. Generally only the first part is quoted. Shukrani, gratitude; sometimes used instead of fadhili, kindness.

Fadhila za punda ni mateke. [MARA](#) 3.

The gratitude of a donkey is kicks. "No thanks at all. Used when bad has been returned for good" - [PA](#). Cf. 2446.

2458. Hakuna mtenda jema akalipwa zizo. [FSM](#) 19.

No benefactor is paid back in the same way.

2459. Heshima ya kiungwana, hujua atendewayo. [T](#) 96.

It is the honor of the noble person to know what is done for him/her.

2460. Huimbana nyimbo zake, wasahau jina lake. [JKP](#).

They sing the [hero/praise] songs to each other, [but] they forget his/her name.

"A prophet (here: a poet) is not honored in the prophet's town, even though the prophet's work is made use of" - [JKP](#).

2461. Ivushayo ni mbovu. [L](#) 28i; [T](#) 112; [F](#) 12.5; [A](#) 114; [MARA](#) 2.

The ferry that takes you across is [looked back on as] rotten. Reproach to a person who does not appreciate the help received - [L](#).

An interesting change of words: **Livushalo ni gogo.** [MARA](#) 2.

That what ferries across is [only] a tree trunk. Cf. 2454.

2462. Jema hulipwa, lakini jema jingine halilipiki. [EM](#) j6.

A good deed is returned, but there is a good deed which cannot be returned. When the good deed is so great that it cannot be returned by a deed of equal greatness. For example, when someone sacrifices his life for you.

2463. Jogoo mtenda mema kaliwa. [AL](#) 1300.

The rooster, always beneficial, is eaten. Rewards of doing good.

2464. Lifaranga, ukimtakia uzima, anajitupa katika moto. [AL](#) 826.

If you want a chick to be alive, it throws itself in the fire. Cf. 3865.

2465. Kushukuru hakudhuru. [RSP](#) 76.

ët does no harm to be grateful.

2466. Lala mkekani ukikarimiwa mkeka. [EM](#) 13.

Sleep on the mat if you are offered a mat. Be grateful for the mat. If you ask for a bed, it is possible that your hosts do not have one and this request may embarrass them or they have a defective one, or used by somebody else. As a guest, accept with gratitude any form of hospitality offered to you - [EM](#).

2467. Macho uliyotibu ndiyo hukuangalia vibaya. [REK](#).

The eyes you cured are the same that now look wickedly at you. "Eaten bread is soon forgotten."

2468. Maiti haoni sanda. [AL](#) 1293.

The dead person does not see the shroud. A thankless person is not grateful for gifts received.

2468a. Mfunza kuoka meuliwa na wavuvi. [SPK](#).

The person who taught people how to grill the fish was killed by the fishermen. The fishermen ought to have been grateful to the grilling teacher, for that art made the fish tastier and thus more saleable. - [SPK](#).

2469. Mguu ukiumwa na mbwa ni mbaya. [AL](#) 1295.

A leg bitten by a dog is [declared] bad. One sees the bad that is now and forgets the good that was - [AL](#).

2470. Mkulima hasahau jembe kiselema. [KA](#).

A [good] farmer does not forget the old worn out hoe. Don't throw away people who have been useful to you. Kiselema, an old hoe, worn out, most of the blade is gone.

2471. Mtenda mema kinyuki jazaye kulipwa moto. [SAM](#) 16.24.

One who does good is rewarded like a bee, with fire. Cf. 2456.

2472. Mwendo akikualika, mwambie nakushukuruka. [JKP](#).

When your friend invites you, say "thank you." "It is considered rude to turn down an invitation" - [JKP](#). Shukuru, give thanks.

Shukuruka (stative from shukurika), you be thanked.

2473. Mwenye kukusifu mbio, maana aliisha kukufuata. [AL](#) 1531.

One who praises you at once has followed you. That person has benefited of your generosity.

2474. Ngarawa iliyokuvusha mtoni, usiite kinyangalika. [NGU](#).

The boat that took you across the river, don't call it useless. Kinyangalika, useless, old, dilapidated.

2475. Nimekupaka wanja, wewe wanipaka pilipili. [F](#) 39.16; [AL](#) 1299.

I have anointed you with kohl, you [in return] anoint me with pepper.

2476. Nisije kula chumvi tena. [KB](#) 239.

May I not come to eat salt anymore? Don't I have a right to live? Chumvi, salt; here means food. Cf. 1212.

2477. Pango lililokusitiri, lisitiri. [EM](#) p3.

You should preserve a cave that has saved you. Because you might need it sometime again.

2478. Panya akila arudisha mavi. [AL](#) 1308.

If a mouse eats your food, it returns droppings.

2479. Pofu hasahau mkongojo wake. [B4.79](#); [F](#) 43.21.

A blind person does not forget the walking stick. A needy person does not forget the benefactor.

2480. Punda hana fadhili. [JK](#) 137.

A donkey shows no gratitude. A lowly-born person shows no civilized behavior - [JK](#).

Cf. 2446, 2457.

2480a. Roho uwe na usawa na kushukuru vipawa. [SPK](#).

Let the soul be well-balanced and grateful for God's gifts.

2481. Shukuru kwa uliyo nayo. [T](#) 478; [Y](#) 38; [NGU](#).

Give thanks for what you have.

2481a. Sindano huwa na uzi na kushona isishone. [JKP](#).

The needle is well threaded but does not sew. "Said of a capable person who does not receive the respect earned" - JKP.

2481b. Umsaidiaye kwenye mvua, anyanyukapo hushirikiana na maadui zako kukucheka. [EM](#) u21.

The person you helped in the rain, getting up, will join your enemies to laugh at you. Some persons often resent the help you gave.

2481c. Umtendaye wema asijue, ukimtenda uovu hatajua. [PA](#).

If the persons to whom you do good should not know it, they will not know it even if you do harm to them. "If someone does not appreciate favors etc., even if you become angry and abusive will not change his mind, i.e., he still will not appreciate your favors. Becoming "bad" oneself cannot make another person "good" - [PA](#). Cf. 1497, 3544.

2481d. Usimkarimu mlevi na kutegemea shukrani. [NGU](#).

Don't treat a drunkard generously and expect thanks.

2481e. Wema kumanina (or kumanyoko). [AL](#) 1310, 1311.

Kindness, dirty insults. Doing good is answered with sexual insults.

Kumanina, his/her mother's vagina. Kumanyoko, your mother's vagina.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Greed

2482. Alaye peke hufa peke yake. [MA](#) 40.

One who eats alone dies alone. The one who refuses to share blessings with others will have to endure all hardship alone.

2483. Amechagua nazi akapata dafu. [MA](#) 59.

So-and-so has chosen the fully grown coconut and got the unripe one. This is said of somebody who is not satisfied with possessions. The chances are that that person might lose all. Cf. 1540.

2484. Anayekuwapo penye mgawo asijitandikie sahani (or jani). [AL](#) 1275.

One who is present at a sharing must not show up with a plate [leaf]. Greed is not appreciated.

2485. Atokeapo mtoto wa fuko, mshike, japo wawinda fuko. [EM](#) 18.29.

If a small mole appears, catch it, even if you are hunting for its mother. Do not despise small favors or gifts if you need bigger ones. Cf. 2493.

2486. Baniani mbaya, kiatu chake dawa. [F](#) 6.5; [L](#) II; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#), baniani.

An evil Indian, his shoe is a medicine - [E](#). You may regard someone as bad, and yet covet his goods - [E](#). The Swahili liked to buy shoes from the Indian shopkeeper, although they thought the Banyan bad, because they adored cattle. Used when people have to give up things for a greater good or profit. - [MARA](#). A Banyan, an Indian, who is a follower of Brahma - [J](#). Cf. 862.

2487. Bata mtaga mayai usimchinje kwa tamaa ya wingi. [EM](#) 25.9.

Do not slaughter a laying duck from the desire of getting many eggs quickly. Do not kill the goose that lays the golden eggs - [EM](#).

2488. Cha wenyewe huliwa na wenyewe. [EM](#) 34.6.

What is theirs is consumed by them. There are people, such as the rich, who do not co-operate with those who do not belong to their group or class. If they hold a party, for example, they will invite themselves only. Thus what is theirs is shared among themselves only - [EM](#).

2489. Chanda ukipewa usikimeze chote. [MA](#) 95; [MA](#) 15.

If you are given a finger, do not swallow it all. Be grateful for the little - [KA](#).

Ukipewa shubiri usichukue pima. [F](#) 46.10; [ED](#) 77; [KS](#) pima; [KA](#).

If you are given a span, do not take a fathom. Shubiri: a span, from thumb to little finger of the open hand, about nine inches. Pima: a fathom, two yards, the stretch of a man's arms.

Ukipewa shubiri usitake reale. [NGU](#).

If you are given a span, don't desire a reale. Reali or rea: a German crown or dollar, that was current on the Swahili coast. Its name is derived from the Portuguese and Spanish coin real. - Krapf.

2490. Changu chetu, chako chako. [EM](#) 33.4.

Mine is ours, yours is yours. If sharing is the principle, then everyone should share - [EM](#).

This saying is used in criticizing a selfish person - [EM](#). Cf. 627.

2491. Fuata nyuki ukafe mzingani. [KS](#) nyuki.

Follow the bee and then die in the hive. Greed can be killing. Cf. 635.

2491a. Hasadi yaua. [SPK](#).

Jealousy kills. Hasadi for hasidi or husuda.

2492. Hasidi mpishe njia apite. [KA](#).

Let the envious person pass by on the road. A jealous person will not join you in a friendly way.

2493. Heri kenda shika, kuliko kumi nenda uje. [L](#) 24; [B](#) 2.29; [KS](#) afadhali. kama instead of kuliko; [T](#) 89; [CM](#) 42.

Better nine take it, than ten go and come back. It is better to get nine now, than [perhaps] ten later.

Moja shika si kumi uje. [F](#) 29.90; [H](#) 68; [MARA](#) 42; [SWA](#) 42.

Taking one is better than ten upon return.

Moja shika kumi hutapata. [SPK](#).

Hang on to one, you will not get ten. Cf. 2507.

2494. Heri moja mkononi, kama kumi mwituni. [MA](#) 135; But [KA](#) and [SM](#) have mia ya mbali.

Better one in the hand than ten in the bush.

2495. Heri twaa kama inshallah utapata. [KB](#) 73.

"Take it" is much better than "You'll get it the Lord willing." Cf. 2493.

2496. Hukuzidi pau wala ndakaka? [T](#) 102.

You cannot beat the length of the pau and the height of the ndakaka. Why are you so thickheaded? - [MM](#). Said of a thrifty person.

Pau or pao, sticks used for the roof. Ndakaka, thin vertical sticks.

2497. Husudi yaua kwa jicho la wivu. [JKP](#).

Jealousy kills with the eye of envy. Husudi or hasidi, grudge, jealousy.

2498. Imekuwa sisi kwa sisi. [EM](#) 17.

It has become everything for ourselves only. About people who work and care only for themselves.

2499. Inzi kufa juu ya kidonda si haramu. [F](#) 40.26; [KA](#), si hasara, [not a loss].

For a fly to die on an ulcer is not bad. After all, it got what it wanted - [F](#).

N.B. This and the following proverb are often used in reference to AIDS; some others in this collection have been related to AIDS:

Mwenye kufa kwa asali ya nyuki hana kilio.

One who dies in honey is not lamented.

Fuata nyuki ukafe zingani.

Follow the bee and die in the hive.

Nguruwe hawezi kuacha vihama.

A pig cannot leave rooting.

Nguruwe aendalo ndilo atendalo.

A pig does what it must do.

Kuti kavu kuanguka si ajabu.

A dry leaf falling down is nothing to be amazed about.

Inzi kufia maji sio hasara. [SPK](#)

The drowning of a fly is no loss.

2500. Inzi kufia tuini si hasara. [J](#) tui; [V](#) 122; [KB](#) 256; [SACL](#) 211.

A fly does not mind dying in coconut cream - J. The death of a fly in coconut milk is not a big thing - [SACL](#). The milk is still drinkable. Cf. 2499.

2501. Jicho la hasidi huenda kila pembe (or upande). [NGU](#).

The envious eye goes everywhere. Looks everywhere to satisfy its greed. What the eye sees, the heart covets.

2502. Jivu usilolilala usilipigie jibwa. [MARA](#) 2.

Don't beat a dog for the ashes you don't sleep in. Dogs and cats like to sleep on warm ashes. Humans don't. So why should you hit a dog for sleeping there? We should not refuse the use of things we don't use or need. Give help where you can. Jibwa, a big dog.

2503. Joka kubwa halitemi. [EM](#) j31.

A big snake cannot spit. A snake swallows what it can. A big snake does not reject anything. It can only swallow. Some people will only receive, without giving anything back.

2504. Joka la mdimu linalinda watundao. [F](#) 13.8; [MARA](#) 3; [AL](#) 970; [FSM](#) 56.

The big snake of the lime tree guards against those who pluck the fruits. Said of a jealous husband - [E](#). Too old or impotent. - [AL](#)

A complete version, but not so common:

Joka la mdimu halitundi wala halili, huwasa watundao na walao. [V](#) joka.

The big snake in the lime tree neither picks nor eats the fruits, but wards off the pluckers and eaters. Used to describe people who do not allow people to use or to enjoy things they themselves don't use - [MARA](#). Also used to say that everybody looks after his own interest.

Joka, a big snake, means an angry and jealous person. Cf. 3274.

2505. Jumbe mroho hufilisi wenzake. [EM](#) j21.

A greedy chief impoverishes the people. Jumbe, chief, headman.

2506. Kama una ngozi yenye kufa na mbaya, usitamani ngozi yenye mikia mirefu na mizuri. [AL](#) 1282.

If you have an old and damaged hide, don't desire those with long and beautiful tails.

2507. Kenda fumbata si kumi njoo kesho. [SAM](#) 9.5; [MS](#) 115; [KA](#).

Nine grasped in the hand is better than come tomorrow for ten. If someone pays you half of what is owed, take it; it is better than the promise: tomorrow I'll pay you all - [SAM](#). Cf 2493.

2508. Kichache hakikutoshi, na kingi hakikulishi. [JKP](#).

A little does not suffice for you, a lot does not feed [your greed] either. A greedy person always wants more.

2509. Kidaku anakazana lakini umaskini haumtoki. [ZO](#) 260.

The greedy person may try as hard as possible, but will not escape poverty.

Daku , "from the saying : Leni upesi, kesho kuna ndaa kuu, eat quickly, tomorrow there will be great hunger" - [Krapf](#). Food eaten at night before breakfast or before a fast day.

2510. Kijaacho tele hutawanyika. [ED](#) 20.

What is abundantly full overflows. When the measure is full it overflows - [RP](#) p.586:151.

2511. Kila mtaraji kingi hapati hata kimoja. [JKP](#).

Whoever expects a lot, does not get anything.

2512. Kimasomaso mwanangu usimwone. [KS](#) kimasomaso.

My son, don't encounter a jealous person. Kimasomaso, a person who is envious.

2513. Kisicho chako usikitegemee. [NGU](#).

Don't rely on what is not yours.

2514. Kitu kisichokufaa wewe wamzuwiliyani mtu kimfae? [T](#) 250a.

If a thing is of no use to you, why do you prevent someone else from using it?

Wamzuwiliyani for wamzuilia nini. Cf. 2525.

2515. Kobe, unipe. Anasema, mkono ni mfupi! Lakini wanamwambia, twaa. Anakamata. [KB](#) 114.

Tortoise. give me. The tortoise will say: my arm is too short. But tell it, Take, and the tortoise will grab it.

2516. Kula nyingi si kushiba. [LE3](#) 227.14; [AL](#) 67.

Eating much is not necessarily being satiated. About someone who has received his share but wants more.

2517. Kunenepa kwako ni kukonda kwangu. [NGU](#).

Your growing fat is my growing skinny.

2518. Kuomba msaada si kuiba. [REK](#).

Begging for help is not [as disgusting as] stealing.

2519. Kutaka ni mazoea. [JKP](#).

Wanting is a habit. "One could stop wishing things if one had the character" - [JKP](#).

2520. Kwa jirani nusu, kwako kunona. [AL](#) 708; [AL](#) nona.

At your neighbor's, half a helping, but at your own place a succulent portion. A bragger depreciates the other person.

2521. Madharau dogo hugutushwa na kubwa. [REK](#).

Those who scorn little things will be without big things. Gutua, take away suddenly.

2522. Maiti mpenda kupewa. [AL](#) 806.

A dead person likes to receive. The more a person is without things the more that person wants.

2523. Maiti mpenda raha. [AL](#) 805.

A dead person likes peace.

2523a. Mali kwa mali. [SPK](#).

Possessions for possessions. Nothing for nothing - [SPK](#).

2523b. Mali ni ja ngazi, utakapo panda. [SPK](#).

Money is like a ladder, when you want to climb up.

2523c. Mali ni ya kuchuma, roho haichumi. [SPK](#).

Money is for spending, but it is never spent on the soul. Unless it is spent on alms - [SPK](#).

2524. Mali ya yeye hula yeye. [EM](#) m3.

That person consumes all. About a person who is selfish and does not share with others.

Mali ya-ye mpe yeye. [SPK](#).

Give that person what is due.

2525. Mavi usiyoyala, wayawingiani kuku? [F](#) 22.22; [MARA](#) 3; [T](#)250a; [MARA](#) 3; [AL](#) 1292; [KS](#) winga.

Why drive away the chicken from the dung which you do not eat yourself? Denying others what you don't use or need - [AL](#). Don't be a dog in a manger - [E](#). Cf. 2502, ×514.

2526. Maziwa ambayo hunyonyi ni sawa utomvi. [AL](#) 1285.

The milk that you have not sucked is like [tree] sap to you. The fox said that the grapes were sour.

2527. Mbegu moja ya karanga mkwe alilala nje. [AL](#) 823.

For the loss of one groundnut the in-law slept in the open. Stupid obstinacy is harmful - [AL](#).

2528. Mbwa dume hawezi kumpokelea mwenzake chakula. [AL](#) 1192.

A male dog cannot receive food for his companion. He will eat it himself.

2529. Mchua ngalawa mbili moja hupwelea. [FSM](#) 102.

One who sets out two boats [outriggers] runs one aground. Cf. 2539, 2542.

2530. Mikono mingi haramu ya kula. [NGU](#).

It is forbidden to eat with many hands. Eat with one hand only. Cf. 2538.

2531. Mja wa hiana ana laana. [KA](#), [SM](#).

A jealous person has a curse. That person envies others and does not want others to enjoy anything and so has no joy. Hiana, udhalimu, uchoyo, unyimaji, envious, jealous, mean spirited.

2532. Mkamia maji hayanywi. [T](#) 268; [FSM](#) 114; [ED](#) 35; [KB](#) kamia; [KS](#) kamia.

A person that puts his/her mind too much on water, drinks it not - [T](#).

Complete version: **Mkamia maji hayanywi, akiyanywa humkwama.** [F](#) 26.66.

One who fixes his mind overmuch on water does not drink it, and if he does, it chokes him - [E](#).

Kila mkamia maji yamtoka puani. [NGU](#).

Everyone who greatly desires water has water coming out of his nose. Ania, intend, desire.

2533. Mkataa chinjo hupata mtanda. [SAM](#) 14.10.

One who refuses a sliver [of meat] will get a big chunk. The ironical understanding is that if you refuse a little favor, you might get a misfortune. Cf. 2533.

2534. Omitted.

2535. Mkataa ya kuchinja hupata ya kunyonga. [SAM](#) 15.11.

One who refuses slaughtered meat will get strangled meat. One who does not want to commit even small mistakes will fall into big ones. Cf. 2533.

2536. Mkowa wa mlafi hurarukaruka ukiwa mpya. [REK](#).

The belt of the glutton gets torn again and again, when it is new. By eating too much.

Mkowa, money belt.

2537. Mla kuku na mbuzi atamla mtu. [AL](#) 496.

The animal that eats chicken and goats will also eat a human being.

2538. Mla kwa miwili hana mwisho mwema. [F](#) 28.81; [ED](#) 38; [B](#) 3.64; [MARA](#) 3; [JKP](#).

A person who eats with both hands will come to a bad end. Eating with both hands is a sign of impatience and greed, and is very impolite. The left hand is considered unclean - [T](#). Greed has no moderation. Greed results in trouble: taking bribes, etc. Such a person has an evil ending - [MARA](#). "The adulterer will one day be caught" - [JKP](#).

Mla kwa miwili sitakula nae. [T](#) 229.

An eater with two hands, I will not eat with him /her. Cf. 2550.

2538a. Moyo hutamani hwishiwa sandani. [SPK](#).

The heart is full wishes, it will all end in the shroud.

2539. Mshika mbili lazima kimoja kimponyoke. Swahili March 1967, p.108; [JK](#) 143; [KS](#), mshika.

One who grasps two things, must allow one to go.

Mwenzu mbili moja humwacha. [V](#) 37.
A person who desires two must leave one.

2540. Mshona kubwa ni lake. [REK](#).
The one who sews roomy, sews his own garment. Cf. 662.

2541. Msi nacho hasidi wa mwenye nacho. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2; [SM](#).
One who doesn't have it is jealous of the one who has it. And the one who has it does not want the other to have it - [KA](#).

2541a. Msijitutize. [SPK](#).
Do not overload yourselves. Do not be too greedy - [SPK](#).

2541b. Mtaka hapati asokadiriwa. [SPK](#)
The covetous person does not get what was not destined for him/her.

2542. Mtaka yote(or vyote) hukosa yote (or vyote). [J](#) taka; [E](#) 31.111;
[A](#) 292; [T](#) 317; [B](#) 1.72; [SACL](#) 605; [RECH](#) 363; [CM](#) 53; [KS](#) mtaka; [H](#) 75; [SWA](#) 59; [B](#) 2.49.
One who wants all loses everything. You may lose the one piece of meat you have while going after another - Swa. Refers to Diva's translation of Aesop's fable about the dog and its shadow.

Mtaka yote kwa pupa hukosa yote. [J](#) pupa; [B](#) 4. 47; [SACL](#) 766; [V](#) 59; [MS](#) 105; [FSM](#) 102; [KS](#) pupa.
One who wants everything in a hurry loses everything.

Mtaka vingi kwa pupa hana mwisho mwema. [KS](#) pupa.
One who wants many things eagerly does not have a nice death. Cf. 1546, 1547.

2543. Mtama usioula wawingiani dege. [KA](#).
Why drive away the birds from the millet that you do not eat yourself. Cf. 2504.

2544. Mteuzi haachi tamaa. [J](#) teua; [SACL](#) 611; [V](#) tena; [E](#) 31.14; [SM](#).
A chooser [a critic -J] is always wishing - [V](#). Mteuzi, a connoisseur, a critic. From teua, to choose, select - [J](#).

Mtenzi haishi tamaa. [B](#) 3.39; [H](#) 78; [FSM](#) 138; [AL](#) tenda.
An active hard-working person is never satisfied with his work - [AL](#).
Mtenzi [from tenda, to do], one who does things, carries on work.

2545. Omitted.

2546. Muacha kiwi hanacho, na chema kimpotele. [T](#) 355.
One who discards a bad thing is without it, and the good thing escapes. Abandon not your old clothes till you get new ones.

2547. Mwend (or mzazi) mwenye ubahili, zao la mwana ni ubatili. [REK](#).
The inheritance of the offspring of a parsimonious parent is emptiness. Nothing is left for the children. Ubahili, miserliness, parsimoniousness. Ubatili, emptiness, vanity, futility, uselessness, falseness. Cf. 4498, 4499.

2548. Omitted.

2549. Mwenye kufa kwa asali ya nyuki hana kilio. [AL](#) 1288.
He who dies of honey has no mourners. Cf. 2499, 2500.

2550. Mwenye ndimi mbili hula na miwili. [JK](#) 121; [AL](#) 354.
A person with two tongues eats with two [hands]. Only one hand may be used while eating. Only greedy children eat with both hands. Therefore, somebody who speaks with a double tongue will have the hands in some other dirty business - [JK](#). Astute people show things to their own advantage, without paying attention to politeness - [AL](#). Cf. 2538.

2550a. Nafusi na mali yasikukulie. [SPK](#).
Do not permit passion and wealth to rule you.

2551. Nyuki hutafuta ladha, watu hufuata fedha. [JKP](#).
Bees search for a sweet taste, people run after money.

2552. Pongo mwenye kula kunde (or kalanga) hachoki. [AL](#) 79.
The pongo antelope eating peas [peanuts] doesn't get tired [eating them].

2553. Pua ulale, vyenye kunukia si vyako. [AL](#) 1286.
Sleep my nose, what you smell is not for you.

2554. Pupa halishi. [JK](#) 129.

Greed never finishes - [JK](#); [MM](#).

2554a. Roho ni kama mtoto yahitaji kurudiwa. [SPK](#).

Our greedy soul is like a child, it wants to be rebuked.

2554b. Roho ni kuacha mema ikatamani maovu. [SPK](#).

Desire, that is to abandon good things out of greed for bad things.

2554c. Roho yataka mafuta. [SPK](#).

The soul needs cleaning, shaking up.

2555. Shauku nyingi huondoa maarifa. [A](#) 39i; [J](#) shauku; [T](#) 475; [KB](#) 284; [SACL](#) 712.

Strong desire overrides prudence. Passion makes blind or imprudent - [KB](#). Cf. 2532.

2556. Sitafute tunda lisilo na mti. [JKP](#).

Do not look for a fruit that does not belong to a tree. "Or, do not look for a fruit [read: bride], who has no family " - [JKP](#).

2557. Tajiri hutajirika na wenzake. [REK](#); [EM](#) t4.

A rich person is enriched by other people. The rich get many presents. People give to the rich in the hope to get something out of it. A wealthy person is made rich by the poor. "Wealth is not a result of an individual's efforts, but the effort of many people...if only one of them becomes wealthy, that person does so because of the joint efforts of all of them including that person, for one's own efforts would not make that person wealthy " - [EM](#).

2558. Tajiri mwenye maelfu hakatai [shillingi] moja. [NGU](#).

A millionaire does not refuse one [shilling].

2559. Tamaa inaua mtu. [KB](#) 288.

Too much eagerness kills a person. Passion leads to crime.

2560. Tamaa mbele, mauti nyuma. [F](#) 45.1; [L](#) 93; [B](#) 2.19; [H](#) 100; [WIKON](#) 177; [KS](#) tamaa.

Desire in front, death behind. Used as a warning to greedy or over-ambitious persons - [H](#).

Tamaa nyingi nyuma ukiwa. [NS](#) 38.

Much desire ends in desolation. This is said of a greedy person.

Ana mkono wa birika. A person with a hand like a vessel.

2561. Tasiliti yashinda belua. [NGU](#); [KS](#).

A craving is stronger than any pain. Tasiliti or tasliti: a great love, craving. Belua or beluwa, loss, pain, trouble, misfortune. Cf. 2559.

2562. Ubepari ni unyama. [KS](#) ubepari, unyama.

Exploitation is beastly (not human).

2563. Ukilamba vyanda, If you lick your fingers,
Watu wakichunga, While people are watching,
Watakwambia baadaye. They will later talk about you - [JK](#).

Do not show greed. For the original text in the Lamu dialect see JK's Proverbs from the Lamu Archipelago and the Central Kenya Coast; and his Four, Centuries of Swahili Verse.

2564. Ukitaka riba, sikio kuziba. [RSP](#) 31.

If you want big profits, stop your ears. Lest you hear the cries of your victims - [JK](#). If you want to go against the norms, you have to be deaf to what your friends and neighbors say - [MM](#).

Riba: interest, overcharging, big prices. This is prohibited by Islamic culture.

2565. Ukusuta hata uwe mjini, uko peke yako, tajiri hata porini anafuatwa. [NGU](#).

If you are penniless you are alone even in a town, but a rich man is followed even into the wilds.

2566. Usiache kunanua kwa kutega. [F](#) 48.28; [AL](#) 339.

Do not forget to break open the traps [with caught game] while you go on setting traps.

Kumamamua or Kunanua take out of a trap, force apart, open by force. Cf. 2542.

2567. Usilie ngoa. [JK](#) 120.

Do not cry with jealousy - [JK](#).

2568. Usione mlango umefungwa ukakata tamaa ya kubisha, labda ukarimu ndio uliofunguliwa. [REK](#).

Don't be amazed that the door is closed since you gave up inviting, perhaps generosity will open the door.

2569. Usitupe shaba yako kwa mng'ao wa dhahabu. Swahili March 1968, p.121; [JK](#) 146; [AI](#) 591.

Do not throw away your copper for the sake of gold's glitter.

2570. Utumainie inayokamata gumba, usitumainie yanayoona macho. [AL](#) 1277.

Put your expectation on what your hand can grasp, not what your eyes see. Gumba, thumb.

2571. Wakisha tia chanda, watatia na mkono: wakisha tia mkono, watatia na mguu. [V](#) 71; [T](#) 576.

When they have put in the finger, they will also put in the hand: when they have put in the hand, they will also put in the foot.

2572. Omitted.

2573. Zabibu zilizo mbali zinakuwa chungu. [NGU](#).

Grapes that are far away have become bitter.

2574. Zaidi na zaidi, mungu akusaidi. [RSP](#) 100.

More and more you want, may God help you. Said to a greedy person - [JK](#).

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Health - sickness

2575. Aendae kwa mganga hakosi jambo. [FSM](#) 84.

A person who goes to the medicine doctor is never without something wrong. Understood is that the doctor will always find something wrong.

2576. Afichaye ugonjwa haponi. [NGU](#).

One who hides sickness will not be cured.

2577. Afya bora na ghofira. [JKP](#).

Health is best with God's pardon. Ghofira or Ghofora: [God's] pardon.

2578. Afya haina kima. [JKP](#).

Health is priceless.

2579. Afya! Kulia juu, chini ku moto. [T](#) 2; [SACL](#) 444.

Health! Grow tall, below there is fire. Grow tall! To remain small has inconveniences. This is said when a child sneezes.

Afya! Kua kama mgomba. [KS](#).

Health, grow like a banana tree.

Kuwa kama mgomba, mnazi unakawia. [KS](#) mgomba.

Grow up like a banana tree, the coconut tree is too slow.

2579a. Afya ni baraka ya rabuka. [SPK](#).

Good health is a blessing from your Lord.

2580. Afya ni taji hakuna aijuaye isipokuwa mwenye maradhi. [MA](#) 22.

Health is a crown and no one knows it save a sick person.

2581. Anayeugua siye anayekufa. [Y](#) ugua; [KS](#); [AL](#) 1843.

The one who is sick is not [necessarily] the one who dies. A healthy person may die suddenly.

2582. Atekea sambu mai. [SACL](#) 792.

So-and-so is like a boat which draws water. About a very sick person. Cf. 2590.

2583. Auguwaye huangaliwa. [F](#) 5.44; [T](#) 39.

A sick person is cared for - [E](#). A sick person is visited - [T](#).

2584. Bora ni afya kuliko mali. [A](#) 202; [T](#) 36; [SACL](#) 43.

Health is the chief thing and it is better than wealth - [MA](#).21; [KS](#).

2585. Bora ni salama, kuliko ghanama. [RSP](#) 33.

Rest when ill, it is better than medicine - [MM](#).

2586. Chendacho kwa mganga hakirudi tena. Kiswahili March 1973, p.79; [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

What goes to the doctor does not come back. Gifts given to your wife or mother-in-law should not be claimed back. This is also used to calm a person who has given things to cheats and thieves and does not expect to get them back - [MARA](#).

Chendacho mavani hakuna marejeo. [KA](#).

What goes to the cemetery does not come back

2587. Dawa inayowasha inakupenda. [Y](#) dawa.

The medicine which hurts, likes you. Bitter pills may have blessed effects.

Dawa haitolewi bure. [JGH](#).

Medicine is never given freely

2588. Dawa ya jipu ni kulipasua. Unyonge p.17.

The cure of a boil is to open it.

2589. Donda-ndugu laisha dawa. [SAM](#) 6.1.

An incurable ulcer finishes medicine. This is said of someone who does not want to improve his ways. There is no substitute for loss or separation of a dearly beloved person - [MM](#).

Donda-ndugu: lit., ulcer-sibling, a wound which someone has for a very long time and which does not respond to medicine. It is like a sibling who is always with you.

Kidonda-ndugu chapoa? [SACL](#) 754; T 153.

Does a sibling-sore [ever] get well?

2590. Fulani atekea sambu maji. [AL](#) teka.

So-and-So is like a pirogue drawing water, and almost sinking. Near dying. Cf. 2582.

2591. Ganga ganga la mganga humlaza mgonjwa na tumaini. [REK](#).

The continual care of the doctor encourages the sick person.

2592. Heri kuzuia kuliko kuuguza. [E](#).

Prevention is better than cure.

2593. Omitted.

2594. Jongo mavunda. [V](#) jongo.

Rheumatism is a spoil-work.

Jongo: a kind of rheumatism, a swelling of the joints. Mavunda or mivunja: a spoiler.

2595. Kazi ni dawa. [BMT](#) p.11.

Work is like a medicine. Work cures.

2596. Kidogo ni tamu, kingi huembeza. [JKP](#).

A little is sweet, a lot is oppressing. "Makes you sick." "Too much of a good thing; advice to a young girl about lovers" - [JKP](#). Embeza (lema), overcome.

2597. Kidonda ukitonesha mwenye hakijifichi. [NGU](#).

Hurt the sore of somebody and it will reveal itself. A sore that is revealed can be cured.

2598. Kizuizui mgonjwa wa macho hawezi kabisa. [JKP](#).

The deaf person who gets an eye disease is sick indeed.

2599. Kulimbika kucha, ugonjwa wa kujitakia. [V](#) ugonjwa; [L](#) 37.

To grow long [finger] nails [is] to invite sickness [injury]. A rule of health. This is said with reference to something unpleasant that is caused by one's own negligence - [L](#).

2600. Kutaataa siyo dawa ya kufa. [SM](#).

Moving restlessly is not a remedy against dying. What is spoiled is spoiled.

Kutaataa, the restless moving of a sick person.

2601. Kwa mdogo pumu, kwa mkubwa mafua. [EM](#) k36.

Asthma to the small, colds to the big. If a child and an adult have the same disease, the child's is called properly asthma, but the adult is given a more respectable name (e.g., cold), so as not to lower that person's respect. The same in life. A small person is called by his proper name, but the important person is given a more respectful name - [EM](#). Cf. 2616.

2602. Kwa mganga (or mkunga) haziishi nyimbo. [FSM](#) 84.

A medicine man [midwife] is never without a song. Neither ever lacks an answer, even if it is only fictitious.

2603. Mali ya mgonjwa faida ya mfumu. [AL](#) 1718.

The property of a sick person profits the healer. Mfumu, or mganga, a healer, doctor.

2604. Maradhi yakija, huja kwa shoti ya farasi; yakitoka hutoka mtambao wa chungu. [ED](#) 28.

When sickness comes it comes in the gallop of a horse, but going away, it goes like a creeping ant.

Maradhi yaingiavyo, ndivyo sivyo yatokavyo. [SPK](#).

The way a disease enters [the body] that is not the way it departs.

2605. Mchoo ni ukoo. [T](#) 256.

The short rainy season is filth. The weather is cold and water is scarce, not inductive to cleanliness.

Mchoo: the period of short rains in July.

2606. Mfarijii aliyeumia hata kama ni adui kwako. [NGU](#).

Console the sufferer, even your enemy.

2607. Mficha ndwele hapati dawa. [FSM](#) 107.

One who hides his/her sickness doesn't get medicine. The best cure for difficulties and problems is to come out with them and talk about them. Cf. 2937.

2608. Mganga hajigangi. [F](#) 25.55; [MARA](#) 3.

A [witch] doctor does not cure him/herself.

Mganga wa miti shamba. A native doctor with local medicine.

2609. Mgonjwa akiugua sana, si lazima afe. [NGU](#).

Even a very sick person does not necessarily die.

2610. Mgonjwa haulizwi dawa. [H](#) 66; [SWA](#) 18; [FSM](#) III; [MS](#) 163.

A sick person is not asked if he wants a remedy. Just give what is needed. Do not ask a beggar what he needs; instead, satisfy that person's needs.

Mgonjwa haulizwi uji. [F](#) 26.60; [B](#) 2.19; [MARA](#) 3; [AL](#) 1153.

A sick person should not be asked if he wants porridge - [MM](#). Because it's the "thing" for a sick person.

2610a. Mgonjwa mwenziwe ni kitanda. [MA](#) 310.

A bed is the companion of a sick person.

2611. Mtambua ndwele ndiye mganga. [ED](#) 42; [V](#) mtambua.

The person who recognizes the illness is the physician. Only when a person recognizes the cause of trouble can it be cured. Cf. 3169.

2611a. Mtoto akitotukuta si mzima. [SPK](#).

If a child does not jump about, it is not healthy.

2611b. Mtu ni afya. [JGH](#).

A person is health.

2612. Mwenye tende hana paja. [KS](#) paja, tende; [AL](#) 988.

A person suffering from elephantiasis has no lap [for a child to sit on]. Tende, teende: A thick or swollen leg. The person does not feel pain. This sickness is common in cold and damp places e.g. on Pemba island - [Krapf](#). The Arabs attribute this sickness to an evil spell - [SACL](#).

2613. Nduli na mchimba dawa shauri lao ni moja. [T](#).414; [SACL](#).534, 673, nduli; [MS](#) 58.

The angel of death and the pharmacist [the root-digger] are in accord - [SACL](#). The object of both the digger of medicines and the angel is one, viz., to relieve the afflicted one - [T](#). Death and the doctor, their counsel is the same - [T](#). Nduli: 1. the Swahili name of the death-angel, Izrail. 2. death, smallpox, a killer - [MM](#). Ndui, smallpox - [J](#). Cf. 1385.

2614. Ng'ombe mteua jani ni mgonjwa. [ED](#) 62.

A cow that chooses grass is sick. Cf. 4724.

2615. Omiited.

2616. Pumu zimepata mkohozi (or kikohozi). [KA](#); [SM](#); [NGU](#).

The one who has a cold gets emphysema. A person who is weak will get a greater sickness.

The understanding of this proverb is that someone with a minor illness as a common cold, complains that he has a lung decease. Used, e.g., when a child cries his heart out for a minor hurt.

2617. Shibe ya waganga hutoka kwa wagonjwa. [NGU](#).

The bounty of the physician comes from the sick.

2618. Sitafuga ndwele na waganga tele. [F](#) 44.14; [L](#) 90.

I shall not suffer illness while doctors abound - [E](#). It means: Why should I suffer when all I have to do is ask for help; many are ready and capable to aid me out of my problems - [MM](#). Or, could it mean that I wouldn't dare to fall sick with so many doctors around looking for patients?

2618a. Tunza maji ya kisima, jamaa wawe wazima. [SPK](#).

Take good care of the well so that the family may be well.

2619. Ugonjwa hufichwa lakini kifo hakifichiki. [NGU](#).

Sickness can be hidden, but death cannot be hidden.

2620. Ugonjwa ni mmoja, matabibu wana tofauti ya elimu. [JK](#) 124.

Sickness is one [is the same], but the doctors differ in their science. Cf. 880.

2621. Ugonjwa wa moyo aujua mgonjwa. [NGU](#).

The sickness of the heart is known by the patient.

2622. Ukiona ndwee ikishindana na dawa, mganga sijisumbue, pana jambo litakuwa. [T](#) 524.

When you see a disease struggling with medical treatment, doctor, don't be upset, something will happen. Cf. 409.

2623. Ukiwaa (or ukiugua) uwe na subira. [JKP](#).

If you fall ill, have patience. Recovery will take longer than you think - [JKP](#).

Waa (Lamu dialect),ugua: to be ill.

2624. Umeingiwa mti. [V](#) mti.

The tree has been overtaken. A powerful person is sick.

2624a. Usipouguza mwele una koo la ujuko. [SPK](#).

If you do not look after a patient you will have a family of the shroud (i.e., all your relatives will die).

2625. Uzee hauna dawa. [NGU](#).

There is no cure for old age.

2626. Uzima haubadilishwi mali. [KB](#) 333.

Life [health] and wealth are not bartered.

2627. Uzima wa akili ni mwili. [NGU](#).

The health of the brain is related to the body.

2628. Wakati tabibu. [EM](#) w7.

Time is a healer.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Hospitality

2629. Achari yalisha. [SPK](#).

Pickles cause [the guests] to eat. A request must be couched in pleasant terms - [SPK](#). Achari, appetizer.

2629a. Akomelepo mwenyeji na mgeni koma papo. [T](#) 9; [MS](#) 4; [KS](#) mgeni; [AL](#) 1396.

Where the host has stopped, there the guest stops also. When the host is convinced about something, the guest stops arguing - [AL](#).

2630. Akufukuzaye hakwambii toka. [MARA](#) 1.

One who chases you away does not tell you "leave." Do not wait until you are told. If you are not welcome, stay away. The visitor must be careful not to overstay his welcome - [SPK](#).

The whole line:

Akufukuzaye hakwambii: toka

Huona mamboye yamebadilika

Waweza: ukae, huwezi: ondoka. [SPK](#).

If one wants to be without you, that person will not tell you: get out! One can see it from that person's behavior. It has changed. You can say: Stay. You cannot say: Go away. Cf. 2631.

2631. Akuwingaye kwake hakwambii ndokea, hukutendea vitendo ambavyo vya kukuchukia. [AL](#) 485.

One who expels you does not tell you go away, but he'll treat you unkindly. Cf. 2630.

2632. Heri yako heri yangu. [JKP](#).

Your happiness is my happiness. "Said to a guest" - [JKP](#).

2633. Karibu mgeni, lakini humwekei macho. [REK](#).

Invite the stranger but do not scrutinize him. Kumwekea macho, put the eyes on somebody.

2634. Kazi haina ugeni. [EM](#) k3.

Work knows no guest. When a guest arrives at the host's, the guest gets time to be entertained and to rest. When that period is over, and the host resumes his work which even the guest can do, the guest joins in without hesitation - [EM](#). Cf. 2648.

2635. Kuku mweupe ni hatari kwa usalama. [REK](#).

A white chicken is a danger for security and peace. A white chicken stands out in the village, and so does a stranger. That easily upsets the tranquility of the village.

Nzi mweupe. [SPK](#).

A white fly. A red herring - [SPK](#). Cf. 2644.

2636. Kula ni faradhi ya kila mtu. [FK](#).

Eating is the right of everybody. Nobody must ever be refused food. Cf. 1435.

2637. Kusimama ingali kwenda. [T](#) 196; [B](#) 1.16.

Standing and still going. Said if somebody is invited to come in and to sit down, but keeps on standing and talking. Another meaning: Whether you sit on a chair or stand, if people see you they will say that you were there - [MM](#).

2638. Kutu kuu ni la mgeni. [F](#) 19.61; [B](#) 4.84.

Old rust is for the visitor - [F](#). The host brings out his best things, not normally used. The expression Kupokewa kwa mikono miwili, to be received with open arms. Cf. 2841.

2639. Maji! Ni kumbwe na kinyweo! Matupu yasonga moyo. [T](#) 229; [SACL](#) 447, kumba; [AL](#) 1230.

[As for] water, [give me] a morsel of food and [then] the beverage; all by itself it [water] gives a person the colic [lit., compresses the heart] - [T](#). You offer me water to drink. That is all right, but you know water on an empty stomach is hard on the heart - [SACL](#). This is said to somebody who gives only water without offering something to eat at the same time. K'umbwe from kukumba (also kumega), to

break off a morsel - [T](#). K'umbwe for nkumbwe for nikumbwe, that I be engulfed - [SACL](#).

2640. Mgeni hachomi chaza mtaani akanuka. [F](#) 26.57; [L](#) 48; [NGU](#).

A stranger does not roast an oyster in a village and then get accused of smelling of it - [F](#).

A visitor, even when roasting an oyster in a village, will not be told that it smells. A stranger should be excused for strange ways - [F](#).
But also: If somebody does not respect the customs of the people, the visitor is in danger of being blamed.

2641. Mgeni hachukui nyumba. [PVP](#).

A guest does not take over the house.

2642. Mgeni na mwenyeji. [NGU](#).

The visitor and the owner. Omitted is husaidiana, help each other. Cf. 2643.

2643. Mgeni naje mwenyeji apone. [T](#) 261; [ED](#) 33; [SACL](#) 550; [V](#) mgeni; [SM](#).

May the guest come and bring some relief to the host. The arrival of a guest is a blessing - [SACL](#). It is usual for a guest to bring his host some present - [F](#). The host will often invite friends and neighbors. When a government official comes, the offices are closed, the streets are swept, the courtyard is cleaned - [SM](#). Naje for na aje, and may come.

2644. Mgeni ni kuku mweupe. [F](#) 26.5B; [MARA](#) 3; [AL](#) 937.

A stranger is like a white chicken. And is very noticeable - [F](#). The new wife is the center of attraction - [AL](#).

Usijifanye kuku mweupe. [KA](#).

Don't become a white chicken. Becoming different from the others. Showing off. Cf. 2635, 4064.

2645. Mgeni ni maji ya mvua. [AL](#), geni.

A visitor is like rain [does not stay]. But also a visitor is welcome like rain in a scorched land.

2646. Mgeni ni mtumwa wa mwenye nyumba. [AL](#) 1146.

A visitor is the slave of the owner of the house. In a strange environment one acts subdued - [AL](#).

2647. Mgeni pofu ingawa ana macho yake. [KA](#); [SM](#).

A stranger is blind even if the visitor has eyes. If the visitor sees bad or unpleasant things nothing must be said.

2648. Mgeni siku mbili, ya tatu mpe jembe. [PVP](#) 83.

A guest two days, the third give him a hoe. Do not exceed your hospitality. Cf. 2634.

Here a well-known poem about hospitality:

Mgeni siku ya kwanza	The first day give the guest
mpe mchele na panza	rice with flying fish
mtilie kifuani	embrace him,
mkaribishe mgeni	introduce him to your family.
Mgeni siku ya pili	The second day
mpe ziwa na samli	give him milk and butter.
mahaba yakizidia	If love can increase
mzidie mgeni.	give more to the guest.
Mgeni siku ya tatu	The third day
jumbani hamuna kitu	there is nothing left
Mna zibaba zitatu	but three bags of rice
pika ule na mgeni	boil it and eat.
Mgeni siku ya nne	The fourth day
mpe jembe akalime	Give him a hoe to farm.
Akirudi muagane	When he comes back say
enda kwao mgeni	Goodby go home dear guest.
Mgeni siku ya tano	The fifth day
mwembamba kama sindano	the guest is needle thin
Hauishi musengenyano	He does not listen to advice
asengenyao mgeni	the guest is well warned.
Mgeni siku ya sita	The sixth day
mkila mkajificha	hide in a corner

mwingine vipembeni
afichwaye yeye mgeni
Mgeni siku ana ya sabaa
si mgeni a na baa
Hatta moto mapaani
akatia yeye mgeni.
Mgeni siku ya nane
njo ndani tuonane
Atapotokea nje
tuagane mgeni
Mgeni siku ya kenda
enenda mwana kwenenda!
Usirudi nyuma
usirudi mgeni
Mgeni siku ya kumi
kwa mateke na magumi
Hapana afukuzwaye
yeye mgeni.

while you eat
hiding from the guest.
The seventh day
a guest now is a monster
and has put fire
to the roof.
The eighth day
the guest comes in to meet.
When he comes outside
we take leave.
The ninth day
go now son, go now
and don't come back
don't return, o guest.
The tenth day chase him away,
with kicks and blows.
There is no other
who is chased away. - Buttner, panza for panzi, flying fish, a delicacy.

2649. Mgeni wa mvua hafukuzwi, mwache aweke mzigo wake. [AL](#) weka; [AL](#) 1062.
A visitor arriving in the rain is not refused entry, let him put down his load.

2650. Mkarimu humchinja mkirimiwa. [EM](#) m19.
A host kills the guest - [EM](#).

"If a person extends a warm welcome to a guest, but if the guest does not appreciate it, the host may think that the guest has seen some shameful things in the house and if the guest goes away, the guest will tell other people about it. Consequently, the host may kill the guest in order to stop telling others what has made the guest refuse to accept the hospitality which was offered. The moral is that if a person is given a warm welcome, it should be accepted joyfully and gratefully" - [EM](#).
Mkarimu, a generous person, who likes to give. Mkirimiwa from kirimu, a person who has been invited for a meal.

2651. Mwenda kwao hafungwi mlala. [B](#) 1.16; [T](#) 624.

Somebody going home is not fastened to a palm-strip. A parting guest must not be loaded with commissions. It was customary for a person going home to tie a palm-strip on the arm in reminder of an errand given by the host.

2652. Mwenye kuwa na mgeni haoni mwezi mwandamo. [AL](#) 1149.

One who lodges a visitor does not see the appearance of the new moon. The host must not alert the visitor to the passing days.

2653. Njoo mgeni uponye mwenye nyumba. [EM](#) n19.

Welcome guest and save the host. All will enjoy delicious food and quarrels will be put to rest. Cf. 2643.

2654. Nyumba yangu ni joya, atakaye huingia. [J](#) joya; [B](#) 3.61; [KS](#) joya; [AL](#) 1250.

My house is like a spongy coconut, anyone who likes goes into it. Everyone is welcome. My house attracts profiteers - [AL](#).

2655. Pema usijapo pema, ukipema si pema tena. [F](#) 42; [AL](#) 1028.

A good place you do not go to is a good place; if you go too often, it isn't a good place any longer - [F](#). Familiarity breeds contempt. Ukipema probably uki-pa-ima, if you stay there.

2656. Shereheka na mgeni wako kama vile ambavyo ungependa ushereheshwa ugenini. [NGU](#).

Celebrate with your visitor as much as you would like to be celebrated as a visitor.

2657. Siku njema ni zawadi ya msafiri. [T](#) 484; [KB](#) 281.

A good day is the gift of a traveler - [KB](#). A polite phrase of welcome.

2658. Simlisha paka wa jirani, atavunja kombe na sahani. [JK](#) 140; [AL](#) 176.

Do not feed the neighbor's cat, it will break cups and saucers - [JK](#). Be careful whom you invite. One who interferes in other people's business is in danger of being accused of causing harm or damage - [AL](#). Kombe, a large serving plate [china], definitely not cups. [MM](#).

2659. Tabasamu hushibisha. [EM](#) t1.

A smile satisfies hunger. Even if there is little food, if the host gives it with an open and happy heart, the guest will be satisfied - [EM](#).

2660. Uchwewapo [na jua], lala. [T](#) 549; [A](#) 170; [J](#) shika; [JK](#) 142; [SACL](#) 919; [KA](#).

When you are overtaken by the sunset, sleep. This saying is often said in combination with:

Ushikwapo shikamana. [F](#) 48.27; [T](#) 549; [A](#) 170; [J](#) shika; [V](#) 126; [SACL](#) 919; [KS](#) ukishikwa. When you are pressed, allow yourself to be held. Where you are caught, stay. Where it pleases you, stay there. Taken as advice: If hospitality is offered to you, take it, don't go further - [V](#). Be courageous in difficult times [KA](#).

Ushikwapo shikamana, si wengi wa kupendana. [SPK](#).

When someone offers you friendship, hold on [to him/her] there are not many people who love one another.

2661. Ugeni mbaya kukosa jirani. [NGU](#).

Being a stranger is bad, you have no neighbor to turn to for help.

2662. Unapokea mgeni, usifunge uso. [AL](#) pokea.

When you receive a visitor, don't frown.

2663. Usigombane na mgeni; siku zake ni chache. [AL](#) 1150; [AL](#) siku.

Don't quarrel with a visitor; his stay is short.

2664. Usipangue fanicha ukingali mgeni. [EM](#) u34.

Don't rearrange the furniture while you are a visitor or a newcomer. When new to a place, don't start changing things before you have studied the situation. Fanicha, furniture.

2665. Usivunje [hata] mguu wa kuku. [JK](#) 140; [AL](#) 1152.

Do not break [even] a chicken's leg. Nobody is allowed to take liberties with the wife of the host.

2666. Uzuzu mtoka mbali. [NGU](#).

Ignorance belongs to the one who comes from afar.

Uzuzu, inexperience, strangeness, incompetence, foolishness, ignorance.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Hunger - food

2667. Ajizi nyumba ya njaa. [RECH](#) 6; [SAM](#) 2.9; [JK](#) 118; [MS](#) 123.
Indecision is the house of hunger.

Uvivu [ni] nyumba ya njaa. [Z](#) 173; [FSM](#) 156.
Laziness is a house of hunger.

Ajizi ni ufunguo wa umaskini. [MEM](#) 31.
Sloth is the key to poverty.

2667a. Akilaye ndiye aandikiwaye. [SPK](#).
The one who eats it (i.e., the food) is the one for whom it was destined.

2668. Akosaye la mama, atalamwa la mbwaye. [JKP](#); [KS](#) amwa.
One that is not suckled by his/her mother, will have recourse to a bitch. A man without a good wife will seek the company of bad women - [SPK](#). If you have not been taught proper language by your mother, you will talk the dirty language of the street, and be ill-mannered - [JKP](#). Cf. 3765.

2669. Ashibaye hamjui mwenye njaa. [L](#) 5; [V](#) 77; [F](#) 36, 166, Mwenye shibe; [KB](#) 216; [MARA](#) 2; [FSM](#) 140.
One who has had a full meal does not know the hungry person. One judges others according to oneself, or one does not know how the other feels. One cannot know the hardship of others until one has experienced them. Used when somebody has no feelings for others.

Aliyeshiba hamkumbuki mwenye njaa. [SM](#).
One who is satiated does not remember the one who is hungry.

2670. Binadamu huongozwa na tumbo. [REK](#).
A human being is lead by his stomach.

2671. Chafi rasilimali yake utumbo. [KS](#) rasilimali.
The belonging of the chafi- is its stomach. Said of somebody who eats ferociously.
Chafi or tafi, a kind of broad black fish. Rasilimali, treasure, capital, fortune, property.

2672. Chakula ni uhai. [KS](#) uhai.
Food is life.

2673. Deni la tumbo halilipiki. [JKP](#).
The debt to the stomach can never be paid. "Every day the stomach demands more. Said of paupers" - [JKP](#).

2674. Hana njaa fisi, kwani hula najisi. [RSP](#) 94.
The hyena is not hungry, because it eats unclean food. Do not be fastidious - [JK](#).
Najisi, unclean food; in this case, dead animals - [MM](#).

2675. Hutushiba na harufu wala mnukio. [AL](#) 110.
Yo úu will not be satisfied with the fragrance of the food.

2676. Jamaa kubwa haina chakula kibaya. [EM](#) j1.
In a large family no food is bad. They value any food they can get and don't waste it - [EM](#).

2676a. Kikuponzacho ni tumbo. [SPK](#).
That which exposes you [to danger] is your stomach. The stomach commands the Swahili merchants, fishermen, sailors, and drivers to go out on dangerous journeys to earn their living - [SPK](#).

2677. Kila kifaacho huliwa, lakini si kila kiliwacho kinafaa. [REK](#).
Every useful thing is eaten, but not everything that is eaten is useful (good).

2678. Kula (or kila) apataye hajui mwenziwe. [NS](#) 7; [FSM](#) 18.

One who obtains food [wealth] does not know his/her companions. Successful people forget their poor old friends - MM. Used for ungrateful people, who forget the help given them in the past, or for people who made it. and who do not want to remember the situation they came from.

Cf. 2669.

2679. Kula bakisha njaa, kesho ule tena. [REK](#).

Eating keep a little hungry, tomorrow eat again. Eat with moderation.

2680. Kula hakuishi. [NGU](#).

Eating never ends.

2681. Kula kitu ni riziki. [NGU](#).

Eating is a God-given necessity of life.

2682. Kula kupindukia ni kudhoofisha tumbo. [REK](#).

Eating meals in turn in each other's places weakens the stomach. One does not get his usual food and sometimes the others forget their promise of serving food. Cf. 1624.

2683. Kula mnapenda mkiambiwa kulima ng'ang'a ! [KS](#) ng'ang'a.

You like to eat, but when you are told to hoe you dry up.

2684. Kula nala kushiba sishibi. [JKP](#).

I ate but did get no satisfaction.

2685. Kula na wenzio. [NGU](#).

Eating is with friends.

2686. Kula ni faradhi, kufa ni wajibu. [JKP](#).

Eating is a duty, dying is a necessity. Cf. 1435.

2687. Kula sana siyo kushiba. [NGU](#).

To eat a lot is not the same as being satiated. Cf. 2516, 2535, 2550.

2688. Kula siyo kujaza tumbo. [NGU](#).

Eating is not the same as filling the belly. One who eats least eats most, will live longer.

2689. Kula uishi, usiishi kula. [EM](#) k28.

Eat to live, do not live to eat.

2690. Kula ulishe milio, roho nayo ipe mlo. [REK](#).

Eating you feed your body, but give also some food to your soul.

2691. Kula upesi upesi, heshima huinukusi. [JKP](#).

Eating in a hurry will diminish your reputation. Nukusu, nakusi, diminish - [SACL](#).

2692. Makao ya njaa ni tumbo. [NGU](#).

The dwelling place of hunger is the stomach.

2693. Matikiti na machango ndiyo maponyea njaa. [T](#) 250; [SACL](#) 505, 868; [KA](#); [AL](#) poa; [J](#).

Melons and gourds, these are the ones which help people through famine. Honor the people you lived with, and who helped you when you were poor and in need of help.

Matikiti na machango ni baraka ya mlango. [SPK](#).

Melons and gourds are blessings of the house. This refers to children - [SPK](#). Cf. 3996.

2693a. Mchuzi sio chakula. [SPK](#).

Sauce is not food.

2694. Mla chake hana aibu. [REK](#); [NGU](#).

If you eat your own [food], you do not have to be ashamed.

2695. Mla na kijiko hajui mla na mikono huchomeka. [REK](#).

One who eats with a spoon does not know that the one who eats with his/her fingers has been hurt.

2696. Mlilala handingwadingwa, mwemacho haambiwi tule. [F](#) 28.86; [KA](#).

A sleeping person doesn't feel the onset of hunger, one who is awake is not told, "let's eat." You know when you are hungry - [E](#). About a lazy person, who complains a lot about being hungry - [KA](#).

2697. Omitted.

2698. Mtu mbuge hawezi nyumba. [KS](#) mbuge; [ZO](#) p.252.

A compulsive eater cannot manage a home. About spending all on food.
Mbuge, someone who is constantly nibbling on food.

2699. Mwenye njaa hana miiko. [F](#) 36.164; [B](#) 4.83.

A hungry person observes no taboos. A starving person is excused to eat any kind of food.

2700. Mwenye njaa hakandiki nyumba. [NGU](#).

A hungry person does not plaster the house. That person is not interested in improving the house.
First things first.

2701. Ndege asiyeruka hufa njaa. [EM](#) n23.

A bird that does not fly dies of hunger. If its food supply is exhausted in its immediate dwelling place, it dies. A person must move to where he can survive.

2702. Njaa haimjui mlimaji. [AL](#) 163.

Hunger does not know the farmer. Hunger is unknown to the farmer. The farmer does not suffer hunger. Result of his labor.

2703. Njaa haina ndugu. [NGU](#).

Hunger has no relative. Nobody comes to the hungry person.

2703a. Njaa iumapo mbwa, mkonowa utarambwa. [SPK](#).

When hunger hurts the dog[s], [then] will my hand be licked. Low-class people will only be polite when forced by need - [SPK](#).

2704. Njaa ya leo ni shibe ya kesho. [J](#) njaa; [V](#) 115, shiba; [SACL](#) 674; [LE3](#) 227.15 njala.

Hunger today, abundance tomorrow. Hope is the poor person's bread - [V](#). Hope keeps the heart from breaking - [V](#). Can also be used in the sense of: To deprive oneself of an easy life in order to learn a trade, to overcome earlier hardship. To be thrifty for something bigger - [LB](#). But also the opposite:

Njaa ya leo si shiba ya kesho. [SACL](#) 836; [MS](#) 57.

Hunger today is not tomorrow's plenty. Today hunger, tomorrow famine.

2705. Njaa si bora kuliko shiba. [V](#) njaa, shiba.

Hunger is not better than satiety.

2705a. Nyama ya koroma sio ya kulika, kabula ya nazi halijakatika. [SPK](#).

The flesh of the koroma (an unripe coconut) is not edible before the ripe coconut has been cut. The elder daughter has to be married off first - [SPK](#).

2705b. Nyenje inajaa bonde na sikio, nyenje haijai tumbo na vilio. [SPK](#).

The cicada fills the valley and the ear with its noise, but it does not fill the stomach.

2706. Nyumba penye huli, ikitoka moshi ni kungugu. [AL](#) toka; [AL](#) 603.

If smoke comes out of a house, where you are not going to eat (you are not invited, you say) it is a mist (that comes out of the house, not smoke). Don't keep false hope. Sour grapes.

2707. Pangu pakavu, tia mchuzi. [AL](#) mchuzi; [AL](#) 1389; [TS](#) 127/4.

Put some gravy on my dry portion. Someone who has a good reputation must expect some evil criticism and maligned curiosity - [AL](#).
About enjoying life without caring about the neighbor.

2708. Papigwapo domo kuna njaa. [KB](#) 259.

Babbling is the source of hunger.

2709. Penye njaa hapana haki. [EM](#) p13.

Where there is famine, there is no justice. It is difficult for hungry people to remain calm.

Mwenye uwezi hupata.

Those who are able win the day. Those in power will obtain.

2710. Penye njaa, shibe ndiyo kweli. [EM](#) p14.

Where there is famine, food is the truth. Anything a hungry person is told does not satisfy. Food for that person is truth or real.

2711. Samli ya pemba haimpati mtu macho. [T](#) 474; [MS](#) 74; [KA](#).

Butter from Pemba does not get a person's eyes. If somebody is well fed, that does not still another person's hunger - [T](#). Something imported from afar cannot be afforded by many people, so it cannot harm them - [KA](#). Cf. 1008, 2712, 4017.

2712. Shiba ya mtu hainilazi na njaa. [T](#) 476; [SACL](#) 836; [AL](#) 1212; [MM](#) has hanitowi njaa (Does not remove hunger); [SPK](#) has

mnene (well fed or fat) instead of njaa.

The repletion of another does not help me to sleep when hungry - [T](#).

2713. Shiba (or shibe) ya uji yajua mpozi. [T](#) 477; [SACL](#) 588, mpozi; [AL](#) 350; [KA](#) shibe.

The satiety of porridge knows the blower [lit., the cooler] - [T](#). The person who has had plenty of gruel does not blow at the spoon or cup like the person does who is still hungry - [T](#). One blows on the [hot] porridge only when not hungry - [SACL](#). Although [T](#). and [SACL](#). give the same explanation, there remains some doubt. Could it have the same meaning as 1382: mpozi would be the one who serves the porridge.

2714. Shibe mwana malevya, njaa mwana malegeza [KA](#); [KS](#) shibe; [ZO](#) p.251 has malenga instead of malevya.

The busy child is well fed, the lazy child goes hungry. Malenga, laziness - [ZO](#).

2715. Siku ya kushiba, kumbuka siku ya njaa. [AL](#) 49.

The day you are well fed, remember the day you went hungry. Cf. 3905.

2716. Simba akizidiwa nyama hula majani. [KS](#) simba; [AL](#) 1862-3.

If a lion can not eat meat, it will eat grass [weeds].

2717. Tumbo haina inga. [KB](#) 295; [AL](#) 108.

The stomach knows no day of rest. Inga (Maniema dialect), rest.

2718. Tumbo haiwezekani. [JKP](#).

The stomach is invincible. "Hunger must be satisfied. This may refer to a famine which caused riots and forced the government to act, c.1900" - [JKP](#).

2719. Tumbo lenye njaa halisikii kengele. [NGU](#).

A hungry stomach does not hear the bell. It neglects duties and timetables.

Tumbo lenye njaa haliwezi kupigana na mengine. [JGH](#).

An empty stomach can't fight with other things.

2720. Tumboni hamna mfupa. [LE3](#) 227.16; [AL](#) 107.

There is no bone in the stomach. A hungry person is weak

2721. Ukishiba kwa chakula himidi mwenye jalali. [JKP](#).

When you are satisfied with your food, praise God's majesty.

Himidi: thank, praise, esp. of praise to God. Jalali, The Glorious One.

2722. Ukishiba usimwonyeshe mung,u tumbo. [REK](#).

When you are satiated, don't show God your belly. Don't boast about your possessions and accomplishments.

2723. Ukisikia mtu, ni kula. [NGU](#).

If you hear somebody, it's eating. Eating is necessary for men's survival and is on the foreground of men's conversation.

2724. Ulacho ndicho unukiacho. [NGU](#).

You smell according to what you ate. People know you by the friends you stay with.

2725. Ulapo ndipo penye fadhili yako. [NGU](#).

Where you eat there is your commitment. You are bound/obligated to those who feed you.

2726. Usidharau ukilacho. [NGU](#).

Don't despise what you eat.

2726a. Uvivu na njaa ni ndugu pacha. [NS](#) 5.

Laziness and hunger are twins.

2727. Vya wahindi haviliwi, vinaliwa kwa harufu. [AL](#) 1287.

Indian foods are not eaten, they are enjoyed for their flavor. Nobody expects to be invited by people of an upper class - [AL](#).

2728. Wala nyama ndio wenye uchu. [EM](#) w12.

Meat eaters are the ones who crave for meat.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Hurry - patience

2729. Aendaye polepole hana budi afikile. [SPK](#).

The person who walks with calm and care will arrive without fail. This proverb is illustrated by the story of the tortoise and the hare.

2729a. Aliye mbele huja nyuma. [NGU](#).

The one who is in front usually comes behind.

2730. Ametia mbugi miguuni. [KS](#) mbugi.

Some people put bells on their legs. Are in a hurry.

Mbugi, a collar with bells.

2731. Apendaye kula wali husubiri mpunga kuiva. [NGU](#).

One who likes to eat rice will wait patiently for the rice to be ripe.

Wali, cooked rice. Mpunga, rice in the paddy. Michele, uncooked rice.

2732. Asubiriye hajuti. [SAM](#) 4.22.

A patient person will not regret.

2733. Bi.kidumu, usikukurike, mwenye safari ni ndoo. [AL](#) 1875-6; [LE2](#) 302.5.

Ee, earthen pot don't take it too seriously, it's the bucket that goes on the journey [to the well]. It is possible that this proverb is intended for the wives of polygamists, whose expectations are not fulfilled - [AL](#).

Kidumu kukulika msafari mbeketi. Pate dialect. [JKP](#).

The earthen jar is full of excitement, but the traveler took the bucket. "Earthen jars look very dignified but they are fragile. Travelers are practical, they prefer strong buckets. Refers to women - [JKP](#).

Kukukurika kwa ndoo, mwenye nyumba ni kidumu. [AL](#) 933.

The bucket is working hard, but it is the earthen pot that has the [chosen place] in the house.

Love and attention in a household are uncertain, especially in polygamy - [AL](#).

2734. Chungu kiinjike moto ukiishawaka. [EM](#) 39.20.

Place the pot on the stones after you've lit the fire. Set not your loaf in till the oven is hot - [EM](#).

2735. Dafu mtu wa halafu. [NGU](#).

A young coconut, a person afterwards. Everything has its time.

Dafu: an unripe coconut.

2736. Daraja livuke ulifikiapo. [EM](#) 44.5.

Cross the bridge when you come to it.

2737. Endambio hashikiki. [JKP](#).

[Mr/Mrs.] Run-fast cannot be caught.

Endambio, a composite of enda (go) and mbio (fast).

2738. Hakuna subira mbaya. [JKP](#).

There's no bad patience.

Subira, or saburi, patience, resignation. Cf. 2796-7.

2739. Haraka, haraka, haina baraka. [T](#) 86; [H](#) 99; [F](#) 10.10; [L](#) 21; [RECH](#) 126; [B](#) 1.7; [MARA](#) 19; [V](#) 6, [KB](#) 65; [LE](#) 82 4; [SACL](#) 269; [SWA](#) 37; [V](#) baraka; [KS](#) baraka.

Haste, haste has no blessing. Haste makes waste.

Ka ka ka ka haina mbaraka. [T](#) 86; [SACL](#) 319; [KB](#) kakakaka.

Too much haste has no blessing.

Baraka: blessing; usually conveys to a Swahili the exclusively physical meaning it has here - [T](#). Kaka kaka (onomatopoeic), indicates precipitation, too much haste.

2740. Haraka haraka ilimfanya chura akose mkia. [NGU](#).

The great haste caused the frog to lose its tail. Refers to a story.

2741. Haraka kupanda, haraka kushuka. [EM](#) h10.

Climbing in haste, coming down in haste. A person who suddenly becomes successful may fall suddenly. Maybe the time of that person's rise was too short to learn the skills needed. "Hasty climbers have sudden fall" - [EM](#).

2742. Harara bila daraka ni barabara bila daraja. [EM](#) h12.

Zeal without responsibility is like a road without a bridge. "Zeal without knowledge is like a runaway horse. Enthusiasm in doing something without caring about the consequences is as dangerous as driving on a road without a bridge" - [EM](#).

Harara, in this context, impetuosity, haste. Cf. 2770.

2742a. Heri kawa ufike kama karibu harabu. [SPK](#).

Better arrive late than early and so meet, or cause, ruin.

2743. Hulimbikwa nazi juu ya minazi. [JKP](#).

The coconuts are left on the trees. Until they are ripe. Be patient. Do not try to do something too early - [SPK](#).

Limbika, put aside to grow in ripeness.

2744. Hungojei faranga mbili na nusu. [AL](#) 212.

Don't expect that they will give you back two and a half francs.

Faranga : 1. young chicken. 2. franc (money).

2745. Kawia ufike. [F](#) 14.6; [H](#) 50; [SWA](#) 41.

Better delay and get there. The important thing is to reach your goal.

2746. Kilicho baharini kalingoje ufuoni. [T](#) 148; [Y](#) 104; [SACL](#) 679; [KA](#).

What has fallen into the sea, go and wait for it on the beach. What is lost at sea, go and wait for it on the beach. The example I was given is as follows: Once a girl has taken 'the plunge' and given herself to a man other than her husband, she will inevitably slide further down and end 'in the gutter' - [SPK](#).

Kalingoje: one would expect kalingojee.

2747. Kobe hatavunjika mguu akitembea. [AL](#) 116; [AL](#) kobe.

A tortoise will not break a leg in walking. It walks so slowly. Cf. 2779, 2791.

2747a. Kobe yufikile, akenda kwa pole. [SPK](#).

The tortoise has arrived, going carefully.

2748. Kukimbia si kufika. [NGU](#).

Running is not the same as reaching your destination. The race is not [always] to the swift. Cf. 2745.

2749. Kulimatia si kazi, kifungo ni salamini. [JKP](#).

Delaying is easy, and the end is in peace. Never hurry - [JKP](#).

Limatia, be delayed, be late.

2750. Kusimamia haki ni subiri. [MA](#) 226.

To stand up for justice needs patience.

2751. Kutinda kanzu mwana hajazawa. [T](#) 198, hajavyawa; [SACL](#) 1008; [Y](#) 112.

To cut out the tunic before the child is born.

Hutafutaje jambia na mtoto hajazawa? [T](#) 105; [MS](#) 26.

How can one look for an [ornamental] dagger and the child is not yet born.

2752. Kutojali saburi, ni kujichimbia kaburi. [REK](#).

Not caring to wait is like digging your grave.

2753. Kuvumilia kugumu matunda yake matamu. [NGU](#).

Enduring hardship produces sweet fruit.

2754. Kuvumilia ni kukomaa. [EM](#) k34.

Forbearance is maturity. "It is not easy for a person to have forbearance, but a mature person practices forbearance in all circumstances" - [EM](#).

2755. Kumngojeshu mtu kwataka sababu. [AL](#) 476.

To keep a person waiting a reason is needed.

2756. Kuzaa kwa haraka mbwa alizaa kipofu. [AL](#) 205.

In being in too great a hurry the bitch gave birth to a blind puppy. Cf. 2795.

2757. Kwa kukimbia mno mvua, mtwa akajichoma mti. [AL](#) 199.

Running away too hastily before the rain, the Pygmy hurt his foot at a tree.

Mtwa, kibete, mbilikimo, mumbote, a Pygmy.

2758. Kwanza kwa saburi, kwisha kwa sururi. [RSP](#) 33.

Begin with patience, end with pleasure.

2759. Kwenda mbio si kufika. [F](#) 19.65; [B](#) 1.52.

Running in not [necessarily] arriving. Cf. 431, 2745.

2760. Kwenda pole, huenda kule. [JKP](#).

Going slowly [is] going far. "Caution travels a long way. This proverb is illustrated by the story of the tortoise" - [JKP](#).

2761. Linaloinuka haraka ndilo linalokimbia. [FSM](#) 91.

What jumps up in a hurry is what escapes. Be prepared. Cf. 285.

2761a. Lumbi haendi dhalali. [SPK](#).

The chameleon does not go astray, does not walk in error. A chameleon can be seen to tread very carefully wherever it goes - [SPK](#).

Dhalala, being lost, wandering.

2762. Mambo yamwistawia mwenye saburi. [MA](#) 281.

Matters work out better for a person who has patience.

2763. Mawindo ya kwanza hayau na ya pili hayajarudi. [AL](#) 601.

The first hunt caught nothing and the second party has not yet returned. So, do not count them yet as successful. Cf. 2787, 2792.

2764. Mbegu za leo si miti ya kesho. [KB](#) 170; [AL](#) 213.

Seeds planted today are not trees tomorrow. One must have patience.

2765. Mbio za kobe (or kasa) si mbio lakini zakufikisha uendapo. [MA](#) 301.

A tortoise's running is not running, but it helps you reach where you are going - [MA](#).

2766. Mbio za sakafuni huishia ukingoni. [F](#) 23.26; [T](#) 251; [SACL](#) 943; [MS](#) 126; [MARA](#) 3.

Running on a smooth floor finishes at the edge - F. Running upon a flat roof will end at the brink - T. Cf. 2779.

2767. Mchakacho ujao, haulengwi na jiwe. [F](#) 23.30.

One does not throw a stone at an approaching crunching sound. Wait and see what it is. Cf. 984.

2768. Mia - chanzo chake ni moja. [NGU](#).

One hundred - it begins with one.

2769. Mimba ya pili haizaliwi kabla ya kwanza. [REK](#).

The second pregnancy does not mature before the first. One cannot advance or skip certain events.

2770. Mkamate mamba kabla ya kuuza ngozi yake. [NGU](#).

Catch the crocodile before selling its skin.

2770a. Mso utahamilivu, hali matunda mabivu. [SPK](#).

A person that has no patience eats no ripe fruit.

2771. Mstahamilivu hula mbivu. [J](#) hamili; .4.47; [MARA](#) 48; [F](#) 30.107; [MS](#) 129. [JK](#) 134 [RSP](#) 104.

A patient person eats ripe [fruit]. A patient person eats well cooked [food]. It takes a long time for a seed to bear fruit and waiting is not enough, the tree has to be protected.

Instead of mstahamilivu, JK has mtulivu. RSP has mvumilivu. Both have the meaning of patient.

2772. Mtafitafi hula swi, mtulivu hula nyama. [T](#) 315; [SACL](#) 605.

A restless person eats fish, but a reliable person eats meat. A person too much in a hurry - [SACL](#).

Swi or samaki, fish. Mtafitafii, a blabber, go-between, tale-bearer - [J](#). Cf. 454.

2773. Mvumbika changa hula mbovu. [F](#) 32.132.

One who stores half-grown fruit eats the rotten. Do not pick unripe fruit because it will rot.

But also: **mvumbika mbichi hula mbivu.** [F](#) 32.133; [L](#) 70.
A person who stores unripe fruit eats it when ripe .

2774. Mwacha kiwi hanacho na chema kimpotele. [KA](#).

If one throws away a bad thing a good thing will also be missed. If you threw it away before you had the good thing.
Kiwi or kibaya, something bad. Kimpotele, kimempotea, escaped somebody.

2775. Mwana hazaliwi mpaka kwa siku zake. [NGU](#).

A child is not born before its days.

2776. Mwenda kasi mngojee achoke. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2.

Wait for the fast walker to tire [and then pass him by]. Don't lose your time competing with those who are in a hurry. Used to show that an overactive person does not achieve much and is often a loser. Don't imitate or compete with that person. Go your own way. Also don't counsel people until they have calmed down and are ready to listen - [MARA](#).

2777. Mwenda mbio huagana na nyonga. [MARA](#) 2; [KS](#) nyonga.

Runners must be in good relation with their hips. If we want to undertake something, we must make sure that we can realize it. Don't do things beyond your power.

Agana or patana, sikilizana, be in agreement.

2778. Mwenda mbio (or haraka) hujikwaa dole. [F](#) 35.155; [B](#) 1.49; haraka; [B](#) 1.5; [F](#) 35.155; [CM](#) 53 mbio.

A person in a hurry stubs a toe.

Mwenda pole hufika mbali. [FK](#).

A careful traveler goes far. Cf. 1858.

2779. Mwenda-mbizi nchi kavu huuchunua usowe. [T](#) 375; [SACL](#) 915; [MS](#) 54; [A](#) 308; [SAM](#) 19.40, huumiza.

Those who dive on dry land graze their face. Cf. 2766.

2780. Mwenda polepole, hakwai kidole. [JKP](#).

Going slowly does not [even] hurt a toe.

Na akijikwaa haumii. [SPK](#).

And if he/she stumbles it does not hurt.

Mwenda taratibu hataki tabibu. [SPK](#).

The prudent walker needs no doctor.

2781. Mwenye pupa hadiriki kula tamu. [F](#) 36.165; [AL](#) 211; [SM](#).

A hasty person misses the sweet things. One who eats in a hurry, does not enjoy the taste of food. Work in a hurry does not satisfy anybody - [SM](#). Cf. 2739, 2740, 2771, 2778, 4384.

2782. Ndege mpole akijikwaa havunji mguu. [NGU](#).

If a careful bird stumbles, it does not break a leg.

2783. Ngoja kuche si mbali. [NGU](#).

Wait dawn is not far. Said to someone in trouble.

2784. Ngoja, ngoja, ikamkosesha sokwe mkia. [KB](#) 243; [AL](#) 1542.

By waiting too long, the chimpanzee missed its tail. Based on the story that when God was giving tails to all animals, the monkey waited too long to appear. This is said when somebody postpones the fulfillment of a promise.

2784a. Ngoja! Ngoja! Haijazi tumbo moja. [SPK](#).

"Wait, wait!" does not fill even one stomach.

2785. Ngoja! Ngoja! Huumiza matumbo. [F](#) 39.9; [T](#) 429; [CM](#) 53; [KB](#) 244; [RECH](#) 403.

Wait! Wait! hurts the stomach.

2785a. Ngoja, ngoja, mtoto si wako. [SPK](#).

Wait, wait; the child is not yours. If you wait too long your girl will sleep with another man - [SPK](#).

2786. Ni heri kujizuia, kusubiri ndio njia. [JKP](#).

It is good to control oneself, patience is the best way.

2787. Nyama angali mzima katika mti, nawe unaanza kucheka na kucheka, ukisema: leo nina chakula kizuri. [AL](#) 602.

Although the game [animal] is still alive in the tree, you start laughing and dancing saying: today I'll have delicious food.

2788. Nyikani ukikimbia, nyoka atakuuma. [RSP](#) 48.

If you run through the high grass, a snake will bite you - [JK](#).

2789. Pole pole ni [ndio] mwendo. [KB](#) 265.

Being careful is moving ahead. Also a political slogan:

Pole pole ndio mwendo, siasa ya wazalendo.

Careful is the political move of the inhabitants.

2790. Pole pole ugali hupikwa. [JK](#) 126.

Slowly, slowly, the porridge is cooked.

2791. Polepole ya kobe humfikisha mbali. [T](#) 462a; [B](#) 4.51; [MS](#) 68; [SACL](#) 221, 428; [SPK](#).

The slow gait of the tortoise takes it far.

2791a. Saburi, heshima nusu ya hekima. [SPK](#).

Patience and respect is half of wisdom.

2792. Samaki angali majini, usimhesabu katika kundi lako. [AL](#) 600.

Don't count the fish still in the water as your catch.

2792a. Sikienue kilaa ila na maji yajaa. [SPK](#).

Do not raise the mainsail [to depart] unless the tide is in. Sail out at just the right time - [SPK](#).

2793. Siku moja haiozeshi nyama. [KB](#) 279.

One day [of waiting] does not spoil the meat.

2793a. Siku zote subiria na zidi kumwabudia. [SPK](#).

Every day be patient and continue worshipping Him.

2794. Sishue dau na maji yajaa. [T](#) 493; [KA](#); [KS](#) shua.

Do not launch the boat at high tide. This is said to someone who asks premature questions of a story teller. Don't put yourself in dangerous situations.

2795. Subira huzaa mwana mwema (or wa kufaa). [T](#) 499; [MS](#) 79; [SPK](#). Patience bears a good [useful] child.

Paraphrase:

Haraka haraka ilimfanya mbwa azae watoto vipofu. [MEM](#) 276.

Hurry, hurry, made the dog breed blind pups.

And: **kujaribu kujifungua haraka, mama alijifungua mtoto asiyekomaa.** [JGH](#).

Trying to give birth too quickly, the mother gave birth to a premature child. Cf. 2756.

2796. Subira ni ufunguo wa faraji. [T](#) 476; [JK](#) 120; [KA](#) wa heri; [SACL](#) 936, saburi; [F](#) 44.15, faraja; [J](#); [CM](#) 50; [H](#) 98; [MS](#) 128; [V](#) 81; [NS](#) 21, wa uwema; [KB](#) 270, 325.

Patience is the key to happiness. Time cures pain. Patience is bitter, but its fruits are sweet - [KB](#). Cf. 2771, 2797, 3453.

2797. Subira yavuta heri, huleta kilicho mbali. [SWA](#) 26. [F](#) 44.16; [H](#) 98; [T](#) 468; [V](#) 7; [J](#); [MS](#) 71, sabura; [JK](#) 120; [MARA](#) 66, huvuta; [NS](#) 20; [NGU](#); [KS](#) subira.

Patience attracts happiness; it brings close what is far away. It makes difficult things possible. Cf. 1298, 1555.

2798. Subiri, subiri, tajaa bahari. [RSP](#) 46.

Wait, wait, the tide will rise. When your boat has run aground only patience is needed and it will come afloat by itself - [RSP](#).

2799. Taratibu ndiyo mwendo. [F](#) 45.2; [JK](#) 123; [KB](#) 289; [LE](#) 3 226.8.

Slowly is indeed the way to go. Affairs [transactions] should be approached with care, not force - [KB](#).

Taratibu ndio mwendo; nguvu-nguvu hayafani. [JK](#) 123; [ED](#) 73

Careful, that is the way; much force is not successful - [JK](#).

2800. Ugumu wa pongo ulivunja mguu. [AL](#) 200.

The impulsive run broke the leg of the pongo antelope.

2801. Uji ukiwa moto haupozwi kwa ncha ya ulimi. [T](#) 519; [MS](#) 80; [JK](#) 146; [SACL](#) 754.

Gruel, when it is hot, is not cooled by the point of the tongue.

2801a. Ukisubiria hutakosa jambo. [SPK](#).

If you are patient, you will lack nothing.

2802. Unipe, unipe, ulijipesha nyama ya mfupa. [AL](#) 206.

[By saying] Give me, give me, you got a meatbone.

Ulijipesha or ulijipatia, you obtained.

2803. Usianze kuzoa mavi, mtoto hujayamba. [AL](#) 1848.

Don't start collecting stool, while the child has not yet produced any or not even broken wind. Hajayamba (Maniema dialect), hajaenda choo: has not yet gone to the toilet. Hajajamba (Kiswahili), has not even broken wind.

2804. Usikate majani mnyama hajauawa. [LE3](#) 226.9; [AL](#) 599.

Don't cut the grass before you have killed the animal. When an animal has been slaughtered it is placed on grass, cut for this purpose - [JB](#). Cf. 2751.

2805. Usikate ubeleko [kabla] mtoto hajazaliwa. [KA](#).

Don't cut the ubeleko before the child is born.

Ubeleko, cloth to carry a child - [J](#). Often a wedding present, made by the bride's mother.

Cf. 2751, 2778, 2804.

2806. Usikunje kidole kabla hujakiona chunguni. [AL](#) 598.

Don't curve your finger before you have seen the pot [with food]. Don't anticipate before receiving. Cf. 2751, 2804.

2807. Usiri usiri wavuta ukiwa. [SACL](#) 971, ushiri.

Delay brings abandonment. Cf. 308, 2784.

2808. Usisafishe kibuyu kabla ya ng'ombe kuzaa. [REK](#).

Don't clean the calabash before the cow has given birth. Cf. 2804.

2809. Usiseme umekosa sanda kabla hujafa. [REK](#).

Don't say that you lack [a shroud] before you are dead.

2810. Usitayarishe mlezi, mtoto hajazalika. [AL](#) 614.

Don't prepare the baby's swinging cot before the child is born. Too much caretaking is foolish. Moreover there is a belief that preparing a birth brings out evil spells - [AL](#). Cf. 2804.

2811. Uudandao ndio ukubwagao. [SM](#).

What carries you will also drop you. If you jump upon something moving, one day you will fall. This is used for somebody who is used to being helped and who may some day find out that no help is coming - [SM](#).

Danda, jump upon a moving object, a train, car. Bwaga or angusha, drop, let fall.

2812. Uvumilivu ndiyo mwanzo wa kushinda. [NGU](#).

Patience is the beginning of victory.

2813. Vumilia ule mbivu, fanya haraka ule mbichi. [EM](#) v3.

Be patient and eat what is ripe, if you are in a hurry you'll eat what is unripe.

2814. Zayenda siku zayenda na miyongo i asia. [SPK](#).

They go, the days they go and even ten-day periods are a trifle. Time goes ever more rapidly - [SPK](#)

2815. Zunguka ufike. [EM](#) y3.

Take a long way and arrive. Take a safe road in order to arrive safely - [EM](#).

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Hypocrisy

2816. Abudu mungu kwa njia ya kuabudu, ukiwa huwezi usipoteze wakati wako. [MA](#) 9.

Worship God in the way of worshipping; if you cannot, do not waste your time. Said of people who worship in order to show off.

2817. Ajabu ya shingo kukataa kulala kitandani. [SAM](#) 2.7; [MEM](#) 24; [MS](#) 179.

How amazing, the neck refusing to lie down in bed. Said of somebody who refuses something while longing for it - [SAM](#).

2818. Ajifanyiza chongo, angaona. [SACL](#) 215; [KB](#) 5, aona.

Someone pretends to be blind in one eye, although seeing well. Cf. 4258.

2819. Ajuaye dhambi yake ana moja; asiyeijua yuna dhambi mbili. [JKP](#).

People who know their sin have only one; but those who do not know their sin have two sins. People who pretend never to have sinned, are sinners since they are dishonest - [SPK](#).

2820. Akipewa amependelewa, nikipewa ninastahili. [EM](#) 9.6.

If it is awarded to somebody else, then that person has been favored; but if it is awarded to me, I deserve it. Used when someone is jealous.

2821. Akukanyagae mchana hakuambii pole usiku. [FSM](#) 7; [FSM](#) 10.

A person who tramples you during daytime does not say "I'm sorry" at night. If a person abuses you openly, he is capable of finishing you off in secret. Or, he who harms you without reason will do worse given a pretext. Understood is that your enemy does not come to help in difficulty; on the contrary, he'll gloat at your misery. Cf. 31.

2822. Akumulikaye mchana, usiku akuchoma. [F](#) 2.12; [MEM](#) 254, atakuchoma; [KS](#) mulika; [NS](#); [V](#) 88; [SACL](#) 625, 957; [KB](#) 15; [RECH](#) 375; [KG](#) 14.

He who shines a light on you [i.e., shows up your defects] by day, sets fire to you [destroys your reputation altogether] by night. - F. If one praises you in your presence he will slander you in your absence - [SACL](#). Flatterers are hypocrites - [V](#).

2823. Asiyejua kucheza husema "wacha nivae nguo." [REK](#).

The one who does not know how to dance says, "wait, let me dress."

2824. Cheka ukiaga, ukidhani nakupenda, kumbe nakukanyaga. [FSM](#) 32.

Laugh when you say "goodbye" [so you] may think that I love you, but [as a matter of fact] I step on you.

2825. Chui avaa nguo za kondoo. [JKP](#).

The leopard dressing up like a sheep.

2826. Chungu kimevuja nyama, maji yasee. [T](#) 56.

The pot has leaked the meat, but the water is left. About people who are unreasonable and use the advantages of a situation without fulfilling their obligations; e.g., a man marries a woman for her money, and although he will not give her her rights, uses her property - [T](#).

Yasee for yamesaa or yamesalia, is left - [T](#). Cf. 2832.

2826a. Duri na mlio wake, ha ishara hana chake. [SPK](#).

The false prophets with their proclamations, they have no signs, they have nothing. Dura, duri, a parrot.

2827. Epuka wakusifuo siku zote. [EM](#) 53.4.

Avoid those who always praise you. Cf. 2822.

2828. Hata k'ishauzwa mashauzi sishauziki. [JKP](#).

Even when I am praised with flattery, I cannot be made proud.

K'ishauzwa for nikishauzwa; shaua, give praise, give honor. Shawishi, persuade, tempt, coax.

2829. Hawi musa kwa kuchukua fimbo. [T](#) 87; [A](#) 282; [SAM](#) 7.4; [JKP](#).

One does not become a Moses by carrying a rod. The Prophet Moses was enabled by God's grace to perform miracles by means of his staff - [SPK](#). Cf. 2830.

2830. Hawi mwerevu mtu kwa kuchukua vitabu. [MA](#) 132.

A person does not become clever by carrying books along.

2831. Hizi staha si huja: nawacha nanyi nichani. [T](#) 98.

This politeness is out of place: I fear you, and you do fear me. Said to unmask the enmity of a person who conceals it under an assumed politeness - [T](#).

2832. Hutumiaje mchuzi nyama usile? [T](#) 107; [A](#) 135; [SAM](#) 8.7; [AL](#) tuma.

How can one use the gravy without eating the meat? Said of someone who refuses to admit wrongdoing, although that person is obviously guilty. Why are you busy doing the accessories and neglecting the essentials? - [AL](#). Cf. 2826.

2833. Ikiwa unaweza kummaliza ng'ombe, utashindwaje mkia wake? [EM](#) ii.

If you can consume a cow, how can you fail to eat the tail? If people are capable of doing big things, how come they cannot tackle something small? Cf. 392, 396, 438, 488.

2834. Jino la pembe, halinyimwi mcheshi. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2.

A flashing smile should be allowed to an actor. A tooth of ivory should not be denied someone who laughs. Laugh with that person and hide the insult in your heart.

Jino la pembe, an ivory tooth. An idiom, meaning that somebody embellished his teeth.

2835. Kama chui kumvisha nguo za kondoo. [JKP](#).

Like putting sheepskin on a leopard. Denying someone's evil character - [JKP](#).

2836. Kilio uliacho ni huruma za mamba. [JKP](#).

Your crying is the compassion of a crocodile.

2837. Kisiki mchana usiku mtu. [AL](#) 1423.

During the day a tree stump, at night a human being. Peaceful at daytime, but dangerous at night.

2838. Maji yajapochemka hayasahau kwao baridi. [KB](#) 149.

Even boiling water does not forget its natural frigidty. Leopards cannot change their spots. Cf. 2839.

2839. Mkia wa nyani haumbanduki nyani. [J](#)banduki; [WIKON](#) 180, ondoki.

The ape's tail never becomes detached from an ape. An ape's habits never change - [J](#).

2840. Mpe, simnyime, na utukuni asende. [T](#) 305.

Give it, don't be stingy, and don't let that person go to the market. Said to be used by the host as a secret sign to the servants that they are not to be lavish with provisions and hospitality to an unwelcome guest, to whom, at the same time, they wish to seem to be urging to greater lavishness - [T](#).

Utukuni, but more commonly, sokoni, market. See different proverbs in the section Hospitality.

2841. Mpishi asingizia moto, ikiwa chakula kimevia. [AL](#) singiza.

The cook blames the fire if the food is not well cooked. Cf. 4737.

2841a. Na midomo ukitabasama na uchungu katika mtima. [SPK](#).

You are smiling with your lips but in your heart is bitterness. Cf. 2849.

2842. Nyoka wa nduma-kuwili, huuma akivuvia. [T](#) 441; [B](#) 1.19; [SACL](#) 1008. The double-mouthed snake bites and blows at the same time. Beware of the friend who flatters you - MM. The double-headed snake is supposed to bite and to blow at the same time so that the person who is bitten would not feel the pain.

Kuuma ukivuvia, to praise someone with evil intent. Nduma kuwili, also the name of the blindworm which is popularly believed to have a mouth at either end. Cf. 2843.

2843. Panya hupuliza aumapo. [J](#) puliza; [AL](#) 1421.

A rat blows where it bites. Do not trust a flatterer. Also used of blowing on a sore place, to deaden the smart, and figuratively, of a person who, after using bitter, strong language, follows it up by a kind or gentle expression to take the sting out - [T](#). N.B.: A rat is supposed to blow while biting the toe of a sleeping person, so that it won't hurt. Cf. 2842.

2844. Shoka liliungua, mpini unabaki. [TS](#) 66/6.

The axe is burned, the handle remains. Cf. 2826, 2832.

2845. Tamu ikizidi tamu, si tamu tena. [ED](#) 72.

If sweetness is excessive, it is no longer sweetness. Overdoing something is not good.

2846. Umwonapo hakiri. Kefa usikiapo? [T](#) 542; [SACL](#) 339 kefa.

When you see them they do not confess, will they when you only hear [about them]?

Kaifa or kefa or kefu, much less, much more, not to mention - J. Kiri, confess or agree, give in.

2847. Usinipe nyama ya ulimi. [SEMI](#) 19.

Don't give me meat of the tongue. Don't just flatter me. Cf. 2848.

2848. Usinivike kilemba cha ukoka. [F](#) 49.36; [KS](#) vaa; [H](#) 106.

Do not put a turban of grass on my head. Do not flatter me.

2849. Usoni kucheka, binadamu si wema. [MEM](#) 119; [SPK](#).

A smile on the face, people are not good. Some who smile have in their hearts masses of mischief.

2850. Uzuri wa chongo, jicho kudidimia. [NGU](#).

The appeal of having a blind eye is that the eye sinks in the cavity.

2851. Wanipaka mafuta kwa nyuma ya chupa? [F](#) 51.4. [KS](#) paka.

Do you rub me with oil with the back of a bottle? The oil is still in the bottle and the one who does the rubbing pretends to use oil, without touching the oil - MM. Said by people who think that they have been treated less than generously.

Paka mafuta kwa mgongo wa chupa, to deceive, to cheat, to outwit somebody.

2852. Watende wao, wakitenda wenzi wao iwe mwao. [F](#) 51.7; [KA](#): [SM](#); [AL](#) 1393.

We should not mind what they do, but if their companions do likewise, they raise an alarm - [E](#). If they do an evil thing it is fine; but if others do it to them it becomes bad, and there will be a fight - [KA](#).

Mwao, also vita, kero, vurugu, war, trouble.

2852a. Waungwana wasitende waasayo watendao. [SPK](#).

Noble people ought not to do what they forbid those who do it.

2853. Wazikanapo ndipo watafunanapo. [FSM](#) 197.

Where they bury one another there they chew one another. Instead of praying they start talking evil. Doing evil under the cover of piety. Said of somebody piously attending the burial of an enemy.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Kindness

2854. Adui aangukapo mnyanyue. [EM](#) 8.2.

When [your] enemy falls, lift him/her up. Helping an enemy in trouble may make a friend.

2855. Asiyekosa hakoselewi. [MA](#) 73.

One who does not wrong is not done wrong. Cf. 3013.

2856. Asiyekosa hayupo. Daraja. p.1.

There is no one who does not make mistakes.

2856A. Atendaye njema atalipwa zizo. [SPK](#).

The one who does well, will be paid likewise.

2857. Chiriku hana hisani. [JKP](#).

A sparrow has no kindness. "A person of low class is not expected to be mild-mannered" - [JKP](#).

Chiriku: 1, a bird, a finch. 2. a garrulous person, a chatterer.

2858. Chui naye ana mkwewe. [EM](#) 38.16.

Even a leopard has a mother- or father-in-law. Even the most cruel and mannerless people have at least one person that they respect - [EM](#). Cf. 3624.

2858A. Chura hana nyoya. [SPK](#).

A frog has no feathers. Don't be too demanding - [SPK](#).

2859. Fimbo huvunja mfupa, haivunji kilema. [KB](#) 50.

A stick can break a bone, but not a vice. Brute force generally does not correct bad behavior, but patience and gentleness might.

2860. Hata matumbo ni nyama. [REK](#).

Even the bowels are meat. Respect for all.

2861. Haya imemaliza shamba langu la muhindi. [KB](#) 67.

Shyness has consumed my corn field. I could not decline any request.

2862. Hisani haozi. [B](#) 4.34; [F](#) 12.1.

Kindness does not go bad.

2863. Huruma usijione mwenyewe. [EM](#) h31.

Sympathy should not be spent on oneself.

2864. Ihsani iandame imani. [KA](#).

A loving relationship should follow acts of kindness. Said to someone who is not grateful for a service.

Ihsani or hisani, kindness. Cf. 2662.

2865. Jamala yako haipotai. [JKP](#).

Your kindness will not be lost.

2866. Jaza ya ihsani ni ihsani. [KA](#).

The reward of kindness is kindness. A person who receives kindness should give kindness in turn.

Jaza or jaza, malipo, fadhili, zawadi, reward.

2867. Jicho la moyo linaona mengi. [EM](#) j11.

The heart's eye sees many things. The heart feels many things, some of which are visible and others that are invisible.

2868. Jicho lako likikuonyesha masawi ya watu, sema: e, jicho wale wana macho vilevile. [JKP](#) ito.

When your eye shows you other people's immorality say, "Oh, Eye, those people have eyes too." Masawi or ubaya, uovu, uufisadi, uzinzi, immorality.

2869. Jua lafanya kiwi cha macho. [JKP](#).

The sun makes it bad for my eyes. The sun obscures the eyesight. Too much of a good thing - [JKP](#). Killing by kindness.

2870. Omitted.

2871. Kila chungu kina kifuniko chake. [JKP](#).

Every pot has its lid. Cf. 2873.

2872. Kila kitendo chema sadaka. [JKP](#).

Every good deed is an act of charity.

2873. Kila mlango na ufunguo wake. [T](#) 179; [V](#) 127; [KB](#) 97; [FSM](#) 68. [J](#) fungua; [KA](#).

Every door has its own key. There is a correct way of doing things.

Kila kufuli na ufunguo wake. [SM](#).

Every padlock has its own key

2874. KILA MTU kwa/NA MTUWE. [SM](#); [SAM](#) 9.8.

Every person has his/her person. Every human being needs a helper, a friend or a confidant who listens and helps in difficulties. Cf. 2861, 28731.

2875. Kila nyumba na mlango wake. [MA](#) 214.

Every house has its door. Cf. 2873.

2876. Kila shetani na mbuyu wake. [SM](#); [KA](#).

Every devil has its own baobab tree. Everybody has somebody to talk to freely and is in agreement with. People believe that devils live in baobabs.

Mbuyu: the baobab or calabash tree, often of enormous girth in proportion to the height, producing a large nut, the hard shell of which is used for drawing water, and the kernel for flavoring food - [J](#).

2877. Kipaka kidogo hakiwigiki na'chi. [T](#) 154.

A little kitten is not hit to the ground. This refers to the quality of perseverance in a cat; like a person who will not give in. Na'chi or na nchi, to the ground.

2878. Kufaa hakudhuru. [T](#) 170; [A](#) 124; [SAM](#) 10.14; [KB](#) faa; [SACL](#) 212; [AL](#) 1985; [JKP](#).

Giving service does no harm. A good deed is never lost. - [AL](#).

2879. Kuku mwenye mayai, humwachia uhai. [RSP](#) 108.

The hen with eggs is left alive. Cf. 2880.

2880. Kuku mwenye watoto halengwi jiwe. [F](#) 18.51; [NGU](#) hatupwi; [AL](#) 42. A stone is not thrown at a hen with chicks. It's foolish to destroy one's future profit, or one's descendants - [AL](#). Cf. 2879.

2881. Kuomba kuomba, harehemu mamba. [RSP](#) 149.

To beg and to beseech, the crocodile is inexorable. Aggressive people have a heart of stone - [RSP](#).

2882. Kusahau maudhi ndio njia nzuri ya kulipiza kisasi. [EM](#) k30.

To forget a wrong is the best revenge. Because then you will have defeated the wrongdoer - [EM](#).

2883. Kwendako mema, hurudi mema. [T](#) 211; [A](#) 170; [SAM](#) 12.26.

Where good things go, there good things return from. Doing good is receiving good in return.

2884. Lala uli simba. Amka uli ndovu. [JKP](#).

Go to sleep like a lion, wake up like an elephant. The lion is a symbol of strength and anger; the elephant is a symbol of even greater strength and of regal temperate behavior. Let sleep cure your anger - [JKP](#).

2885. Lipitalo hupishwa. [F](#) 20.7; [B](#) 4.83; [MARA](#) 36.

That which is passed is allowed to pass - F. What has passed [long time ago] must be forgotten; let bygones be gone; forgive and forget - [MM](#).

2886. Maji hayapozi moyo ila yakiwa baridi. [MA](#) 263.

Water does not cool off [refresh] the heart except if the water is cold. Good manners and words do.

2887. Mama na mama, huona huruma. [RSP](#) 133.

A mother will feel pity for a mother. Because she knows the sufferings of a mother - [RSP](#).

2888. Mambo taratibu humshinda mwenye nguvu. [T](#) 237-8; [V](#) 106. Gentle matters conquer the strong person. Carefulness in all things conquers the powerful.

Mambo taratibu hughilibu. [SPK](#).

Action taken with care, and well planned, will succeed.

2889. Maneno ya mwendawazimu hayana maana, lakini ni maneno. [MA](#) 286.

A mad person's words have no meaning, but they are still words. A person should be able to listen even to fools, for they have something to offer.

2890. Mbwa hamtafutii mwenzake mfupa. [REK](#).

A dog does not look for a bone for its fellow-dog. Cf. 2528.

2891. Mchezo wenu ndio mauti yetu. [MEM](#) 237.

Your play is our death. From the story of children throwing stones at the frogs in the pond.

2892. Mema hayaozi. [KB](#) 161; [SACL](#) 1021.

Good deeds never spoil. A good deed is not forgotten. Cf. 2862.

2893. Mema hujificha mabaya hujitokeza. [FSM](#) 105.

The good things go in hiding, the bad things come out in the open. The bad side of a person is often better known than the good side.

2894. Mgomba changaraweni haupandwi ukamea. [SAM](#) 14.9.

The banana tree is not planted in gravel in order to make it grow. Cf. 2905.

2895. Mjinga ni mtu usinene ni ng'ombe. [CM](#) 36; [J](#).

A fool is a person too, don't say that person is a cow.

2896. Mjua kutenda vyema, sambe viwi havijui. [T](#) 266; [SPK](#).

The one who knows how to do good, don't say that this person doesn't know evil. Give a good person full credit for his/her generosity. Don't say: "That person knows no better" -[SPK](#).

2897. Mkuki (or kigumba) kwa nguruwe kwa mwanadamu [wa] uchungu. [F](#) 27.76; [KB](#) 188; [T](#) 142; [KA](#); [SACL](#) 366; [KS](#) kigumba; [MARA](#) 3; [JPK](#); [NGU](#).

A spear [arrow] for a pig [is painful, but] is agony for a human being. So think twice about sticking spears or arrows into pigs in future - [E](#). This proverb is used when a person is doing things that hurt others and complains when similar things are done in return.

Mkuki kwa nguruwe matamu, una uchungu kwa binadamu. [AL](#) tamu.

The spear for the pig is sweet, but for a human being it is suffering. Suffering of another does not hurt us as much as our own suffering. One who does not pity others assumes that nothing hurts them - [Nestor](#), p.16.

2898. Mtenda mema hulipwa maovu. [MA](#).

One who does good things is paid back bad things. Said when people take advantage of one's goodness.

Mtenda mema mabaya kamwangukia. [AL](#) 1297.

Bad things happen to a person who does good. Cf. 2883.

2899. Mtenda mema [kifani] cha nina. [SACL](#) 124; [AL](#) 1010.

A benefactor is [like] a mother. Follows mother's example.

The cha asks for a ki-noun (such as kifani or kifano).

2900. Mtenda wema kwa watu atendea nafsiye. [SAM](#) 17.25; [MS](#) 198; [SM](#); [JK](#) 134.

People who do good to others do it [also] to themselves. Being polite and helpful will make people helpful and polite. The benefactor will be rewarded later - [JK](#). Cf. 2906.

2901. Mtende jirani haki na imani. [JKP](#).

Treat your neighbor justly and honestly.

2902. Mti wa kufa ngedere, miti yote huteleza. [REK](#).

The tree on which the ngedere died, causes all trees to be slippery [from weeping].

Ngedere or kima, small black monkey.

2903. Mtu awafanyae watu mema, nae mungu humlipa mambo mema. [T](#) 336; [SACL](#) 476.

Someone who does good to others, God requites that person with good things too - [T](#).

Awafanyae or awafanyiaye, one who does to others.

Mwenye kumridhi mwenziwe, na mungu humridhi. [T](#) 385.

To a person gracious to fellow humans, God is gracious also.

2904. Mtu hula ihisani yake. [NGU](#).

A person is consumed by being kind.

2905. Muhogo maweni haushushi mizizi. [T](#) 356; [SACL](#) 655; [KA](#); [AL](#) 1095.

The cassava plant does not send its roots down in stony soil. It does not thrive in stony soil. Nobody is supposed to do the impossible - [AL](#). Cf. 2894.

2905a. Mwema hupendeza umbo. [SPK](#).

Good people charm [others] by their nature.

2905b. Mwenye kumridhi mwenziwe, na mungu humridhi. [T](#) 385.

God is gracious also to a person who is gracious to others.

2906. Mwenye kutenda jamala, naye hulipwa jamala. [B](#) 1.16; [T](#) 338; [JK](#) 139; [SACL](#) 180; [KB](#).

To the person who does kind things, kind things will be done.

2907. Mwezeka viwi, mtupie nyasi. [L](#) 75; [V](#) kiwi.

If somebody covers the roof badly, throw up bundles of grass. Being kind to a person encourages doing well - [L](#).

A free translation: If a man thatches with bad grass, give him good rushes - [RP](#) p.385:96.

2908. Ndege njema, uenende ukale na vipofu. [V](#).

Good luck [on your trip], go and eat with the blind. A wish for a good journey.

Ndege njema. lit., good birds, as in travel under lucky stars. Ukale na vipofu, eat with the blind, because they cannot give you the evil eye. Cf. 2909.

2909. Ngarawa juu, wimbi chini. [T](#) 419; [CM](#) 51; [KB](#); [V](#).

The boat above, the wave below. Used as a wish for a good journey, or congratulations after a happy journey.

2910. Ng'ombe wa maziwa hakai zizini. [EM](#) n14.

A cow that produces much milk does not last in the pen. A cow that gives much milk has a short life. A good person does not live long - [EM](#).

2911. Omitted.

2912. Niteee maua ningali hai. [EM](#) n18.

Bring me flowers while I am still alive.

2913. Nimekula asali udogoni, utamu ungali gegoni. [E](#) 39.15.

I ate honey in my childhood, and its sweetness is still in my tooth. A person often turns to childhood to recall the bliss and easy circumstances of life.

2914. Njema zaua. [NGU](#).

Doing good works kills. Cf. 2898.

2915. Pole hutolewa na mwenye huruma. [NGU](#).

"I am sorry" comes from a merciful person.

Pole, said to a person who is hurt.

2916. Pole ni dawa. [JKP](#).

Concern is like medicine.

2917. Radhi ina mwisho. [NGU](#).

Happiness has an end. Nothing is everlasting.

Radhi, pardon, apology, blessing, contentment. Cf. 1224.

2918. Rahisi kuwa mwema kama huchokozwi. [EM](#) r10.

It is easy to be good if you are not provoked. Character comes to a test when provoked - [EM](#).

2919. Rehema, kisima. [RSP](#) 129.

Compassion is [like] a well.

2920. Salamu hurudishiwa salamu. [KB](#) 272.

One greeting gains another greeting.

2921. Si lazima kuzimia taa ya mwenzio ili yako ionekane. [EM](#) s13.

It is not necessary to blow out the other person's lantern to let yours shine.

2922. Sindikiza haokotiwi. [NGU](#).

Guidance is not easily found.

2923. Sitara na kushusha nguo. [T](#) 496.

Hiding is to let the garment down - MM. Hiding a fault and letting down the raiment. Charitable concealment is seemly -[T](#).

2924. Sukrani za wema ni matusi. [EM](#) s10.

The gratitude for goodness is insults. Do good without expecting good in return.

2924a. Ukijifanya asali nzi wote watakula. [SPK](#).

If you make yourself [like] honey all the flies will devour you - [SPK](#). Don't be too good.

2925. Ulimi huelekea penye jino bovu. [EM](#) u16.

The tongue ever returns to the bad tooth. A good person tries to help the one in trouble. The bad tooth hurts. The tongue tries to still the pain.

2926. Uliomkaridhia, mpe muhula akija. [JKP](#).

The one to whom you lent [money], give respite when that person comes.

Uliomkiridhia or uliomkaridhia. Muhula, space of time, period, interval.

2927. Usirudishe ubaya kwa wema. [KB](#) 331.

Do not render evil for good.

2928. Viwi, mwavilamba vyombo, vyema mngelikulaje! [T](#) 569.

[If you get] bad food, you lick the platters! If [you were given] good food, how you would eat it! If you welcome bad things like that, how would you welcome good deeds?

2929. Wema hauozi. [F](#) 51.9; [SAM](#) 27.3; [KB](#) 332; [MS](#) 132; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#) wema; [J](#) ema (njema : good deeds); [CM](#) 62; [T](#) 572; [JK](#) 119; [KB](#) 339.

Kindness [good deeds] never goes bad. They will receive their reward. It is like storing something. Even if you forget the good deed, the one who received your kindness will not forget - [MARA](#). Cf. 286.

2930. Wema na upole zashinda ukali. [KB](#) 344; [AL](#) 816.

Goodness and kindness are stronger than harshness.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Learning

2931. Ajionaye ajua sana hajui lolote. [NGU](#).

The one who thinks to know a lot, does not know anything.

2932. Ajifunzaye haachi kujua. [ZAW](#), p.xi.

One who studies goes on learning. No learning is a waste of effort - [Zaw](#).

2933. Alioko ulimwenguni hajaisha (or hajesha) kuumbwa. [FSM](#)9.

A person who is here in the world has not yet been totally created. A person goes on learning until death. A person is being formed [created] as long as that person lives.

2934. Asiyejua kitu, hawezi kujua thamani yake. [KB](#) 26.

A person who does not know an object cannot know its value.

2935. Asijejiona nafsiye, haoni akionyeshwa. [SAM](#)4.21.

People who do not see by themselves, do not see [even] when it is shown to them. This is said of an intelligent adult who does not see the difference between good and evil, between justice and injustice, between politeness and rudeness - [SAM](#). We must know ourselves before we can understand others. Cf. 2056.

2936. Asiyejua hufunzwa ajue kisha afuate. [JKP](#).

Whoever has no knowledge, let that person be taught and learn and thus follow [the rules].

2937. Asiyauliza, hanalo ajifunzalo. [F](#) 5.41.

One who does not ask a question learns nothing. Cf. 2968.

2938. Biashara ni hesabu. [EM](#) 25.10.

Business is arithmetic. Arithmetic is an essential tool in business. Hit and miss business is like a journey undertaken in the wilderness where there are no paths - [EM](#). Cf. 973.

2939. Cha mkufunzi mwanafunzi hali na akila hufa: cha mwanafunzi mkufunzi hula na akila hafi. [T](#) 49; [MA](#) 92.

A student does not eat [the food] of the teacher, and if a student does eat, that student will die; but if the teacher eats [the food] of the student, the teacher does not die. Used if a junior does not respect his seniors - [KA](#). This saying was used in the days of capitalism, when pupils used to send presents such as eggs to their teachers - [EM](#).

Mkufuu or mwalimu, teacher. Mwanafuu or mwanafunzi, a student.

2940. Chakula kilicho mbali usipokipata, unaweza kupata kwa wengine. [KB](#) 38.

Food out of reach, you can get it from others. By learning, knowledge.

2941. Cheo ni dhamana. [NGU](#); [JKP](#).

A certificate is a surety. Rank is a trust - [JKP](#).

Cheo, rank, degree, status, certificate.

2942. Dari ya binadamu ni kichwa. [EM](#) 45.8.

A person's ceiling is the head. In many places the ceiling of the house is used as a store. A person collects a lot of ideas and preserves them in the head until called upon to use them - [EM](#).

Sifa: honor, quality. Is sometimes used instead of dari.

Sifa ya binadamu ni kichwa. [NGU](#).

A person's value is the head.

2943. Elimu bila amali, kama nta bila asali. [RSP](#) 82.

Knowledge without practice is like wax without honey.

Elimu bila ya mtalaa hupotea. [KS](#) mtalaa.

Learning without practice is lost.

Mtalaa, lessons, practice - [KS](#). Mtala, mtaala, practice - [Krapf](#).

2944. Elimu haina mwisho. [EM](#) 53.1.

Education has no end. One is never too old to learn.

2945. Elimu hakimu. [JKP](#).

Knowledge is the arbiter. "No judge or umpire can decide without knowledge"÷ - [JKP](#).

2946. Elimu maisha, si vitabu. [EM](#) 54.5.

Education is life, not books. You cannot learn all the things that matter in life from books.

2947. Elimu ndio mwanga uongozayo kila shani. [T](#) 110; [SPK](#); [SACL](#) 714; [MS](#) 28 ilimu; [AL](#), shani.

Knowledge is the light that leads to everything wonderful. With intelligence one emerges from a difficult case - [AL](#).

2948. Elimu ni [kama] bahari. [J](#) bahari; [EM](#) 53.

Learning is like an ocean.

Elimu ni kama bahari haina sahili. [JKP](#).

Knowledge is like an ocean without shores.

Elimu ni kama bahari, haina kuta wala dari. [SPK](#).

Science is like an ocean, it has neither walls nor a roof. The pursuit of learning is like a voyage for life: it will never end against a wall nor can the spirit be stopped when rising up - [SPK](#).

2949. Elimu ni mali ambayo adui hawezi kuiteka. [EM](#) 53.2.

Education is a possession that no enemy can capture.

Elimu haitekeki. [KA](#).

Education cannot be stolen.

Teka or chukua, twaa, to take.

2950. Elimu ni kama taa, gizaniitazagaa. [RSP](#) 41.

Knowledge is like a lamp, it will shine everywhere.

2951. Elimu tafuta swini, kama yakulazimia. [JKP](#).

Search for knowledge [even] in China, whenever you need it.

2952. Faida ya kujua kufuata. [JKP](#).

The advantage of knowing is following. "It is useful to know people's views and habits beforehand. So one can avoid giving offenses: good public relations" - [JKP](#).

2953. Fimbo umpigayo mtoto yamfikia kwa ngozi, haifikii tabia yake mbaya. [AL](#) 442.

The stick you beat the child with reaches its body, it does not reach its bad character. Physical punishment is most of the time inadequate - [AL](#).

2954. Funzo la mjinga ni tabu. [MARA](#) 2.

A fool learns by his troubles. It is because the fool did not listen to advice.

2955. Giza adui yake mwanga. [EM](#) g2.

Light is the enemy of darkness.

Ukweli utawapeni uhuru, the truth will set you free. Cf. 849, 3150.

2956. Haifai mtoto kuogopa umande. [AL](#) 428.

A child should not be afraid of dew. Unpleasant things are character-forming.

2957. Hekima haitegemei umri wala rangi. [NGU](#).

Knowledge/wisdom is independent of age and color. All can acquire knowledge.

2958. Hesabu hizi ni mswaki tu. [KS](#) mswaki.

These sums are [easy like] a toothbrush. Said by students. Easy to make.

Mswaki, a toothbrush made from a small tree-root.

2959. Kama kungwi wandazi nipe changu kitumbua. [FSM](#) 61.

If I am a pastry teacher, give me a rice-fritter. When a student does not follow the rules that are taught, the teacher will use this proverb. It's a way of telling the student that a fault was made. It could also be used by the teacher to tell the student that a reward should be given to the teacher, which might be of more common usage.

2960. Kazi haifai ila kwa kunga. [NGU](#); [J](#)kunga.

Work is no good unless you have been taught the art.
Kunga, secret, trick, device; private instruction.

2961. Kijana kijiti kipotovu. [AL](#) 438; [AL](#) pota.

A youth is like a twisted twig. Should be educated while young.

2962. Kila mnyama hufundishwa na mizungu yake. [AL](#) mzungu.

Every animal is taught by its instincts.
Mizungu, instructions given during puberty or initiation.

2963. Kujifunza ni kuiga. [NGU](#).

Learning is imitating.

2964. Kujua kidogo hatari kutojua kabisa usiku wa manane. [NGU](#).

The danger in knowing a little is knowing nothing at midnight. Not knowing enough when needed.
Usiku wa manane, midnight

2965. Kukauka kwa kichikichi kulikausha jiwe. [AL](#) 451.

In drying the palm nuts, the stone has dried also. The palm nuts are put on a stone or rock to dry, but also the stone on which the nuts were crushed is drying. Too many loveless admonitions disturb the child - [AL](#).

2966. Kula nyama ya mwalimu ni kula sumu. [JKP](#).

To eat the meat of scholars is eating poison. Slandering a teacher is like eating poison. "Scholars, i.e. Islamic scholars, who teach the Koran, are holy men who must not be harmed" - [JKP](#).

Kula nyama ya mtu, to eat meat of somebody is an idiom meaning slandering a person's name. Cf. 2939.

2967. Kusoma si ukarani. [JKP](#).

The ability to read does not make a secretary. More is needed to be a good secretary.

2968. Kuuliza si ujinga. [MARA](#) 34; [MEM](#) 108; [ZAW](#).

Asking questions is not ignorance.

Muuliza ana elimu. [FSM](#) 144.

A questioner has knowledge. A student who asks questions learns more than one who does not; a wise person questions before beginning an enterprise.

Jifanye mnyonge upate kujua. [HM](#).

Degrade yourself in order to know. Cf. 2937.

2968a. Maisha mwalimu bora. [SPK](#).

Life is the best teacher.

2969. Mbele giza, kisha werevu. [KB](#) 169.

First there is darkness, then there is cleverness. An inexperienced person can become clever.

2970. Mbwa mzee hajifunzi ujanja mpya. [NGU](#).

An old dog does not learn new tricks.

2970a. Mfunze asiyejua uliofungwa fungua. [SPK](#).

Teach the ignorant, open [the door of knowledge] that is closed.

2971. Mkono kufunua usikie, mkono kufungwa huku sikia. [AL](#) 389.

Understand the meaning of the open hand while you did not understand the meaning of the closed hand [fist]. One who is eager to learn will grasp any occasion. An open hand explains, but a closed hand does not.

2972. Mkono uleao mwana hutawala ulimwengu. [AL](#) 424.

The hand that raises the child rules the world. Education forms the child's future.

2973. Mpumbavu alienda porini, akaokota tembo, akasahau njia yake. [AL](#) 426.

The fool went into the forest, picked up an elephant, and forgot the way back. It is not enough to bear children, one must also educate them - [AL](#).

2974. Mtaka maarifa huwa rafiki wenye maarifa. [MA](#) 354.

One who is after knowledge befriends people with knowledge.

2975. Mto ulikunjama, sababu ulikosa mtu wa kuungoza. [AL](#) 437.

The river meanders, because it did not have a guide. Poor education ends up with a good-for-nothing person.

2976. Mtoto huanza kutambaa ndio asimame. [NGU](#).

A child starts crawling and that's how it may stand up.

2977. Mtoto yatima hawezi kutanda wavu mrefu. [AL](#) 425.

An orphan is not able to set a long net [to catch game]. Without education a child is not ready for life.

2978. Mwana-vyuoni, shida haoni. [RSP](#) 82.

A scholar does not have hardship.

2979. Mwana wa kuku hafunzwi kuchakura. [F](#) 34.144; [T](#) 370; [A](#) 73; [Y](#) 135; [KB](#) 210.

A chick is not taught how to scratch up the ground for food. Some things come naturally. Kifaranga, or mwana wa kuku, a chick Tony Hillerman writes about a "belagana", a busybody: "His mother would have called her in Navajo, 'One who tells sheep which weed to eat.'" Skinwalkers, p.95 (N.Y.: Harper Perennial Library, 1988). Cf. 2980.

2980. Mwana wa nyoka hafunzwi kuuma. [ED](#) 53; [JK](#) 131.

The young of a snake is not taught to bite.

2981. Mwenye macho haambiwi tazama. [F](#) 35.162; [FSM](#) 160.

One who has eyes is not told to look. Be alert, use all your gifts.

Mwenye mdomo hasaidiwi kusema. [FSM](#) 157.

One who has a mouth gets no help in speaking. Someone who is able to do a job is not helped, but on the other hand, we should help those who cannot help themselves.

2981a. Mwezi ukitokea nyota zikapotea. [SPK](#).

When the moon appears the stars disappear. The moon is the symbol of nobility and scholarship - [SPK](#).

2981b. Nyama ya waalimu ni sumu. [SPK](#).

The meat of scholars is poison. If you harm a scholar you will die. If you refuse to feed a scholar, the food that he ought to have received will be poisonous - [SPK](#).

2981c. O! Akili na elimu zitakapo kukutana. [SPK](#).

Oh! intelligence and knowledge when they meet!

2982. Popo huning'iniza kichwa chini aone wafanyao ndege wengine. [EM](#) 29.20.

The bat hangs with its head down watching the actions of other birds. It is better to observe or investigate a matter silently than ostentatiously to make a lot of noise about it - [EM](#).

2983. Punda wasiojuana hunusana kwanza. [REK](#).

Donkeys that don't know each other first sniff each other.

2984. Roho ni mgeni. [REK](#).

The soul is a stranger. Is difficult to know.

2985. Shamba lililopandwa karanga halikosi maoteao. [AL](#) 423.

In a field where peanuts were planted, there is no lack of young sprouts [after the harvest].
A good education leaves its marks.

2985a. Siache kusoma upate hekima. [SPK](#).

Never stop studying so you may acquire wisdom.

2986. Tembea ujionee usingoje kuambiwa. Mlezi Oct-Nov. 1982, p.3.

Walk around and see for yourself, don't wait to be told. Cf. 3177.

2987. Ujualo ni hazina ya maisha yako. [NGU](#).

What you know is a treasure of your life.

2988. Ujuzi bila vitendo ni ujinga, sio mwendo. [REK](#).

Knowledge without deeds is stupidity, it's not a life.

2989. Ujuzi hauzeeki. [NGU](#).

Knowledge never gets old.

Ujuzi, knowledge, wisdom, sagacity, practical experience.

2990. Ujuzi ni nguvu. [NGU](#).

Knowledge is strength

2991. Ukitaka kujifunza, mwishowe utashinda, ukichoka hupotea. [JKP](#).

If you want to learn something you will succeed in the end, but if you give up, you will lose.

2992. Ukiujua huu, huu huujui. [MARA](#) 69.

If you know this [side], that [side] you do not [necessarily] know. One cannot know everything: there is always more to learn. There is always someone who knows more about it.

2993. Ukupigao ndiwo ukufunzao. [NGU](#); [AL](#) 1577; [E](#) 26.11.

What beats you is what teaches you. The misfortune that strikes you teaches you.

Ukupigao + ukufunzao, the u and o refer to the noun msiba (misfortune), that is understood.

2994. Usiku hauzai mtoto mzuri. [AL](#) 422.

The night does not bring forth a comely child. Upbringing and education produces a child you can show off.

2995. Vua na mvuvi mpenda nswize. [JK](#) 141.

Go fishing with a fisherman who loves fishes - [JK](#). If you want to learn the trade properly, study the ways of someone who loves it - [JK](#).

2996. Vya kizungu haviishi ujinga. [AL](#) 392.

Those European articles don't end ignorance. One always has to learn more, even from strangers.

2997. Wajua utokapo. [NGU](#).

You know where you came from.

2998. Wakati mkufunzi. [EM](#).

Time is a tutor. A person may not understand something the first time. But after living with it for a sufficient time, one may understand it - [EM](#).

2999. Walimu wawili hufundana. [JK](#) 134.

Two learned men will learn from each other.

Hufundana or hufundishana.

2999a. Watafutao elimu wako njiani kwa mungu. [SPK](#).

The seekers of knowledge are on the path of God.

3000. Yamemsibu kwa kujua kwingi. [EM](#) y4.

Things have happened to a person for knowing too much. To show off one's knowledge may get one into trouble. So, it is better to be humble - [EM](#).

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Love - hate

3001. Adui haanguki anapotupwa. [KER](#).

An enemy does not fall down when discarded.
The enmity remains.

3002. Adui mpende. [T](#).3; [E](#).1.3; [A](#).120; [MS](#).3.

Love [your] enemy.

Adui mpende, kumchukia ni kumchukia ndugu yako. [MA](#).17

Love [your] enemy, your hating is like hating your own brother.

Adui mpende leo, yawezekana mkawa rafiki kesho. [MA](#).18.

Love an enemy today; it is possible that you might become friends tomorrow.

3003. Akipenda chongo huita kengeza. [F](#).2.11; [B](#).4.68; [MARA](#) 3, apendaye chongo.

A person who loves calls one-eyed a squint.
Love thinks no evil. Love is blind. Lovers do not judge mistakes or faults harshly.

Akipenda chongo huona kengeza. [H](#).95; [L](#).4; [MS](#).157.

If one loves a one-eyed person, that person sees only a squint.
Chongo : blind in one eye.
Kengeza : squint or cross-eyed.
"A person in love mistakes a pimple for a dimple." Japanese proverb.

3004. Akuchukiaye hakosi ila ya kukutia. [JKP](#).

The person who hates you will not lack faults to put on you. Cf. #3.

3005. Akutendaye mtende. [V](#)., tenda; [KB](#).12.

Do harm to the one who harms you.

Akutendaye mtende, mche asiyekutenda. [F](#).2.12; [KS](#), tenda; [AL](#) 1451.

Do harm to the one who harms you, and fear the one who harms you not. A vicious proverb. [F](#).
If you take revenge, expect retaliations. [AL](#).

Akutendaye, mtende: simche akutendaye. [A](#).219; [SACL](#).198; [H](#).8; [T](#).10.

Do harm to the one who harms you, do not fear who harms you.

An eye for an eye.

Kumtenda has the special meaning of doing harm to someone; while kumtendea means doing good to someone. The same for kumfanya and kumfanyia. [Do evil to--do good to.]

3006. Alokunyowa, mekupunguza kuchana. [ED](#).1.

The person who cut your hair has also diminished [taken away the need of] combing.
If one harms you, you are excused from being kind to that person.

Aliyekunyoa shungi kakupunguzia kuchana. [SM](#).

The one who cut your curls took away your need of combing.

Shungi: plait of hair, tress, crest, forlock.

Said when someone took something away from you that you really did not need. A person who lost something not really needed is consoled in this way. Cf. #1271.

3007. Aninyimae mbaazi, kanipunguzia mashuzi. [F](#).3.29; [FSM](#) 8; [AL](#) 1201; [SM](#).

One who withholds pigeon-peas from me reduces my passing of wind. [E](#).

No need to help someone who refused to help you.

Amnyimae punda adesi, kampunguzia mashuzi. [F.3.20](#).

The person who withholds lentils from a donkey, reduces its passing of wind.

If someone refuses me a service, I don't have to show any gratitude, either. If someone denies you something, don't complain. Perhaps you escape other difficulties, such as paying a debt. This proverb can be used whenever assistance is not forthcoming. [KA](#).

One never knows the outcome of gifts or refusal of them, so don't be too sorry. Most gifts will bind you to the giver.

Akunyimaye kunde akuepusha kuvimbiwa. [NGU](#).

The one who denies you beans helps you to escape bloating.

If somebody denies you something that could harm you, even if you would have liked it, it's for your good, because it diminishes your trouble. [SM](#).

Try to laugh about people's selfishness. [AL](#).

Kunde: small beans thought to cause gas.

Anikataaye kanipunguzia simanzi. [KA](#).

The one who denies me something reduces my pain.

Simanzi (huzuni): pain, sorrow.

Don't be sorry for lack of friendship that might bring chagrin.

Cf. #1270 and #1272; # 1032.

3008. Anipendaye nami nampenda: anikataaye, napunguwa simanzi. [T.30](#); [MS.11](#).

The one who loves me, I also love; one who rejects me diminishes my grief.

There are several similar proverbs, e.g., #1271, denoting a breaking off of a relationship. In this case, a relationship of love. Love and vulnerability go together. If someone does not love me, that person spares me grief.

Anipendaye, nami nampenda: anikataye, nami namkataa. [V.35](#).

The person who loves me, I love too; the one who denies me, I deny that person too.

Nampenda mtu pindi anipendapo. [SACL.750](#).

I love someone when that person loves me.

3009. Apendapo hushona, asipendapa hurarua. [KA](#).

When a person loves (a garment), she'll sew it, if she does not like it, she'll tear it (even if new).

Said of a critical person. No compromise. Easily applied to personal relationships.

3010. Apendwaye akajua haachi kujishaua. [KA](#).

People who are loved know it and do not stop showing it in their way of walking.

People don't like to see that kind of behavior. So, don't show it.

Kujishaua or kuringa: walk with a swagger, put on airs.

3011. Asili ya huba, mwanzowe ni jicho. [JKP](#).

The beginning of love is the eye. [JKP](#).

Huba: love, friendship.

3012. Asio adui si mtu. [EM.15.20](#); [KA](#)., asiye.

A person who has no enemies is not a human being.

3013. Asiyekuridhi mridhi. [T.34](#); [A.114](#); [SAM.4.19](#).

Please the one who does not please you.

Do good to a bad person in order to make friends.

Aliyekuridhi nawe umridhi [JKP](#).

The one who agrees with you, agree with that person.

Asiyekuudhi simuudhi. [MA.67](#).

Do no harm to the person who does not harm you.

cf. #1229, #1274, #1951.

3014. Atakaye kumpiga mtoto atapata fimbo. [MA](#).

The person who wants to beat a child will find a stick.

That one will find a reason to do so.

3015. Barua ya moyo husomwa juu ya panda la uso. [MULIKA.10](#); [MEM.127](#).

A letter from the heart can be read on the face.

The face mirrors joy and sorrow. The heart's letter is read in the eyes.

Panda la uso or kipanda cha uso: forehead. Sacl.

3016. Cha mtima cha moyo. [KA](#).

What the heart loves is what it wants.

Good or bad, if the heart loves it, it will be good for the heart, like medicine.

Mtima (poet.) or moyo: heart. Cf. #1290, #1290b;

Also Pamoyo pa mtima: If the heart loves a place, it's a good place for the heart.

3017. Chako kikioza, unaanikaanika. [EM](#).32.1

If what is yours rots, you dry it over and over again.

If your affairs go wrong, you try your best to rectify them for the better. [EM](#).

Chako kikioza hakikunukii. [MARA](#) 3.

Even if your sore is putrefied, you don't smell the bad odor.

You don't see your own bad behavior or that of your family and if you see it you don't hate it as other people do.

Mkono wenye uchafu husafishwa, haukatwi. [NGU](#).

A dirty hand is cleaned, not cut. Cf #1306. #1300a.

3018. Choji la akupendaye hutoka kwenye chongo. [EM](#).37.14.

The tears of one who loves you will come even from a bad eye.

A friend in need is a friend indeed. [EM](#).

3019. Chuki humchoma anayehifadhi. [EM](#).38.17.

Hate burns its preserver.

Do not nurse hatred, it will hurt you. [EM](#).

3020. Chuki kwa chuki, mwanga kwa mwanga. [KB](#).13.

Hatred for hatred, light for light.

3021. Dawa ya meno ni meno. [ED](#).ll.

The remedy for teeth is teeth.

Tit for tat; a tooth for a tooth

Sumu ya neno ni neno. #1316.

The poison of a word is - a word. Cf #1282.

3022. Dawa ya moto ni moto. [E](#).8.4; [H](#).28; [SWA](#).12; [CM](#).50; [MS](#).144; [FSM](#).184; [B](#).2.59; [RECH](#).342; [V](#)., moto; [MARA](#) 2; [KS](#), dawa.

The cure against fire is fire.

Fight fire with fire. [SWA](#).

To stop a running fire start a fire moving against it. To stop an insulting person a similar person is needed: Oppose cruelty with cruelty. [MARA](#). Cf. #1316.

3023. Dhana sio njema. [JK](#).117; [AL](#) 1390.

Suspicion is never good.

3024. Fitina ikidhihiri ubaya hukithiri. [REK](#).

When the quarrel gets in the open, evil will grow.

More people are getting involved.

Dhihiri: to be evident, plain, clear.

Kithiri: to increase, grow.

3025. Haina tabibu ndwele ya mapenzi. [T](#).73; [SACL](#).673, ndwee; [V](#).24, uwele wa.

The disease of love has no cure.

Love-sickness has no remedy. Love is blind and blinds. [V](#).

3026. Hakukuwa kupendana, bila kuheshimiana. [JKP](#).

There has never been mutual love without mutual respect.

3027. Hamu haiji bila kupenda. [NGU](#).

Longing does not come without loving.

3028. Hasama ndimi za moto. [SAM](#).J.3.

Enmity is like flames of fire.

Enmity and rivalry bring troubles and fights. [MM](#).

3029. Hasikii la mwadhini wala la mtia maji msikitini. [KS](#), mwadhini; [JKP](#).

So and So does not listen to the muezzin nor to the one who puts water [for the ritual ablutions] in the mosque.

JKP has mteka maji (fetcher of water), instead of Mtia maji.

(The person who puts water in the mosque.).

A person totally absorbed in love, even neglecting religious duties. [JKP](#).
Mwadhini: muezzin, the person who calls to prayer.

3030. Hata akose meno, simba hachujuki. [NGU](#).
Even a toothless lion does not please and remains hostile.
Chujua: washing out color; pleasing.

3031. Heri kufa macho kuliko moyo. [L](#).,fa,[F](#).11.15; [KB](#).70; [MS](#).154, kufa moyo; [KS](#), fa.
It is better for the eye to die than the heart.
Better blind than despairing. [F](#).
Kufa moyo: to become disappointed, discouraged, despairing.

3032. Heri moyo mkubwa kuliko akili kubwa. [EM](#) h24.
A big heart is better than a big brain.
Love is better than knowledge. A person with a big heart is concerned about others; a man of knowledge may ignore them. [EM](#).
Cf.#837; #526A; #1289.

3033. Heshima ni moyo. [EM](#) h27.
Respect is of the heart.
Respect, like love, is a free gift. A person can be forced to obey, but not to respect. [EM](#). Cf. #1371

3034. Humpendaje mtu kwa kwambiwa penda? [T](#).103; [L](#).109; [MS](#).25.
How is one to love a person by being told [to] love someone.
One cannot love on command; love is freely given.

3035. Huwezi kurudisha mahaba na maisha. [RSP](#).122.
You cannot bring back love or life.
Understood: Once they have gone. Cf. #1324, #78.

3036. Inyeshapo mvua, aliye ndani hajali. [EM](#) I9.
When it rains, the one inside does not worry.
A person who has a strong relationship or has a stable position will not worry about those who want to harm.

3037. Ikiwa unawapenda watoto wa wengine, utawapenda wako zaidi. [EM](#) I10.
If you love other people's children, you will love your own even more.
Increased love for others will increase love for your own. [EM](#).

3038. Johari bora ni mapenzi kuliko maisha yetu. [NGU](#)
Love is a more precious jewel than life.
Johari: jewel. Cf. #688.

3039. Jongoo hupenda watu, na watu hawampendi. [AL](#). 1098.
The centipede pursues man and man avoids it.
Man is afraid of the centipede and the latter likes to be indoors with people.
This is said of somebody one does not really like, but cannot get rid of.

3040. Kidole chako kibaya chaweza kufaa siku baya. [MA](#).166.
Your bad finger could be useful on a bad day.
About a bad relative, etc.

3041. Kidole chako kibaya si kikate. [MA](#).167.
Don't cut off your bad finger.
Don't cut off a bad relative. Cf. #1306; #1289A.

3042. Kijana mpende akilala, akiondoke mwumie chanda. [MA](#).172.
Love young people when they are asleep; if they gets out bite your finger for them.
A child should never be shown excessive love. [MA](#).
This could have a different meaning because "to bite something for another" is often done to take away from the other any evil, magic, curse.

3043. Kinacholeta ugomvi duniani ni kugawanya fedha [nyama]. [EM](#) k14.
The cause of dispute in the world is the distribution of money [meat].
People need money, but they are never satisfied with it.
Money is the root of all evil. For meat eaters the root of dispute is meat. [EM](#).

3044. Kipendacho moyo ni dawa. [F](#).15.25; [B](#).4.74; [CM](#).36.
What the heart desires is like medicine to it.

A little of what you fancy does you good. [F](#).

Penzi la moyo ni dawa. [T](#).461; [MS](#).67.

Kipenda cha moyo ni dawa. [V](#).28.

What pleases the heart is medicine.

Having a hobby is like a medicine.

Ipendacho roho ni dawa. [REK](#).

What the heart loves is a cure for the soul.

Usiseme sitaki; kipendacho moyo ni dawa. [AL](#) 1335.

Don't say I don't want; on the contrary] what the heart likes is like a remedy.

3045. Kipendacho ngoma roho. [NGU](#).

What is loved is music for the heart.

Ngoma: drum, dance, music. Cf. #1290.

3046. Kipendacho roho nyama mbichi. [AL](#) 668.

What the heart likes is like fresh meat.

A man prefers a young woman. [AL](#).

Kula nyama mbichi ni moyo kupenda. [EM](#) k27.

Eating raw meat is a choice of the heart.

It's unfair for those who do not like to eat raw meat to blame those who do. Don't blame people for liking things you don't like. [EM](#).

3047. Kofi la mahaba haliumizi. [NGU](#).

A slap of love does not hurt.

Kofi la mapenzi [mpenzi] haliumi. [NGU](#)

Same translation.

Mpenzi: lover.

3048. Kumkaanga mtu na mafuta yake. [T](#).182.

To fry a person in his/her own fat.

Taking excessive advantage of someone's generosity and kindness, especially by cheating. [MM](#). As when you have given a friend a present, and some time after it happens that you need that very thing; which your friend seeing, gives it you, saying: Takukaanga na mafuta yako, "I will fry you in your own fat." [T](#).

Akamkaanga papa kwa mafuta yake. L.M.Thonya,Misingi ya Kiswahili, p.60: 54..

Someone fried the shark in its own fat.

This proverb is used when somebody is giving some of a person's own medicine, e.g., a judge may tell a drunk who misbehaved while drunk not to drink; or a thief to pay back with his own property. Thonya.

3049. Kupendana kulishana. [JKP](#).

Loving one another is feeding one another.

3050. Kupendana si kufanana rohani. [REK](#).

Loving each other is not the same as being similar in spirit.

Lovers keep their own characteristics and should develop their own attributes.

3051. Kupenda sana ni ugonjwa usiotibika. [REK](#).

Being deeply in love is a sickness that cannot be cured.

3052. Kushinda kupendwa, kupenda kushindwa. [RSP](#).148.

Victory makes a man popular, and to fall in love means to be conquered. RSP.

3053. Kuwapo moyoni, halipo machoni. [KA](#).

Something can be in the heart without being seen.

What you do not see, you can remember in your heart.

3054. Kwamba mimi ng'ombe ni bora, ningaligandamwa na kupe. [JKP](#).

"If to me a cow is good, do you think the ticks would bother me?" [JKP](#).

The Swahili is a little stronger on account of ningaligandamwa na kupe: although the ticks are sticking to me. Most cows have ticks on them, sucking their blood.

3055. Kweli iwe katika upendo, na upendo katika kweli. [EM](#) k38.

Truth should be in love and love in truth.

Proper love is that which does not hide the truth from the loved one, and proper truth is that which is expressed in love without hatred or bitterness. [EM](#).

3056. Mahaba ni tamu, mahaba ni sumu. [JK](#).122.

Love is sweet, love is poison. Verse of a song.

3057. Mahaba yana mkono wake. [NGU](#).

Love has its own hand.

Love has its own time of coming.

3058. Mahaba yaua. [NGU](#).

Love kills.

3059. Maji hayatokoti yakishushwa kwa moto. [MA](#).262.

Water does not boil if taken away from fire.

Hostility and love end when not encouraged.

3060. Mapendo kwa asiyekupenda ni sawa mvua porini. [KB](#).157.

To bestow love on somebody who does not love you is like rain falling on the uninhabited wilds. A waste of energy.

3061. Mapendo yanapovusha. [KB](#).158.

Love blinds.

3062. Mapenzi hayana macho, wala hayana maarifa. [T](#).245; [SACL](#).505; [V](#)., mapenzi has first half of proverb.

Love has neither eyes nor understanding. Cf.#1933.

3063. Mapenzi ni hakika, hupanda na kushuka. [JKP](#).

Love is real, it goes up and down.

3064. Mapenzi ni kikohozi, hayawezi kufichika. [F](#).22.18; [MS](#).102.

Love is like a cough, it cannot be hidden.

Amor tussisque non celantur, Love and cough cannot be concealed. The Cyclopaedia of Practical Quotations, Latin proverbs, p. 579.

We know that there were early visitors to the east coast of Africa.

3065. Mapenzi yakifa yazike na usiweke maua juu ya kaburi. [REK](#).

If love dies, bury it and don't put flowers on the grave.

Get over it.

3066. Mapenzi ya kiswibu wawili ndiyo mapenzi. [MA](#).291.

Love is love only when it affects both sides.

Kiswibu or kisibu, conditional tense from sibu: affect, happen. Kuswibu is an old version of usibu. The word siba, from the Arabic, presents the difficulty of correct spelling in Swahili. The Arabic s is pronounced in two ways, like the English s and like the s sound which has no English equivalent. To differentiate the two sounds, some people add a w : sw. [MA](#).

3067. Mapenzi ya sufuria: hayakawii kupoa. [MP](#).83.12.

Love of the [metal] cooking pot: off the fire it cools at once.

Puppy love.

3068. Mguu ukikanyaga mavi haukatwi. [MP](#).227.19.

If one steps in excrement one does not cut off the foot.

If a member of the family has gone wrong it is not a reason to repudiate that person. Cf. #1306.

3069. Mkono usioweza kuukata, ubusu. [F](#).27.74; [ED](#).36; [JK](#).127, ubusu.

Kiss the hand you cannot cut.

Respect those who have authority over you, or they will destroy you.

Usioweza kuukata, ubusu. [MARA](#). 73; [kA](#).

[The hand], which you cannot cut, kiss it.

Ikiwa humwezi, muunge mkono. [EM](#) i2.

If you cannot fight someone, join that person.

It would be safer to be on that person's side. Work with the competition. [KA](#). cf. #1321.

3070. Mkono wako ukichafuka, huukati. [EM](#) m21; [AL](#) 1428.

If your hand gets soiled, you do not cut it off.

This means that if your relative errs, you should help so that that person may avoid any recurrence of the mishap. [EM](#).

False obsequiousness often hides a desire to harm. [AL](#) Cf. #1306;

3071. Moyo hauna subira. [JK](#).129.

The heart has no patience.
First half of a verse.

3072. Moyo huambia babu yake. [NGU](#).

The heart tells its grandfather.
The heart tells the owner to do something.
Babu: grandfather; here, the owner of the body.

3073. Moyo hujua uchungu wa nafsi yake. [NGU](#).

The heart knows its own pain.
Nobody else does.

3074. Moyo huona mbali kuliko kichwa. [NGU](#).

The heart sees further than the head.

3075. Moyo ni chuo. [JKP](#).

The heart is like a book.
The human heart knows things that it never learned. Even the 'second sight' or the sixth sense (hisu ya sita) is believed to slumber in the heart." [JKP](#).

3076. Moyo ni kilindi. [NGU](#).

The heart is deep.

3077. Moyo ni nyongo, ukigeuka udongo. [V.](#), moyo; [AL](#) 793

The heart is like bile, if it changes still more it becomes clay.
Either the heart is full of sad thoughts or it is like molding clay. [AL](#).
The heart changes all the time.

3078. Moyo safi silaha ya kutosha. [NGU](#).

A pure heart is weapon enough

3079. Moyo ukitamani utashawishika. [NGU](#).

If the heart desires it will entice.

3080. Moyo wa kupenda hauna mithali [mithili]. [NGU](#).

A loving heart has no equal.

3081. Moyo wa kupenda hausemezeki. [SAM](#).15.17.

A loving heart is not argued with.
Someone in love will not listen to a harsh word about the beloved.

3082. Moyo wa kupenda na kuwiza huwa. [SAM](#).16.18.

A loving heart can also reject.
Can change to hatred.

Moyo wa kupendana kwanza huwiza. [KA](#).

The heart of love can also begin to hate.
Impossible to commit to eternal love.

3083. Moyo wa mwenzako ni tunda la chupa. [NGU](#).

The heart of your friend is like the hole in a bottle.
Difficult entering. We are ignorant of what goes on in the heart of a neighbor or friend. Cf. #.3084.

3084. Moyo wa mwenzio tundu ya mwanzi hauingiliki. [NGU](#).

The heart of your friend is like the hole in a reed, impossible to enter. Cf. #912; #1303b.

3085. Mpenda watu watu hawampendi. [TS](#) 88/2; [AL](#) 1097.

The lover of people is not loved by the people.
A person who is kind to others is not necessarily loved by them. Cf. #1289.

3086. Mpende nduguyo. [JK](#).118.

Love your brother.

Mpende akupendaye. [JK](#).133; [KS](#), penda.

Love the one who loves you.
Also the first line of a love song. [JK](#).

3087. Mpenzi hana kinyongo. [T.307](#); [J.](#), nyonga; [RECH.211](#); [TS 23.10](#).

A lover has no grudge.

One does not criticize a friend

Love thinks no evil.

3088. Mtu akipendwa hupenda. [MA.386](#); [CB 66](#).

A person if loved, should love.

When someone is loved that person should love in response.

3089. Mwana akinyea kiweo hakikatwi. [T.363](#).

When a child dirties your thigh, [the thigh] is not cut off.

Against undue resentment, senseless spite, etc., such as would most of all harm the person that exhibits it. [T.](#)

Do not run away from your responsibilities, how unpleasant they may be. [MM.](#)

Kiganja alichonyia mwana huoshwa hakikatwi. [V.](#) in Swahili readings; [L.](#) p.88.

The palm of the hand a child dirtied is washed, not cut.

Mtoto akinyea kiwiko hakitupwi. [ZO 354](#).

When a child dirties your arm you don't throw it away.

Kiwiko: wrist.

3090. Mwekaji kisasi haambiwi mwerevu. [F.34.153](#); [AL 1409](#).

A person who nurses vengeance is not called wise.

3091. Mwenye ishiki kalewa. [JK.132](#).

Someone in love is drunk.

Ishiki=ashiki: strong desire, affection, usually of sexual desire. [J.](#)

3092. Mwenye kuja na baridi usimpe moto. [AL 1441](#).

To one who comes to you cold-heartedly, don't give warmth.

Don't show that person kindness. That kind of attitude inspires defiance.

3093. Mwenye kupenda ni jura, wala hana maarifa. [T.386](#); [V.44](#); [MS.55](#); [SACL 195](#); [JK.132](#) has first half.

One who loves is a fool and has no understanding.

Love makes fools, and takes away all wisdom. [SACL.](#)

Jura: a large frog; a simpleton, idiot. The expression Mtu huyu ana chura: that person has a frog, i.e. is crazy. V. Cf. #1296.

3094. Ndugu akipenda kuwa sumu hajali mali wala uhai. [NGU.](#)

If a relative becomes poisonous, that person does not care about wealth or life.

3095. Ndugu wanapogombana watenganishe. [EM n9](#).

When brothers quarrel separate them.

The meaning is that you do not quarrel or fight them, because then they might turn against you.

3096. Nyani hutumaini, hupendana mitini. [RSP.87](#).

Baboons long to make love in the trees.

One must be content with little; baboons do not even have a house for privacy; the other meaning is contemptuous: only baboons would make love in the open air. RSP.

3097. Pato la mahaba, ni haba ni haba. [RSP.71](#).

The gain of love is little, is little.

Give and take. [MM.](#)

3098. Pendo lisilo na kitu, katu halibainiki. [JK.123](#); [AL 1025](#).

Love without a thing [i.e., gifts and presents] does not become evident at all. [JK.](#) Verse of a song.

Gifts keep friendship going. Cf. #1596.

3099. Penye udhia weka rupia. [NGU.](#)

There where is trouble put money.

It will cost money. Indirectly: Money is the cause of trouble.

Rupia: a rupee.

3100. Penzi la kujitolea ndilo penzi la daima. [NGU.](#)

Love of self-renouncing is an eternal love.

3101. Penzi ni maua maji hutilia. ([EM p19](#))

Love is like a flower, it must be watered.

Take care of it.

3102. Radhi ni radhi ingawa hafifu. [EM](#) r1.

I'm sorry is an excuse although weak.

A bad excuse is better than none at all. [EM](#).

Radhi hafifu ni bora kuliko kutokuomba radhi kabisa. [EM](#).

A weak excuse is better than no excuse at all.

3103. Radhi ni ushindi. [EM](#) R2.

Forgiving is victory.

A person who forgives has mastered the force of hate.

3104. Riziki la mtu masilahi. [REK](#)

The blessing of a person is reconciliation after a quarrel.

Masilahi: 1. reconciliation, agreement 2. price after bargaining, profit.

3105. Sandamane na ambao hakupendi. [JKP](#).

Do not follow someone who does not love you.

Sandamane = usi-andamane: do not join

Ambao = ambaye: who.

3106. Shadaha mara tatu. [NGU](#).

Forgiveness is given three times. Koran.

3107. Si mimi ni moyo. [JK](#) 117.

It is not I, it is the heart.

It is not my fault, it is my heart that loves you. [JK](#).

3108. Songolea si mkuki, kutongoza si kuowa. [PM](#) 84.

A hunting-pole is not a spear, to seduce is not the same as marrying.

One has not the same rights over a mistress as over one's wife, and when one would make similar claims, the mistress would make that clear.

3109. Sumu mkiani. [JK](#) 146; [AL](#) 1430.

The poison is in the tail.

After a nice relationship one discovers that someone tries to harm you. [AL](#).

3110. Sumu ya neno ni neno. [T](#) 500; [E](#) 44.17; [CM](#) 48; [KB](#) 283; [Swa](#) 13.

The poison for a word is a word. [E](#).

If somebody calls you a bad name give him a worse one. When there is a hubbub about an event, there is nothing like another event for diverting interest. One bad word begets another bad word.

Sumu [poison] and dawa [remedy] often have the same meaning. See CF. #1282; #1281.

Cf. Sumu ya miti ni moto, sumu ya moto ni maji, sumu ya maji ni mchanga, lakini mchanga hauna sumu. The poison of trees is fire, the poison of fire is water, the poison of water is sand, but sand has no poison. [T](#).

3111. Toa upendo mwingi kuliko unaopokea. [EM](#) t14.

Give more love than you receive.

Love many even those who do not love you. Kindness is one commodity of which you should spend more than you receive. [EM](#).

3112. Tukipendana sana, twataabishana sana. [REK](#).

If we love each other very much, we cause each other much distress.

3113. Tumekwisha kunywa kahawa, machicha ya mwenye ndoa. [MP](#) 83.11.

We have drunk the coffee; the grounds are for the husband.

This is said by paramours upon the return of the woman to her husband.

3114. Ubaya ukiingia mlangoni, wema hutoroka dirishani. [EM](#) u2.

When evil enters the door, goodness escapes through the window.

When evil enters a loving family, that lovely relationship disappears.

3115. Ukali wa chui lakini watoto wananyonya. [NGU](#).

The leopard may be fierce, but the pups are sucking.

3116. Ukimpiga kuku wamtafuta mwenye kuku huyo. [KA](#); [SM](#).

If you hit another's chicken, you find the owner of that chicken [and have a quarrel].

3117. Ukimtaka baniani umtake na ubinda wake. [RECH](#) 550

If you like a Baniani, you must like his loincloth too.

The meaning is that if you like somebody you must take that person as is.
Baniani or Banyani: Hindu; Indian tradesman or craftsman.
Ubinda: a type of loincloth worn by some Indians in East Africa. Cf. #322.

3118. Ukipenda damu upende na usaha. [FSM](#).189.

If you love blood, love pus too.

If you love people in health or wealth, love them also in sickness and poverty. Cf. #1317.

3119. Ukipenda, penda chako. [NGU](#).

If you love, love what is yours.

3120. Ukishindwa kupasua jiwe, linyanye. [NGU](#).

If you cannot cut the stone lift it.

Give it a place of prominence. Cf. #1300; #1321.

3121. Ukiumia kwa kisu chako wewe mwenyewe, huwezi kukitupa. [KB](#).309.

If you hurt yourself with your own knife, you can't throw it away.

Blame yourself, not the knife.

One is more tolerant towards one's own.

3122. Undugu wapita urafiki. [MBT](#) p1.

Brotherhood is greater than friendship.

3123. Upendapo, uendapo. [RSP](#).23.

Where you like it, is where you must go. RSP.

3124. Usipo na msu, adui mbusu. [RSP](#).114.

If you have no big knife, kiss your enemy. Cf. #1300.

3125. Viwili havipendeki. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

Two things cannot be loved at the same time.

The heart loves only one thing at a given time.

3126. Wa mtu mtima, u kama kisima. [RSP](#).32.

The heart of a human being is [as deep] as a well.

3127. Wajua tamu yaua sumu umenipiani? [MS](#).86.

You know that sweetness kills, why have you given me poison?

Your love for me, your attentions, will kill me, so no need to look for poison.

Said of a wife or close friend who by overdoing their attention cause the person to want to run away. "Please go away peacefully."

Wajua tamu ya ua sumu umenipiani. [SACL](#).720; [AL](#) 1429.

You know the sweetness of a flower, why then give me poison? [SACL](#).

About those who do you favors, but in the mean time hurt you on purpose.

3128. Wema hauwezi kuepuka meno ya kusudi. [NGU](#).

Goodness cannot escape the teeth of envy.

3129. Ya kale hayapo. [F](#).52.1; [B](#).2.6.

The ancient things are with us no longer.

Let bygones by bygones. [F](#). Cf. #659.

3130. Ya mahaba ndweo maradhi upeo. [JKP](#).

The intoxication of love is the worst disease.

Ndweo, kiburi, majivuno: pride, arrogance.

Upeo: horizon, ultimate.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Lying - truth

3131. Afadhali kuwa na jirani mchawi kuliko mwongo. [WIKON](#) 208.

It is better to have a wizard as a neighbor than a liar.

A liar cannot be trusted; a wizard, though dangerous, can be trusted.

3132. Asemaye kweli mpenzi wa mungu. [NGU](#).

One who speaks the truth is loved by God.

3133. Asemaye uwongo husema mwenziwe. [NGU](#).

Saying a lie abuses your companion.

Hurts friendly relationships.

3134. Asiyekuwako hatakuwa mwongo. [MEM](#).98.

One who is absent will not be a liar.

One not associating with liars is not counted as one.

3135. Binadamu ni waongo, hata mwizi hawezi kukubali ni mwizi. [REK](#).

Human beings are liars, even a thief denies being a thief.

3136. Habari ya uwongo ina ncha saba. [J](#); [T](#).72; [CM](#). 60; [SACL](#).666; [V](#) 91.

A false story has seven endings.

It can be told in many ways. Like a snowball grows as it rolls along. [V](#).

Habari ya kweli ina ncha moja. [T](#).72; [CM](#).60; [SACL](#).666, [V](#).92, *ncha yake moja*.

A true story has only one ending. Cf. #877.

3137. Hakuna akweaye mbuyu na viatu miguuni. [MEM](#).227.

Nobody can climb a baobab tree with shoes on his feet.

Truth and falsehood do not go together. The liar will fall down. [MEM](#).

3138. Hekima haishindi ukweli. [NGU](#).

Knowledge does not defeat the truth.

3139. Jicho la jirani halikuangalii bwami. [KB](#).82.

Free translation: It is better to see than to hear.

It is better to be an eye-witness than a [hearsay] witness. [KB](#).

3140. Kinywa cha mzee kina harufu, lakini hakisemi uwongo. [KB](#).110; [AL](#) 1315.

Katika kinywa cha mkubwa muna haruu, hakuna uwongo. [KB](#).89; [AL](#) 1316.

The mouth of an elder may have an offensive smell, but has no lie.

The truth can be hard to hear or to admit. [AL](#).

3141. Kuona ni kuamini. [NGU](#).

Seeing is believing.

3142. Kuota kwa ndoto si kushuhudia. [JKP](#).

Dreaming is not the same as witnessing.

Shuhudia: attest, confirm, give evidence, prove.

3143. Kuro haisemi uwongo. [KS](#)., *kuro*; [AL](#) 1690.

The *kuro* drum does not lie.

Kuro: a waterbuck with a very tough skin; a big drum with three legs, covered with a kuro hide. This drum is not beaten without a

sound reason. Cf. #1416

3144. Kusema kweli si tua. [T.194a](#); [SACL.905](#).

Speaking the truth is no disgrace.

3145. Kusema kweli [ni] thawabu. [NGU](#).

Telling the truth is a [God-given] gift.

3146. Kusifiwa si kuona, shani nda kuionea. [ED.22](#).

Being praised is not seeing, a wonder becomes evident when one sees it. [ED](#). Cf. #1333.

3147. Kusikia si kuona. [T.195](#); [A.95](#), 124; [SAM.11.21](#); [V.114](#); [KB.133](#).

Hearing is not seeing.

Do not believe all you hear; investigate. Hearing and seeing is twofold. [V](#).

Kusikia si kufikia. [RSP.54](#)

Hearsay is not arrival. [RSP](#).

Hearsay is not the same as being there on the spot.

3148. Kweli chungu. [NG](#).

The truth is bitter.

Kweli inauma. [NGU](#)

Truth hurts.

Kweli inunue, lakini usiiuze. [NGU](#).

Buy the truth, but don't sell it.

Kweli iseme inapofaa. [NGU](#).

Speak the truth when it is appropriate.

3149. Kweli chungu si uwongo mtamu. [TAA.5](#).

Bitter truth is better than a sweet lie.

To tell the truth can be painful and the one who tells the truth may not be loved by others. A lie may please, but it brings doubts in people's minds. [TAA](#). Cf. #1335.

3150. Kweli ikidhihiri uwongo hujitenga. [RECH.73](#); *TNR 79/80*, p.29; [JKP](#); [KS](#), *dhihiri*; [EM k37](#).

When truth is obvious, falsehood usually gives way.

Ukweli ukidhihiri uwonge kajisetiri. [JKP](#).

When the truth appears, untruth hides itself.

Kweli ikisimama, wongo hujitenga. [RECH.258](#)

Where truth stands, falsehood must yield.

Kweli inapofika uwongo hujitenga. [MEM.165](#).

When truth arrives, falsehood yields.

3151. Kweli iliyo uchungu, si uwongo ulio mtamu. [L,kweli](#); [T.209](#); [V.84](#); [SACL.462](#) ,*ulo*; [KB.](#), *kweli*.

An unpleasant truth is better than a pleasant falsehood.

Kweli uchungu, uwongo haramu. [CM.50](#).

If truth is bitterness, falsehood is an outlaw [is forbidden].

3152. Kweli ingawa uchungu niambie, usinifiche. [A.186](#); [T.2110](#); [LOBO.201](#); [SAM.12.24](#); [MS.184](#).

The truth, even though bitter, tell it me, and do not hide it from me.

Said of people who want the truth so they can change their ways. [SAM](#).

3153. Kweli ndiyo fimbo ya kukamata. [SAM.12.25](#).

Truth is the walking stick to grasp.

Truthfulness is the best help in life.

3154. Macho ya mbwa hayazui mwanaume kula. [KB.144](#).

The eyes of a dog do not prevent a man from eating.

Truth has nothing to be afraid of; the caravan passes by while the dog barks. [KB](#).

If you are certain of your way you are not distracted by noisy disapproval.

3155. Maelezo si ushahidi. [NGU](#).

Giving explanation is not the same as bearing witness.

3156. Mambo sivyo unavyoyaona. [NGU](#).

Things are not as you see them.

3157. Masikio hayapiti kichwa. [T](#).246; [AL](#) 1565, *yasipite*.

The ears are not bigger than the head.

Do not come to conclusions on hearsay evidence.

For a different interpretation, cf. #1433.

3158. Mla sumu hakufa, afile alopika. [JK](#).131; [AL](#).1738.

The one who ate the poison did not die, the one who died was the one who prepared it.

Slander often backfires. [JK](#).

Alopika for *aliyopika*.

Afile for *amekufa*. Kiamu dialects.

3159. Mpanda hila huvuna ufukara. [KA](#); [SM](#).

A person who plants deceit harvests poverty.

Hila or *hadaa*: cheat, deceive, outwit; tricks, deceit.

3160. Msema kweli hakosi. [T](#).311; [A](#).73; [B](#).1.19; [CM](#).44; [MARA](#).47; [SAM](#).16.20; [V](#).21; [MP](#).226.3.

One who tells the truth makes no mistakes. Cf. #1343.

3161. Msema kweli hukimbiwa na marafiki zake. [SAM](#).12. 25.

One who tells the truth is deserted by friends.

Flattery brings friends, truth enemies.

3162. Msema kweli yu mpenzi wa watu. [NGU](#).

One who speaks the truth is loved by the people.

Cf.#? **Msema (msemaji) kweli yu mpenzi wa Mungu.**([NGU](#))

One who speaks the truth is beloved by God.

3163. Msema pweke hakosi. [E](#).30.102; [MARA](#).47; [KA](#).

A person who speaks alone cannot go wrong.

Msema pweke hakosi sheria. [FSM](#). 126.

One who speaks alone does not break a law.

Everybody pulls the law to his own side. Give both parties a fair chance to explain their case. Used, e.g., by parents when their children accuse one another.

Msema pweke hatolewi makosa. [HM](#).

One who speaks in private [when alone] will not get rid of mistakes.

Msoma pekee hatolewi makosa. [ZO](#).

One who reads alone does not get rid of his mistakes.

Azungumzaye peke yake hakosei. [NGU](#).

One who talks to himself does not offend anybody.

Msema mweke hajui ailiye. [KA](#); [KS](#).*aali*; [AL](#).557; [ZO](#) 254.

The one who talks when alone does not know what is wrong.

Aili: mistake, defect. Cf.#1600.

3164. Muamini hana deni. [RSP](#).75.

An honest man has no debt.

3165. Mvua ni ikupigayo. [ED](#).49.

Rain is what hits you.

Investigate for yourself. [ED](#).

3166. Mwanaharamu metiwa chupani, akatoa chanda. [JKP](#).

The illegitimate baby was put in a jar, but its finger stuck out.

A sin always comes out, even if you try to kill it. [JKP](#).

Metiwa for *ametiwa*: was put.

3167. Mwongo haaminiwi. [AL](#) 1330.

A liar does not inspire trust.

3168. Mzingeni si mfunjeni. [SAM](#).19.45.

Searching someone is better than locking that person up.
Give people under suspicion a chance to clear themselves.

Mzingeni, si mfanyeni. [KA](#).

Searching someone is better than harming that person. Cf. #37.

3169. Mzumbua kijungu ndiye mpishi. ([SAM](#).19.46)

The person who found the small cooking pot is the cook.
A person who started the lies implicating somebody is the one who did it in the first place.
Mzumbua or mvumbua. discover. J. Cf #1101.

3170. Ngano ina ncha saba. [SACL](#).678; T.418.

A tale has seven endings [variations]. Cf. #1327.

3171. Njia ya mwongo [ni] fupi. [B](#).2.16; [SACL](#)..674; [SWA](#).24; [L](#).82; [E](#).39.17; [T](#).r10; [A](#).94; [H](#).91; [J](#)., *wongo*; [MARA](#).63; [V](#).9; [KB](#).249; [KS](#), *mwongo*; [AL](#) 1326.

The liar's road is a short one.

Lies do not go far. [J](#).

After a short time a liar forgets and will be caught. [MM](#).

3172. Pori moja fundi akienda kuua mbogo, lazima alete mkia wake. Maniema dialect. [KB](#).268; [AL](#) 474.

Mwindaji akiua mbogo porini, lazima alete mkia wake. Standard Swahili translation by AL.

If a hunter kills a buffalo in the bush, he must bring back a tail.
Truth must have its evidence.

3173. Sema kweli, ishi kweli, peponi utawasili. [RSP](#). 83.

Speak the truth, live rightly, in Paradise you will arrive.

From a song. [MM](#).

3174. Siache uonalo kwa usikialo. [T](#).479.

Never give up what you have seen for what you have heard.

3175. Tembea uone, kuambiwa kuna uwongo. [KB](#).291.

Travel and see for yourself; what they tell contains falsehood.
Traveling shapes a person. [KB](#).

Tembea ukaone. [KB](#).292

Travel and look. Travel and learn.

Tembea uone, kua utaone. [NGU](#).

Travel and observe; grow up so you may see that.

See also the heading "Experience."

3176. Ugali ni tepetepe, hata alipika mama. [KB](#).299.

The [stiff] porridge is too soft [watery], even if it is the mother who cooked it.
A misdeed is a misdeed, even when committed by a parent.

3177. Ukali wa moto ni kuchochea. [JK](#).131.

The fierceness of the fire is [caused by the fact that someone] stoked it up. [JK](#).

Moto: fire and *sumu*: poison, are often associated with slander. [JK](#).

Kuchochea: continue to feed a fire with firewood.

3178. Ukweli hauna mwanandani. [AL](#) 1318.

The truth has no hiding place.

Truth will come out in the open.

Mwanandani: the empty space in the side wall of a grave, where the corpse is laid. Then the space is covered by a *kiunza*, a wooden board, so that the corpse will not be oppressed by the soil put in the grave.

3179. Ukweli hauna njia moja. [NGU](#).

The truth does not have only one way.

The truth can be told in many ways.

3180. Ukweli huishi muda mrefu. [NGU](#).

Truth lives for a long time.

3181. Ukweli ni kisu chenye ukali pande mbili. [AL](#) 1317.

Truth is like a two-edged knife.
Truth can be hard for both parties.

3182. Ukweli uchungu, lakini wa mungu. [RSP.6](#).

Truth [causes] bitterness, but it [comes] from God.

3183. Ulimi mtoa uwongo hauvumilii: una machukizo kwa mungu. [KB.317](#); [AL](#) 1314.

A lying tongue has no patience; it bears God a grudge.
One accuses God of the harm caused by one's own lies.
A lying tongue is unbearable; is hated by God. [AL](#).

3184. Una uwongo una njia. [KB.318](#).

You have a lie, you have a road.
A lie to save one's face.

3185. Usiseme kuna mamba mtoni kama hujavuka. [NGU](#).

Don't say there is a crocodile in the river if you have not yet crossed that river.
Don't affirm what you do not know for sure.

3186. Uwongo hauongoi. [T.566](#); [V.9](#); [SACL](#) 714.

Lying blesses not. [T](#).
A lie does not guide. [V](#).
A lie leads to no good. [SACL](#).

3187. Uwongo ni mbio ya sakafuni. [ED.79](#)

Lying is like running on a smooth [flat] roof. Cf. #1154.

3188. Uwongo si kazi. [NGU](#).

Cheating does not work.

3189. Uwongo wa mganga ni nafuu ya mwele, ni mwele kupona. [E.50.48](#).

The lie of a witch doctor is a relief to the sick person.
It cures the sick.
Even the lies of a witchdoctor are relief to the sick one. [E](#).

Uongo wa mganga, [ndiyo pona ya mgonjwa]. [NGU](#).

The lie of the doctor [cures the sick].

3190. Uwomgo wa mnyapara si kweli ya kibarua. [EM](#) u37.

The lie of an overseer is stronger than the truth of the day laborer.
An overseer is trusted more than a laborer, even when telling a lie.

3191. Uwongo wa mwenye nyumba si ukweli wa mpita njia. [E.50.49](#).

The lie of the householder has more value than the truth of a passerby. [E](#); [AL](#), *uwongo*; [AL](#) 1325.
If a householder tells a lie, it is easier believed than a passerby who tells the truth. [MM](#).
One puts more value to the advice of a stranger than in that of neighbors and family. [AL](#).
Mwenye nyumba: a settled person, someone with a house.
Mpita njia: a passerby who has no permanent address, is difficult to trace him back.

3192. Waongo wawe na kumbukumbu nzuri. [EM](#) w14.

Liars should have a good memory.
In order to remember the tales they invented.

3193. Waweza kuwadanganya wakubwa siyo wadogo zako. [NGU](#).

You can deceive adults, but not your little ones.

3194. Woga ukiingia, ukweli hutoroka. [EM](#) w26.

When fear enters, truth escapes.
A person who is threatened and becomes afraid may lie.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Manners

3195. Ada ya mgeni huonyeshwa njia. [JKP](#).

The custom is to show the way to a stranger.

3196. Ada ya mja, hunena: mwungwana ni kitendo. [F.1.1](#); [T.1](#); [MS.2](#); [SACL.40](#), 539; [B.1.38](#); [J.](#), ada; [V.](#) p.2, ada ya mtumwa.

There are two different translations:

1. Public opinion maintains: "A gentleman is judged by his actions." [F.](#)
"A slave talks, a free man acts". [SACL. V.](#)

2. The custom of a slave is to talk [with] the free-born, it is action. [T.](#)
The favorite explanation seems to be the first.

JK avoids the difficulty: **Mungwana ni tendo.** [JK.133](#).

A gentleman is deeds [not mere words].

3197. Adabu ni ustaarabu. [MA.5](#).

Good manners is civilization.

3198. Adabu si adhabu, faida yake yaonekana mtoto akuapo. [MA.8](#).

Good manners is not a punishment, the good of it is seen when a child grows up.

Used to stop a child short when it objects to rules of conduct.

3199. Ajaye apige hodi. [JKP](#).

One who comes must call "*hodi*."

No one is allowed to enter a private house without express invitation

Hodi: the word that announces a visitor's presence outside the door.

Haikujuzi kwingia kwa wengine. It is not fitting for you to enter another's house without their express permission. [JKP](#).

The invitation is *karibu*: welcome, come in.

3200. Ajaye bila ya kadi huondoka pasi na kuaga. [NGU](#).

The one who comes without a card leaves without saying good bye.

Kadi: a letter of invitation, an I.D. cf. #1367.

3201. Ajaye usimchungulie. [NGU](#).

Don't scrutinize the person who arrives.

Cf.#? *Karibu mgeni, lakini humwekei macho*

3202. Ajjalikaye hujichukulia kiti. [KB.4](#).

If you invite yourself bring your own chair.

Behave humbly. Cf. #1367.

Ajjalikaye mwenyewe ajitafutie kibaba. [AL](#), *kibaba*.

If you invite yourself, you must look for your own stool.

Kibaba: a container for measuring, volume of about 1 liter or a pint.

3203. Akipaza sauti kakasirika; akibwata kachoka. [NGU](#).

When angry that person shouts, and when tired, complains.

A moody person.

3204. Anayekuja pasi na hodi, huondoka pasi na kuaga. [F.3.23](#); [B.4.12](#); [AL](#) 1160.

Who comes in without "May I come in," leaves without "Goodbye."
About a person who comes without a warning.
A person without manners is incorrigible. [AL](#).

3205. Anayewahi au achelewaye kwa mtemi huambua mzoga. [EM](#).12.14, [KA](#).

A guest who arrives early at the chief's courtyard or leaves late removes a dead body.
Being dead tired of all the extra work that person is asked to do.
Know when to come and when to leave. It's not good to put yourself forward.
This is said of those who come early or late.

3206. Moyo wa kupenda hauna mithali. [NGU](#).

"Pardon me" is not an insult.
Ashkum: excuse me, forgive me.

3207. Asio adabu hajali wenzake. [EM](#).15.19.

Asiye na adabu hajali wenzake. [KA](#).

A person who has no manners does not care about others.
Lack of manners shows contempt for others. Cf.#? *Asiyejua utu si mtu*.

3208. Asiyefunzwa na mamaye, hufunzwa na ulimwengu. [E](#).4.32; [L](#).6; [SWA](#).64; [H](#).13; [MARA](#).6; [KB](#).25.

A child who is not taught by its mother will be taught by the world.
If a child is not taught good manners by its parents, it will have to learn them in the school of hard knocks. [SWA](#).

Asofundwa na nina, ulimwengu humfunda. [ED](#).4

A child who is not taught by its mother will be bruised by the world.
Nina or *mama yake*: his or her mother.
Fundwa in Standard Swahili means: to be pounded; but in Lamu dialect it has the meaning of *-funza* = to learn.

Asiyefunzwa na wazazi atafunzwa na dunia. [NGU](#); [MEM](#).315.

Those who are not taught [manners] by their parents, will be taught by the world. Cf. #418, #419.

3209. Atambaaye na nyasi mtambulie ni nyoka. [KS](#), *nyoka*.

What creeps in the grass, recognize it as a snake.

3210. Fanya heshima kwa wazee hata kama si wako. [NGU](#).

Honor the elders, even if they are not yours.

3211. Farasi huenda kwa hatamu; punda huenda kwa mchapo. [NGU](#).

A horse obeys the bridle, a donkey goes when hit.
Different methods, same results.

3212. Heshima ikivunjika ni yai limeanguka. [REK](#).

Lost respect is like a broken egg.
It cannot be repaired.

3213. Heshima [ni] kitu cha bure. [SAM](#).8.5.

Respect is free.
It does not cost anything to honor a person.

3214. Heshima kuheshimiana. [NGU](#).

Courtesy is to respect each other

3215. Heshima si utumwa. [KS](#), *utumwa*.

Courtesy is not slavery. Cf. #3216.

3216. Hewala si utumwa. [KS](#), *utumwa*; [FSM](#) 523.

Saying "That's right" is not the same as slavery.
Hewala from *ewaa!* or *eewaa!*: intonation commonly used in assent by inferiors or slaves ("Yes, Master"); also of approval ("Just so, that's right"). From the Arabic *Ee Wallah*: yes by God.
Cf. *inshallah*, *wallahi*: God willing. J., *ewaa*.

3217. Hewalla! Haigombi. [E](#).11.18.

"All right" and "thank you" does not cause disagreement.
Civility does not cause disagreement. Civility costs nothing but is worth much. F.
Hewalla: Corruption of an Arabic term meaning "All right," "thank you." [E](#). Cf.1372 note

3218. Jirekebishe kabla hujarekebisha wengine. [EM](#) j14.

Correct yourself before you correct others.

If you are not a perfect example, others will not follow you nor listen to you. [EM](#).

3219. Jogoo hawiki ugenini. [NGU](#).

A rooster does not crow in a strange environment. Cf. #1637; #883.

3220. Kaa mahali pakadiri yako. [KS](#), *kadiri*.

Sit in your proper place. Cf. #1109.

3221. Kaa vema. [NGU](#).

Behave yourself.

3222. Kama si kizuri usifanye, kama si kweli usiseme. [NGU](#).

If it is not nice don't do it, if it is not true don't say it.

3223. Karibu ni mila, si kula. [JKP](#).

Welcome is a courtesy, not [an invitation to] eating.

It does not mean that one is invited to a meal.

3224. Kawaida ni [kama] sheria. [E](#).14.5; [T](#).131; [A](#).95; [MS](#).142; [LOBO](#).167; [V](#).120; [SACL](#).337; [KB](#)., *kawaida*: [KS](#), *sheria*

Custom is lawlike.

Kawaida: a custom practised of old, unwritten law.

Ada ya nchi kwa wenyewe ni sheria. [MA](#).2

A country's customs and traditions are laws for the inhabitants.

A country's culture and all that goes with it, should be respected. MM.

3225. Kila kisitwacho usikione. [JKP](#).

To look at a hidden thing is not proper.

Sita: to halt, to hide. Steere.

Cf. #1768A for more explanation.

3226. Kiti cha mkewe si cha kukalia. [REK](#).

The chair of the housewife is not for sitting on.

Don't interfere with other people's business.

A chair has a special value in most cultures.

3227. Kitwitwi akishindwa kumwaga mgeni, anaugua wazimu. [AL](#) 1162.

If the sandpiper is unable to say goodbye to his host, [its excuse] is that it is suffering from hallucinations.

Somebody looking for an excuse in breaking the rule of good manners.

3228. Kucha si kuogopa. [NGU](#).

Paying respect is not the same as being afraid. Cf.#975.

3229. Kufaa hakudhuru. [JKP](#).

It does not harm to be of service.

"Said by one who offers to help." [JKP](#).

3230. Kuhukumu ni kujihukumu. [EM](#) k25.

Judging is judging oneself.

When you judge another person, you are also judging yourself for you are showing your stand. [EM](#).

3231. Kuku anakula kadiri ya mdomo wake. [KB](#).122.

A chicken eats according to its beak.

Avoid exaggeration. Cf. #147; #232.

3232. Kuku jike haiwiki kwenye jogoo. [KB](#).123.

A chicken does not crow in the presence of a rooster.

One should keep one's place. [KB](#).

3233. Kusumbwana si mambo ya kiungwana. [MA](#).227.

To bother one another is not a thing a free man does.

It is not a good thing to cause trouble for another.

3234. Lebeka si utumwa. [MP](#).226.7.

Politeness is not slavery.

Being polite does not necessarily mean servitude or base flattery.

3235. Shukrani si utumwa. [EM](#)s9.

Gratitude is not servitude.

Lebeka or *labeka*: at your service; used by a youngster when called by its father or mother. *Lamka* and *lama* are also used.

3236. Mbwa hata awe wa kizungu, haachi kunusa vyombo. [NGU](#).

Even a European dog does not leave sniffing pots.

Mbwa hawachi kunusa vyombo. [KA](#).

A dog always sniffs the pots.

Comes naturally.

3237. Mbwa kwa watu hasemi. [AL](#) 1175.

Among people a dog does not speak.

It's better not to interfere in other people's business. [AL](#).

3238. Mchama ago hanyeli, huenda akauya papo. [F.23.31](#); [KA](#).

Delicately translated by F: "A traveler does not make a mess where he makes camp as he might one day come back to the same place".

Mchama: one who moves, a traveller.

Ago, kambi: camp.

Akauya, akaja or *akarudi*: comes back, returns.

Usinyie kambi. [FSM](#).194.

Do not do your call of nature in the camp. Cf. #610.

3239. Mfuata sheria hujisaidia. [SAM](#).14.8.

One who follows the rules will profit by them.

3240. Mgeni hawezi kuona mwezi. [KB](#).180; [AL](#) 1135

A stranger cannot see the moon.

A stranger is not able to know the customs of the inhabitants. A stranger is ignorant until settled. A visitor cannot give advice. [AL](#).

Mgeni haoni mwezi. [MEM](#).253.

A stranger does not see the moon.

Possibly the moon may stand for rites to be observed. [AL](#).

3241. Mshenzi ndiye asiyejua atokapo. [MA](#).350.

Stupid people do not know where they come from.

3242. Mtasema mchana, usiku mtalala. [JK](#).120.

You will talk in daytime, at night you will sleep.

This is not only a general rule of conduct, but also, take counsel with your pillow. [JK](#).

Let them talk [do not kill yourself worrying], they will get tired. [MM](#).

3243. Mtoto wa kuku, kausha mdomo ule. [AL](#) 443; [AL](#), *mtoto*.

Chick, dry your beak and eat.

A child is told to grow up and act like an adult.

3244. Mtumwa mwelewa hafunzwi adabu. [T](#).349; [SACL](#).237; [KB](#)., *funza*, omits *adabu*.

An intelligent servant does not need to be taught good manners. [KB](#)., [SACL](#).

3245. Mtumwa mwenye busara ni azawao. [T](#).350.

"Born here" is the sensible slave. [T](#).

A slave of the first or second generation gets accustomed to the ways of the coast; in contrast to the *mshenzi* from the interior, that never quite loses clumsiness. [T](#).

Azawao (aliyezaliwa pwani): one born on the coast.

3246. Mwana mtumishi hula chake na cha mwenziwe. [T](#). 367.

A child sent on an errand eats its own food and its companion's.

A messenger usually benefits from errands made. [MM](#).

A child who is willing to do errands [to do what it is told] will be rewarded.

Mwana msikizi hula chake na cha mwenziwe. [T](#). 643b.

The obedient child eats its own [food] and its companion's.

3247. Mwana wa mbuzi afagia [hufagia] alalapo. [NGU](#).

A kid [of a goat] sweeps where it sleeps.

Its tail sweeps the place before lying down.

3248. Mwenye kurulama haoni haya. [KB](#).219.

One who squats [call of nature] is not ashamed.
One must tolerate human needs.

Mwenye kufuama haoni haya, kefu yule mwenye kuangalia. [AL](#) 1168.

One who squats is without shame, but the one who stares at that person should be ashamed. Natural needs are human, but also secret.
Fuama or Fulama or furama.

3249. Mwiza, mwiza si utumwa. [V.](#), *mwiza*; [SACL.](#) 651.

[To say] "yes, yes" is not slavery.

Reverence is not slavery. [SACL.](#)

Being agreeable is not the same as becoming a slave. Cf.1372; #1376.

3250. Mwangwana asiye ari kama ng'ombe asiye na pembe. [L.](#)77; [SACL.](#)71; [V.](#), *asiyoari*.

The civilized person not making an effort [to avoid disgrace] is like a cow that has no horns. [L.](#)

A gentleman without self respect is like a bull without horns. [SACL.](#)

A gentleman who does not care about others is like an ox without horns. [V.](#)

Ari: shame; effort to avoid the disgrace of being thought incompetent. [L.](#)

Mwangwana: a free man.

3251. Mwangwana hanuni kwa masavu, hununa moyoni. [A.](#)73; [Lobo.](#)1; [SAM.](#)19.44;[SACL.](#)691; [T.](#)359; [KB.](#) 225; [AL.](#) *nuna*.

Civilized persons pout not with their cheeks, they pout in their heart A.

A gentleman does not sulk ostentatiously, but sulks in silence, when defeated. Suffer insults silently. An intelligent person does not show worries or hatred. [SAM.](#)

And stays master of self. [AL.](#)

3252. Nashikilia ukale ambapo hapana budi. [FK.](#)

I hold a tradition where there is no choice. [FK](#)

As a warning to desert old customs for new ones. [FK.](#)

3253. Ndege mwigo hana mazoea. [E.](#)38.5; [B.](#)3.71; [E.](#), *mazoewa*; [AL](#) 1695.

A bird that imitates has no good behavior or culture. [AL.](#)

A bird that imitates others does not get used to a place. [E.](#)

A stranger always looks how others behave while eating.

3254. Ndiyo, ndiyo, jua lako, usijue ya mwenzako. [AL](#) 1174.

Indeed, know your problems, don't try to know those of your friend.

3255. Ni lipi lisilo nduguye na mwamu wake? [V.](#)67; [T.](#) 429; [SACL.](#) 639.

What [affair] is there that has not its in-laws? [T.](#)

If you treat a guest inhospitably, know that your own turn may come to be treated likewise. As you do to me, so I'll do to you. [V.](#)

3256. Nilimwona mnyama katika makundi, kenda kamwegema; kanipiga pindi. [SACL.](#)750.

I saw an animal in a herd [in a crowd], I went [I tried] to make acquaintance; it went away like a snake (turned its back on me).

Piga pindi: zigzag as a snake, undulating.

Egema: to trust to.

3257. Salamu za mabeberu ni pembe. [REK.](#)

The he-goats greet each other with their horns.

Beberu: he-goat; a strong man.

3258. Shitaka kwa nyani au kwa ngedere hukumu moja. [EM](#) s7.

The judgment of a case submitted to an ape or a monkey is the same.

People of the same kind give a similar judgment or answer. [EM.](#)

3259. Sionje haramu kwani ni kama sumu. [JKP.](#)

Don't taste anything forbidden [like adultery], it is like poison.

3260. Tabia ni ngozi ya mwili. [MARA](#) 2.

Character is like one's skin.

One cannot change one's skin. It is equally hard to change one's character.

Tabia ya mtu ni kia cha mwili. [MARA](#) 2.

The character of a person is like a joint of the body

Kia, kiungo: joint.

3261. U mwana u kamange we? [A.](#)95; [T.](#)514.

Are you a child or a grit?

Don't you hear at all? Are you altogether shameless?

Kamange: a bean or seed that is still hard after cooking; a person who does not want to behave.

Huitendaje kauta hata ikatalayani? [T.100](#).

What shall they do to a grit for it ever to become soft?

Kauta: dust, grit.

3262. Uchafu wa ndugu hautapishi. [NGU](#).

The filth of your relative does not cause you to vomit.

3263. Ujinga huo wa kuacha kinywa kutia puani. [AL](#) 1157.

This stupidity of removing your finger from your mouth and putting it in your nose.

In society the rules of good behavior are to be observed. [AL](#).

3264. Ukenda kwa wenye chongo, [nawe] vunja lako jicho. [T.522](#); [E.46.5](#); [AL](#) 359.

When you visit one-eyed people, destroy also your own eye.

One must howl with the wolves. [V.](#); [ED](#).

When in Rome, do as the Romans.

If you want to be more shrewd than your companions you are taking risks. [AL](#).

Ukenda kwa mwenye chongo, nawe fumba lako jicho. [MARA](#) 2; [ED](#) 84.

If you go visiting a person with one eye, you better close also one eye.

Ukikaa mji wa mwenye chongo, nawe vunja lako jicho. [V.47](#).

If you live in a village of a one-eyed person, destroy also one of your eyes.

3265. Ukienda pemba, uvae kilemba. [EMu7](#).

If you go to Pemba, you should wear a turban.

Cf.#289 Waarabu wa Pemba...

3266. Ukienda rumi, fanya wafanyavyo warumi. [NGU](#).

If you go to Rome, do as the Romans do.

3267. Ukienda usiage, ukirudi u mgeni wa nani? [AL](#) 1161.

If you leave without saying goodbye, coming back who will invite you?

3268. Ukikaa na simba, vaa ngozi ya mamba. [RSP.141](#).

If you live with a lion, wear the skin of a crocodile.

3269. Ukila pamwe na namiri, igiza zao desturi. [RSP. 91](#).

If you eat with the leopards, imitate their habits.

3270. Ulimbwende una ungwana. [SACL. 950](#); [AL, ulibwende](#).

Finery asks for class.

Finery needs taste and money.

3271. Umekaa kama ngawa, kwani huna mazoea. [T.540](#); [SACL.521](#).

You behave like a civet-cat, don't you know how to behave?

Said of someone who does not associate with others.

3272. Usichekelee mbwa kuchutama, hujui ukao wake. [AL](#) 665.

Don't laugh at a dog squatting, don't you know that it is his normal pose.

Don't judge others. [AL](#).

3273. Usikichekee kicheko cha mkwe. [NGU](#).

Don't mock the little joke of your in-law.

Kicheko: laugh, smile, giggle, grin

3274. Usiwe joka la mndimu, hatundi hatikizi watundao. [JK.146](#).

Do not be like the lemon tree snake: it does not pick the fruits nor does it tolerate the pickers. [JK](#).

Live and let live. [JK](#). Cf. #1057.

3275. Usiwe kidoa cha kuharibu nguo za wenzio. [SAM. 25.17](#).

Don't be a stain spoiling the clothes of your companions.

Said of people who are envious of others and do not maintain the standards of the group. [MM](#).

Cf. #1399.

3276. Uungwana haufai, bora ni ndarama. [T.546](#); [V.119, ndirama](#).

Gentle birth avails not, the important thing is money.

Money rules the world.

Ndarama or dhirahmu, darahima, darahimu or dharamu : drachmas; fig., riches. Sacl.

3277. Vijana hawana hekima, hisana wala kupendana. [JKP](#).

Children have no wisdom, kindness, or love.

"They have to learn all those." [JKP](#).

3278. Wakinzani hawavunjiki. [NGU](#).

The people with objections are unbreakable.

There always will be objections.

Wakinzani: obstructionists.

3279. Wananchi wakila panya. Ule panya. [JK](#).146.

If the natives eat rats, eat rats.

3280. Waweza ukae, huwezi ondoka. [JKP](#).

You can [say] Stay, you cannot [say] Get out.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Master - servant

3281. Afadhali kufa vitani kuliko kufa mtumwa. [NGU](#).
It's better to die in the war than to die as a slave.

3282. Akikalia kigoda mtii. [EM](#).9.5.
The one who sits on the stool must be obeyed.
Said of a man invested with authority.
Kigoda: stool, traditional seat on which a man of respect and authority sits. [EM](#).

3283. Akosapo mkubwa, mdogo huadhibiwa. [EM](#).10.7.
When a great person blunders, a junior person is punished.
A scapegoat.

3284. Akupitaye kwa nguvu mwogope. [NGU](#).
Fear the one who is stronger than you.

3285. Aliye juu ni juu. [J.](#):juu; [V](#).142; [KB](#).:juu; [SACL](#).196; [MS](#).7, *yu juu*.
The one who is above is above.
A powerful man is out of reach.

Aliye juu yu juu : mbwidi haliwina funo. [T](#).4.14.
The one who is above is above: a beast of prey is not eaten by the *funo*-antelope.
Mbwidi or *mbwidyi* for *mbwa-mwitu*: jackal, wild dog.

3286. Aliye na nguvu hula, dhaifu hulipa. [KB](#).17.
The mighty feasts, the poor pays.

3287. Aliyekalia kiti cha enzi ndiye mtawala. [NESTOR](#) 12.
The one who sits on the throne is the ruler.
The one who possesses an article at the time is the owner. [NESTOR](#).

3288. Aliyekupa wewe kiti ndiye aliyenipa kumbi. [E](#).2.17; [MARA](#) 3.
The one who gave you a chair is the same who gave me a coconut husk [to sit on].
Do not despise me. I occupy the station God gave me, just as you do. [E](#).
Kumbi: the shell that houses the coconut. Often used as a stool to sit on. In the same way that townspeople use chairs, villagers use *makumbi* (coconut husks). In case townspeople mock the villagers, the farmers answer 'Don't boast about your chairs. Almighty God who gave you chairs, gave us the *kumbi* and God could change that. Be grateful for the good things God gave us. God could give gifts to others. [MARA](#).

Aliyekupa wewe kiti, mimi kaninyima kumbi. [NGU](#).
The one who gave you a chair, refused to give me a coconut husk.

Aliyekuweka kitini, ndiye aliyeniweka chini. [SM](#).
The one who put you on a chair, is the one who put me down.
The one who put you high up in rank has put me below. Cf. #1482; #449.

3289. Aliyepanda juu akianguka huvunjika. [NGU](#).
If they climb high up and fall they break.

3290. Amefanyaye kafara na dawa ili awe na bwana, mwisho wake hulemewa na mazito kujaliwa. [REK](#).
Somebody made an offering of an amulet and medicine in order to be with the master, at the end that person will be overloaded with all the things granted.

Bwana: master, boss, even husband.

3291. Asimamao haendi mbio hayafukuzwa. [JKP](#).

The one who stands will not start running before he is chased away.

"It is not easy to dislodge a dignity once he is in power." [JKP](#).

Asimamao = *asimamaye*.

Hayafukuzwa = *hajapofukuzwa*.

3292. Atangazaye mirimo, si mwana wa ruwari. [E](#).5.43.

The one who allocates the tasks is not [necessarily] the son of the headman.

Ruwari or *liwali*: the headman.

Mirimo: work, probably from *kulima*: to work the land, farm.

3293. Daga pia humtuma papa. [REK](#).

The sardine also employs the shark.

3294. Dalili ya ushehe ni kilemba. [EM](#).43.1.

The sign of Sheikh-hood is a turban.

The headgear has thus become a sign of work and station in life. [EM](#). Cf. #289.

3295. Dua la kuku halimpati mwewe. [H](#).98; [E](#).8.6; [B](#).2. 36; [RECH](#)., *dua*; [L](#).18, *haimpati*; [V](#)., *dua*; [MARA](#) 4; [SWA](#).2; [KS](#), *dua*.

The curse of the chicken does not reach the kite.

Or: The prayer of the fowl does not bother the hawk.

It is vain to protest against those in power.

A woman wearing a kanga with this proverb printed on it tells the world around her that she is impervious to prayers and curses of her admirers.

An interesting word change of this old proverb:

Dua la kuku halimshiki mwewe. [REK](#).

The prayer of the chicken does not seize the hawk.

Something more has to be done than praying. One suggested that being heard by God depends on your status with God.

Prayer in Islam:

Sala (salat): formal prayer during worship, a form that must be followed in order to be ritually correct.

Dua (du'a): ejaculatory phrases of one's own choice, without a fixed pattern. Spontaneous and intercessor prayer. (Kenneth Cragg, *The Call of the Minaret*, Galaxy Book edition, Oxford U. Press, 1964 p. 106).

Also the reverse is heard:

Dua la mwewe halimpati kuku.

The prayer of the hawk does not get the chicken.

Prayer alone is not enough, one must act in order to obtain what one desires.

3296. Fedheha kutawaliwa. [EM](#) f.5.

It's shameful to be ruled.

To be ruled rob people from their essential qualities of being human, i.e. to make their own decisions. This applies to parents as well as their growing and grown-up children. But one can also be ruled by bad habits. [EM](#).

3297. Hakuna jumbe kapera. [NGU](#).

No chief is a bachelor.

3298. Hata mtumwa alipata kuwa mtoto wa mtu. [EM](#) h15.

Even a slave has once been somebody's child.

Even a slave once tasted parental love. This is said to remind a person to treat a servant as well as any other person. [EM](#). Cf. #1515, #1531.

3299. Hii yafutika, hii haifutiki. [I](#).92.

That [sin] can be wiped out, this one cannot be wiped out.

A common expression in the mouth of women when scolding their slaves; as though to say, "It is no venial sin if you disobey my orders." [I](#).

3300. Hivyo ndivyo ilivyo sivyo? (p.243; 3 Sec.School Students. Edwin Mellon Press.)

That's the way it is, isn't it?

This is often said when managers get all the praise and money, while the contributions of others are not considered.

3301. Ipunguzwayo ni iliyojaa. [MARA](#) 2.

What is full will be diminished.

A person in charge should not be sad or angry if attacked, accused or spoken ill of. It is because people want to make a person in charge smaller. Or if a person is good, they want to smear that person. [MARA](#). Cf. #1437.

3302. Jicho la mkubwa ni jicho la tai. [EM](#) j10

The leader's eye is like an eagle's eye.

A leader sees many of the things in the sector overseen.

3303. Jicho la mwinyi humnenepesha mtwana. [EM](#) j12.

A master's eye makes a slave fat.

Every person likes to be recognized by people in charge.

3304. Jogoo hawiki bila ruhusa. [NGU](#).

The rooster does not crow without permission.

Jogoo: a cock; a young boisterous person. Cf. #.3305.

3305. Jogoo mkubwa hamwachii mdogo kuwika. [EM](#) jk16

A big cock does not allow a small one to crow.

A big rooster wants to keep its prestige. A small one will be disciplined. A bigger person can oppress a smaller one, who may be able to do as good a job.

3306. Jongoo, kunja mkia, wazuri wapite mbele. [AL](#) 497.

Centipede, curve your tail and let the beautiful people pass by.

Little people should not be pretentious. [AL](#).

3307. Jukwaani hawakai wengi. [EM](#) j18

Only few can sit on a platform.

The top positions anywhere are few. Cf. #335.

3308. Jumbe akikumiza (akikuudhi) tabasamu. [EM](#) j19.

If the headman hurts (offends) you, smile.

The *jumbe* has authority. If you take offense you may be hurt.

3309. Juu ya mwalimu kutoa ruhusa. [JKP](#).

It is up to the [school] master to give permission.

3310. Kambara anapotembea na "mpenda kula", "mpenda kula" anakula mavi mengi. [AL](#) 1608.

When the catfish goes walking with the Glutton-fish, the Glutton-fish will eat a lot of excrements.

The little ones get only the left-overs from the big ones.

3311. Kichwa kimoja hakivai kofia mbili. [AL](#),*vaa*; [AL](#) 1741.

A single head does not wear two hats.

One person should not be in charge of two offices at the same time. Later, the Arusha Declaration: "No TANU or government leader should receive two or more salaries ...[or] ... hold directorship in privately owned enterprises." (Part Five, section A., paragraphs 2 and 3)

3312. Kidole cha mkubwa kilimpatia mbuzi mimba. [AL](#) 1480.

The finger of the headman has made the goat pregnant,

The experience of a superior proves to be effective. [AL](#).

3313. Kifaranga hawezi kujaa chungu. [AL](#) 1588.

A young chicken cannot fill the pot.

An inferior usually cannot take charge.

3314. Kijacho na maji, cha mwenye mji. [SACL](#).498; [AL](#) 1558; [JKP](#).

What is brought along by the water belongs to the chief.

What comes with the water is appropriated by the chief.

"Flotsam and jetsam includes not only wood, but also ambergis." [JKP](#). Cf. #1141o.

3315. Kikubwa kibaya ni kidinda. [REK](#).

Greatness gone bad is a sore.

People in power being corrupt is a sore, it harms the whole community.

3316. Kila aingiapo simba mbuzi huchukulia. [JKP](#).

Wherever the lion enters it carries the goat away.

The lion always wins. The powerful person or ruler will collect taxes at will, or carry away your daughter. [JKP](#).

3317. Kila kundi na mkubwa wao. [NGU](#).

Every group has its own leader.

3318. Kila mamlaka mina allahi. [JKP](#).

Every authority originates from God.
Mina or *mimina*: pour out, pour, spill.

3319. Kila mmoja ni mfalme nyumbani mwake. [BM](#) 10.
Every person is a ruler at home.

3320. Kila mtu akae kwa cheo chake. [JKP](#).
Let every person stay in his or her rank.

3321. Kisichomfaa mkubwa ni mshipi. [AL](#) 1550, *Chenye hakienei*.
It is the belt that does not go well with the chief.
All authority is imperfect and therefore criticism comes easily.

3322. Kisigino hufuata mguu. [EM](#) k16.
The heel follows the foot.
A servant must follow wherever the master wants the servant to go

3323. Kivuli cha miti mingine hustwisha, cha mingine hukausha. [EM](#) k20.
The shade of some trees is healthy for the undergrowth, while that of others dries it up.
Some bosses favor the growth of the juniors, while other discourage them.

3324. Kivuli cha mvumo huwafunika walio mbali. [E](#).16. 31; [V](#).95; [KB](#).*fînika*; [KS](#).*kivuli*; [JKP](#); [SACK](#).191; 420.*jivuli*; [MS](#).31,*aliye*.

Vuli la mvumo humfunika alo mbali. [JKP](#).
The shadow of the *mvumo* [palm tree] provides shelter for those who are far away.
"A powerful person can provide protection far away.
Second meaning: A foolish father will not protect his own child but a distant friend." [JKP](#).
But also used in case of a farmer who produces food for many; or a teacher teaching many children.
Mvumo is the Deleb palm, Palmyra palm or the Borassus palm. It has a slightly bottle-shaped stem up to 60 feet tall, and is crowned with a head of large fan-shaped leaves.

Mti mkubwa unaota kivuli kikubwa. [NGU](#).
A big tree develops a big shadow. Cf. #324, #1430.

3325. Kobe haumi mguu wa chui. [AL](#) 1562.
The tortoise does not bite the leg of a leopard.
Revolt against authority is dangerous. Don't insult a strong man.

3326. Kondoo wawili hawawezi kunywa pamoja kwenye chungu kimoja. [EM](#) K21.
Two sheep cannot drink out of the same pot at the same time.
Their heads are too big. Only one leader can lead at the same time.

3327. Koti kwake ni mgongoni. [NGU](#).
The place of one's coat is on one's back.
Everything has its place.

3328. Kuagiza ni kuweza? [TS](#) 35/31.
Is giving orders the same as enabling?

3329. Kuku hali anakwenda akila ameisha hukumiwa afe. [AL](#) 1616.
Although the chicken is going on eating, it is already condemned to die.
Little people don't know what the ruling power has in mind for them.

3330. Kuku hashindani na kisu. [KB](#).125. [MP](#).226.1.
The chicken is no match for the knife.
It is the earthen pot against the iron pot. [MP](#).

Kuku ataweza kushindana na kisu? [KB](#).125.
Can a fowl fight a knife? Cf. #1424.

3331. Kuna chuma cha suwezi, hushindana na sukuo? [T](#).183.
Is there iron from Suez, that can fight the grindstone?
Of useless resistance against superior forces.

3332. Kwa kukaukani, maji visimani, hata mfalume, kiu kimuume. [JKP](#)
When the water in the wells dries up, even the king suffers from thirst.
"In time of dearth even the king loses his rights." [JKP](#).

3333. Kwa simba fisi huinama: ya simba fisi hula nyama. [RSP.74.](#)

For the lion the hyena bows [and so] the lion's food it eats.

3334. Kwenye vipofu mwenye chongo hutawala. [REK.](#)

Among the blind one-eye rules.

Kwa vipofu, mwenye chongo huwa [ni] mfalme. [NGU.](#)

Among the blind one-eye is king.

3335. Macho ya vyura hayamzuii mteka maji kuteka. [EM](#) m1.

The toad's eyes don't stop a water-drawer from drawing water.

Words and warnings of small people don't stop big people to do their things. Cf. # 1417a.

3336. Mafurika hutengeneza mkirizi wake wenyewe. [NGU.](#)

The floods make their own path.

3337. Mali ya mjomba si ya mpwa. [AL](#) 1115.

The property of the (maternal) uncle is not going to the nephew/niece.

Don't count on help from others.

3338. Mamlaka yanamsahau mfalme anayekufa. [NGU.](#)

The dying king forgets his authority.

Mamlaka: authority, right to ownership; property.

3339. Mbiu ya mgambo ikilia ina jambo. [F.23.27](#); [T.252](#); [H.59](#); [J.](#), *mbiu*; [SACL.527](#); [KS](#), *mbiu*.

When the buffalo-horn sounds, there is something of importance. [and often something is wrong].

Mbiu ya mgambo: formerly a buffalo-horn was blown to call people to hear a proclamation or announcement. [J.](#)

3340. Mbwa anakufa, kengele inabaki. [AL](#) 1470.

The dog dies, but its bell remains.

Power is transferred to the successor, another hunting dog will carry the bell. [AL.](#)

3341. Mbwa hushikwa mdomo na mwenyewe. [REK.](#)

The mouth of a dog is held tight by the owner.

A dog does what its owner wants.

3342. Mbwa wa jumbe ni jumbe. [AL](#) 1533.

The dog of the chief is also a chief.

Receives the honor of a chief: respect, food.

Jumbe, or *mwami*: chief.

3343. Meno yasipite midomo. [AL](#) 691; [AL](#), *mdomo/shinda*.

Teeth should not exceed the lips.

One should stay within one's rank. [AL.](#)

3344. Mfalme akifanya biashara, raia watakuwa maskini. [NGU.](#)

If the king goes into business the citizens will become poor.

3345. Mfalme hasifiwi kwao. [NGU.](#)

A king is not honored in his own country.

Mfalme: king, chief

3346. Mgomba mfupi ndio ukatwako majani. [KB.182.](#)

From a short banana tree one cuts the leaves.

It is usually the little and meek person who carries the burden.

3347. Milio ya vyura haiwazuii ng'ombe kunywa maji. [REK.](#)

The cries of the frogs do not stop the cows from drinking water.

Who is bothered by the cries of a frog?

Mindful of a Native American proverb: A frog does not drink up the pond in which it lives. Cf.#3355.

3348. Mja kwako akusikilize. [REK.](#)

A person who is with you should listen to you.

3349. Mjumbe hauawi. [F.26.64](#); [T.267](#); [A.73](#); [KB.184](#); [AL](#) 1513; [MARA](#) 3.

A messenger must not be slain.

The messenger is innocent and must be respected. [KB](#); [AL.](#)

3350. Mkizima moto mtaota nini? [AL](#) 1464; [AL](#) zima.

If you extinguish the fire, what will warm you?

Undermining authority is always harmful.

3351. Mkoba haungeharibika hungetembea na furushi mkononi. [AL](#) 1469.

If your shoulder bag were not broken you would not walk with a bundle in your hand.

The inferiors suffer when their chiefs are becoming worthless.

3352. Mkono wa serikali ni mrefu. [REK](#).

The arm of the government is long. Cf. #1411.

3353. Mkubwa kakupita. [NGU](#).

The leader is greater than you.

3354. Mkuu yu juu. [RSP](#).27.

The great one is on top.

A powerful man always wins. [RSP](#).

The only Great One at the top is God. [MM](#).

3355. Mlio wa chura utamdthurisha nani? [JKP](#).

The cry of the frog, whom will it harm?

"The frog is considered a funny, defenseless animal, a symbol for a cuckolded man." [JKP](#). Cf #1409.

3356. Mnyonge kupata haki ni mwenye nguvu kupenda. [T](#).298; [MS](#).46; [V](#).76; [SACL](#).263, 579.

The poor's right depends on the liking of the powerful.

Mnyonge hupata haki na mwenye nguvu kutaka. [NS](#).9.

A poor person usually receives rights as a gift, but the powerful just takes them.

Power is stronger than right and money is all-powerful. [NS](#).

3357. Moto ni mtumishi mwema, lakini bwana mbaya. [NGU](#).

Fire is a good servant, but a bad master.

3358. Mpishe mwenye nguvu apite. [NGU](#).

Let the strong man pass by.

3359. Mti wa kimo chako hauwezi kukupa kivuli. [EM](#) m31.

A tree of your height cannot shade you.

A person with the same ability as yourself cannot help you in matters which require greater ability than you have. [EM](#).

3360. Mtinda nywele kichwani. [TS](#) 69/3.

The one who cuts the hair on the head.

This is said of chiefs: they don't know the day they will be dismissed.

When someone tresses the hair of somebody, who will not know what kind of hairdo he or she will get? [TS](#).

3361. Mtoto akipanda juu ya mti, chini yuko mkubwa. [AL](#) 1587.

If a child climbs in a tree, there is an adult below.

One who is protected will take risks.

3362. Mtu mmoja havezi kutumikia mabwana wawili. [NGU](#).

A person cannot serve two masters.

3363. Mtumbwi uheshimu maji na maji yaheshimu mtumbwi. [KB](#).205.

May the dugout canoe respect the water, and the water respect the canoe.

About the mutual respect of employer and employee, superior and inferior. Cf. #1233.

3364. Mtumwa huthamini cha bwana wake. [REK](#).

A slave values his master's goods.

He takes care of them.

Thamini: to value something, to put a price on it. Cf. #214.

3365. Muko ndani ya koko, vishindo vya mwenye nyumba. [MP](#).303.15.

You are still in the bush: triumph of the mistress of the house.

Freely: "Concubine: the first lady always conquers." [MP](#).

The first wife in a household is always the most powerful.

Vishindo: shocks; *Vigelegele*: shouts of triumph; *ushindi*: victory.

3366. Mungu tusalimu kodi, mayumba hayana vitu. [JKP](#).

May God preserve us from taxes; even the big houses [the rich families] have nothing left.

3367. Mwamba ukitoka nyumba, makombamoyo yanasambaa. [AL](#) 1457.

If the ridge pole leaves the roof, the other poles fall aside.

Without a chief there is disorder and failures. [AL](#).

Kombamoyo or *mwamba*: roof pole.

3368. Mwenye kutawala hawezi kulala. [RSP](#).102.

A ruler cannot sleep.

3369. Mwindi [naye] huwindwa. [NGU](#).

The hunter also is hunted.

3370. Mwingwana hasukumwi. [NGU](#).

A gentleman is not pushed.

He moves freely.

3371. Mwingwana hatupi nguo chakavu. [AL](#) 7.

A free person does not abandon an old piece of clothing.

One does not easily discard an object one is used to. It is hard to abandon customs, habits, pleasures.

3372. Nazi haishindani na jiwe. [MARA](#).58; [EM](#) N1.

A coconut cannot compete with a stone.

"A junior cannot beat a senior." [EM](#).

Jiwe: stone; here, a person in authority. Cf. #1413, #1441, #1442.

3373. Ndege tele katika mti, mwenye midomo mekundu ndiye mkubwa. [AL](#) 679.

There are many birds in the tree, but the chief is the one with a red beak.

3374. Nikiwa kwangu mfalme. [NGU](#).

If I were at home, I would be a king.

3375. Nyumba kwa kuwa na nguvu, lazima iwe na mwamba. [KB](#).254.

A house in order to be solid needs a ridge pole. In order to keep a family or a society strong it needs a head.

3376. Nywele huchukuliwa na kichwa. [MARA](#) 2.

Hair is carried by the head.

Hair on the head is hair. Hair needs the head in order to be hair.

Used for people, who depend on others being in order to exist or to do a job. Dependency.

Malaika: eyelashes, hair on arm or hand.

Masharubu: mustache.

Ndevu: beard

Nywele: hair on the head. Hair on other parts of the body is not called *nywele*.

3377. Nywele ziliheshimu uso, uso ukaziheshimu nywele. [AL](#) 1185.

Hair respects the face, and the face respects the hair.

Superior and inferior respect each other, etc.

3378. Nywele ziliota zikaogopa uso. [AL](#) 1569.

The hair has grown and was afraid of the face.

The inferior must stay within certain limits.

3379. Nzige hawana mfalme. [NGU](#).

Locusts have no chief.

Nobody controls them from doing harm.

3380. Ogopa anayekutuma, usiogope mpokea ujumbe. [EM](#) o2.

Fear the one who sends you and not the one who receives the message.

The one who sends you has more authority over you.

3381. Pa mndewa usishindane napo. [EM](#) p2.

In the headman's domain you should not be a challenge.

You should observe the regulations of that place.

Mndewa: headman or clan leader.

3382. Pa shoka hapaingii kisu. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2.

At the place of an axe, a knife does not enter.

If an axe is needed, a knife is useless [to split a coconut, to cut a tree].

Use adequate tools or means.

3383. Paa akitoka shimoni, haya ya mchimbaji. [AL](#) 391.

If the antelope escapes from the hole, blame is the digger's. Imperfect work is offensive to the headman in charge. [AL](#)

The workman is responsible for his work.

3384. Pahali pa mtu kufawa ni mtu aliye juu yake. [T](#).447; [SACL](#).212.

The place for a person to get good is [with] the boss. [T](#).

Where can help for you come from, if not from above you? [SACL](#).

Stand by your boss and you'll profit.

3385. Paka akiondoka, panya hutawala. [F](#).41.4; [H](#).93; [J](#)., *panya*; [T](#).448; [V](#).3; [A](#).139; [L](#).84; [B](#).2.17; [RECH](#). 428; [CM](#).53; [KB](#).257; [SWA](#).57; [MARA](#) 3.

When the cat goes away, mice reign.

Paka akitoka, panya wakaruka. [RSP](#).110.

If the cat leaves, the rats jump.

A cruel ruler is better than no ruler. [RSP](#).

Paka wakiondokea, panya tatumilikia. [RSP](#).50.

When the cats are gone, the rats will rule us.

Young ambitious leaders are no better than the old traditional chiefs and elders. [RSP](#).

Tatumilikia for *watumilikia* or *watumaliki*. [MM](#).

3386. Safari ya mabwana, arusi ya maboi. [KB](#).271.

The journey of the masters is like a wedding feast for the servants.

3387. Samaki anaogelea majini nayo maji yatamla. [AL](#) 1573.

The fish that swims in water will be eaten by the water.

A flatterer risks being exploited. [AL](#).

3388. Samaki huanza kuoza kichwani. [JK](#).122.

A fish begins to rot at its head.

When leaders are corrupt, the whole community will become corrupt. [JK](#)., [MP](#).

Samaki inaoza kichwani. [MP](#).226. 12.

The fish rots at the head.

3389. Serikali ina mkono mrefu. [RECH](#).471.

The government has a long arm.

There is no running away from it. Cf. #1411.

3390. Sheria haijui nguvu. [NGU](#).

The law does not know force.

The law is impartial.

3391. Sheria haina kwao. [KS](#), *sheria*; [NGU](#).

The law has no home.

The law does not belong to any special group of people.

3392. Sheria iishapo dhuluma huanza. [NGU](#).

Where law ends, violence starts,

Dhuluma: injustice, fraud, oppression, violence

3393. Sheria na chuma hazina huruma. [RSP](#).57.

The law and iron [weapons] have no mercy. [RSP](#).

3394. Sheria ni msumeno hukata huku na huku. [KS](#), *msumeno*.

The law is like a saw, it cuts everywhere. Cf. #1431.

3395. Shida kwa aliyetawala kuitika unyofu. [KB](#).285.

It is difficult for one who has ruled to submit to a former subordinate. [KB](#).

It is difficult for a person in power to correspond to honesty. [MM](#).

3396. Si nyumba, si nchi, haiwezi kukaa bila kiongozi. [NGU](#).

House nor country can stay without a leader.

3397. Sikio halipitii kichwa. [F](#).44.8; [SWA](#).p.93; [KB](#). 278; [F](#)., *halipwani*; [AL](#) 1564.

The ear does not surpass the head.
One ought to know one's place.
But also : Use your head, do not believe all you hear. The egg is not more clever than the hen. [V.83](#).
The inferior does not surpass his superior. [KB](#).

Masikio yasipite kichwa. [AL](#) 1565.
The ears should not surpass the head.

Shingo haipiti kichwa. [AL](#) 1566.
The neck does not surpass the head.

Bega halipiti kichwa. [AL](#) 1567.
The shoulder does not surpass the head. Cf. #1339.

3398. Simba alaye nyama ya mtu hana nguvu. [NGU](#).
A man-eating lion has no strength.
A sick or disabled lion goes for easy prey. Some people make their fortune off weak and old people.
Cf. #1852

3399. Simba mla watu akiliwa, huwani? [T.488](#); [KA](#).
When a man-eating lion is devoured, what matters it?
Why be amazed if an evil person falls down.

3400. Sindano huduru dirani. [JKP](#).
The needle turns on the point of the compass.
The needle of the compass determinates the direction of the ship. [JKP](#).
The husband decides in a marriage.
Dira (compass) also means female genital, the needle being the male symbol.
Duru: turn.

3401. Sungura, bakia pembeni; tembo mwenye shindo apite. [AL](#) 698.
Hare, stay in the corner, let the elephant in heavy stride, pass by.
Wise people let the ambitious people pass.

3402. Tarumbeta ni mwenyewe. [REK](#).
The trumpet is the master.
The trumpet is dominating and listened to.

3403. Toa amri, nawe upokee amri. [EM](#) t13.
Give orders and receive orders.
What you do to others, you should be ready to accept it, when it is done to you.

3404. Tunda lililokatanzwa [linalokatanzwa] ni tamu. [NGU](#).
The forbidden fruit is sweet.

3405. Ubeberu - kama shetani. [NGU](#).
Exploitation is work of the devil.
Ubeberu or *ubepari*: the state of exploitation

3406. Ubepari ni unyama. [KS](#).
Exploitation is beastly.

3407. Ukiipata itumie: ukikosa ijutie. [NS](#).15.
If you get it, use it; if you miss it, regret it.
This is said of people who become arrogant when in power; when they lose their power they'll get their due.

Ukipata kitumie, ukikosa jishukurie. [SAM](#).24.5.
If you get it, use it; if you lack it, be patient in it.
Take the good with the evil.

3408. Ukitaka kusafiri, bwana-mwitu umkiri. [RSP](#).135.
If you want to travel, pay due respect to the master of the wilderness. [RSP](#).

3409. Ukiwa mkubwa jisahihisha mwenyewe. [NGU](#).
If you are an important person, scrutinize your own behavior.

3410. Ukubwa ni jaa. [MARA](#).71.
Greatness is like a rubbish hole.

Mkubwa jaa. [AL](#) 58.

A great person [is like a] rubbish hole.

A person in charge is like a garbage heap, much abuse, blame and accusation is thrown upon that person. This is said to remind people in power that *ukubwa si raha*, being in power, is not comfort. The rich people are wasteful. [AL](#).

Uongozi ni jalala. [EM](#) u23.

Leadership is like a rubbish pit.

Leadership is the place where rubbish is thrown; that is, all blames, insults and evils concerning an organization or business are levelled against its leader. [EM](#).

3411. Ukuu si pembe kama mtu ataota. [AL](#) 687.

Greatness is not a horn that grows on the head of somebody.

It must be earned.

3412. Usigombeze upepo; njiwa aliyetandika vibaya. [AL](#) 1559.

Don't quarrel with the wind; it's the pigeon that landed badly.

It is dangerous to contest people in authority. [AL](#).

3413. Usile kwa sahani ukasahau bunguu. [KA](#).

Don't eat from a plate, and forgetting [that you were eating from] the earthen bowl. Cf. #925; #1661; #1438

3414. Usiogope mkubwa, ogopa ukubwa. [NGU](#).

Don't be afraid of the person in charge, but fear to be in charge.

Ukubwa: greatness, power, grandeur, celebrity, renown.

3415. Usione simba kapigwa na mvua. [KA](#).

Don't ignore a lion that has been caught in the rain.

The lion might shiver and look like a wet old dog, but it is still very dangerous. Don't look down on people who seemingly lost their power. Cf. #1721; #1719.

3416. Usisahau ubaharia kwa sababu ya unahodha. [F](#).49. 39; [SWA](#).28; [H](#).107; [JK](#).140.

Usisahau ubaharia kwa kupata unahodha. [FSM](#).195.

Do not forget the lot of the seaman because [you are now] a captain.

Do not despise those who are beneath you. Cf.925.

3417. Utakwenda utarudi. [AL](#) 1551.

You'll go, [but] you'll come back.

Independence has a catch.

3418. Utii ni bora kuliko kafara. [NGU](#).

Obedience is better than a sacrifice.

Kafara: offering, a charm, a sacrifice.

3419. Viovu vya bwana si vyema vya juma kitwana. [SAM](#). 26.1; [MS](#).190.

The bad things of the master are not the good things of Juma, the servant.

Bad people in power often hinder good people doing good. [SAM](#).

But what about: Powerful people get away with the bad things they do, but not Juma Kitwana, the little person?

3420. Wakubwa humeza wadogo. [KB](#).341.

The big ones eat the small ones.

3421. Wakubwa wadogo wana taabu. [EM](#) w10.

Big little people have difficult times.

If a small or little persons are put in charge they will have difficulties.

3422. Wali unaifokea sahani. [AL](#) 696.

The cooked rice is angry with the plate.

The subordinate is always angry in vain with his superior.

Foka: blurt out a rush of words, as in anger.

3423. Watu humcha mfalme anayetawala. [NGU](#).

People respect the ruling king.

3424. Watu wawili wanagombiana usultani. [AL](#) 1473.

Two people dispute the job of the chief.

One person only will be in power.

This is also a riddle. The answer is *miguu*: the legs.

3425. Wewe jiwe mimi nazi. [L.107](#); [Y.107](#).

You are the stone, I am the coconut.

I am helpless, you have the power to crush me. Cf. #1421, #1442.

3426. Wewe kisu, mimi nyama. [NS.11](#); [WIKON.227i](#) [SWA.35](#); [V.107](#), *sisi nyama*; [SACL.404](#).

You are the knife, I am the meat. [Or: we are the meat]

It is your pleasure, I am at your mercy. Complaining is useless, you are too powerful.

Wewe kisu, mimi kipini. [V.107](#); [SACL.404](#): [AL](#) 1052.

You are the knife, I am the handle. You are the hammer, I am the anvil. [V](#).

Everyone must cooperate to the measure of one's ability. [AL](#). Cf. #1421, #1441.

3427. Yai litakuwa juu, la mamaye kuku kuu. [RSP.36](#).

The egg will be on top of its mother, the big hen.

The next generation will try and teach their elders. [RSP](#).

Yai lina[m]shauria kuku. [AL](#), *yai*.

The egg advising the hen.

An inferior giving advice to a superior.

3428. Yenu hunuka, yetu hainuki. [REK](#).

Yours smells bad, ours does not smell evil.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Misfortune

3429. Afadhali kuvumilia joto kuliko msiba. [SAM](#).1.5.

It is better to suffer from the heat than from calamity.

3430. Afadhali nusu ajali kuliko ajali kamili. [NGU](#).

Half a mishap is better than a whole one.

A minor accident is better than a big one.

3431. Ajali haibishi hodi. [EM](#).8.3.

An accident does not ask for permission to enter.

3432. Ajali ina sababu. [SAM](#).2.8.

An accident has its cause.

Many accidents can be avoided. Cf. #766.

3433. Ajaye ndiye aondokaye. [FSM](#).2.

A person arrives and will go away.

What comes to you will also go away from you, be it good or evil.

3434. Akosaye [ukikosa] la mama hata la mbwa huamwa. [KA](#).

If a child has no [If you lack] mother's breast to suck, even a dog's tit will do.

If we cannot get the best, second best will do.

3435. Aliangukiwa na mti. [AL](#), *angua*.

A tree has fallen upon someone.

A misfortune fell upon that person. cf. #1446, #1448, #1449.

3436. Aliyeanguka mwanuko wa mende hana bao. [EM](#).10.8.

One who has fallen cockroach-style has no chance.

To fall that way is to fall on the back with legs up and head down. This means to fall so badly that help is needed in order to come up.

[EM](#).

Kuanguka mwanuko wa mende mdani ya chupa ya mafuta. [AL](#), *mweleka*; AL 1768.

Falling like a cockroach in a bottle of oil.

A fall from which one cannot recover.

Mweleka wa mende kuanguka chali. [AL](#) 1767.

The wrestling of the cockroach falling on its back.

Mweleka wa mende chalichali: mpaka kuokotewa na mdomo wa kuku. [AL](#) 1769.

The struggle of the cockroach on its back: until it be picked up by the beak of a chicken.

3437. Aliyekutweka ndiye atakayekutua. [SM](#); [KA](#).

The one who put that load on you is the one who can unload you.

This is said when someone is complaining about misfortune and hardship, after that person self is the cause of trouble.

Tweka: put a load on someone or something.

Tua: unload, put down.

3438. Amekalia mguu wa kausha. [KS](#)., *kausha*.

That person sat at the foot of Mr. Trouble.

A student might say, e.g., when the teacher refuses to student to go to the hospital, "*Mwalimu amenikalia mguu wa kausha*": The teacher put me down at the foot of Mr. Kausha.

Kausha: a person in misfortune, trouble.

3439. Amekipanda chombo mwamba. [SACL.728](#).

So and So has thrown the boat on a cliff.

Has lost everything.

Chombo amekipanza mwamba. [T.54](#); [J.](#), *Panda mwambani*.

So and So has run the boat on a rock.

3440. Amekula ngano. [V.131](#); [SACL.678](#).

So and So has eaten wheat.

Muslims believe that the "forbidden fruit" was wheat. [T](#); [SACL](#).

Amekula ngano, imemtoa peponi. [T.23](#).

So and So has eaten wheat, it turned that person out of Paradise.

Amekula tunda la shetani. [MA.50](#).

So and So has eaten Satan's fruit.

Amegusa mwa munda. [T.21](#).

So and So has touched the garden fruits.

Has eaten the forbidden fruit and lost paradise.

3441. Amekwenda mrisi. [KS.](#), *mrisi*.

That person went bankrupt.

Did not succeed.

3442. Ametubwikia kisimani. [T.28](#).

That person has fallen into the well.

Has got into a plight where help is needed. [T](#). Cf. #665.

3443. Anayechomwa na mwiba ndiye anasikia uchungu. [NGU](#).

The one who is pierced by a thorn is the one who feels the pain.

3444. Apatikanaye na mkasa hupatikana na visa. [EM.13](#).

A person who gets involved in an accident gets involved in tales.

Everyone will try to explain how and why it happened and blame the person. Cf. #6.

3445. Asemavyo kabla hajaswa siyvo asemavyo anaswapo. [REK](#).

The way a person speaks before being caught is not the same way that person speaks after being caught.

3446. Ashukaye hushushwa. [EM.14.17](#).

A person coming down is helped.

When people are going downhill, everyone will give them a push. [EM](#).

3447. Asiye na mengi ana machache. [E.4.38](#).

One who has not many, has a few.

About troubles and imperfections. Nobody is perfect. [MM](#).

Asiye hili ana lile. [FSM.21](#).

A person who has not this has that.

Kila mmoja ana chake. [FSM.21](#).

Everybody has his own [defect or possession].

3448. Asiyelijua chozi amtazame aliaye. [TAA 1](#).

One who does not know tears [suffering] should look at the one who weeps.

Before starting a major enterprise consider the consequences, or consult those who have.

3449. Azibaye masikio kwa lio la maskini, mungu hatamsikia aliapo kiyamani. [JKP](#).

If you block your ears (refuse to listen) from the crying of the poor, God will not hear you when you cry on the day of resurrection.

3450. Baa haipati mmoja. [MM](#).

Misfortune does not get [only] one.

If one person of the homestead is in trouble or has done bad things, all the others suffer too.

3451. Baa ikija mtu awe utuvu. [MA.81](#).

When a mishap comes about, let the person be at ease.

3452. Baa pia hutokana na vijana na watumwa. [T.40](#); [SACL.82](#), *baa*.
All kinds of nuisance come about through children and slaves.

3453. Baada ya dhiki, faraja. [F.5.1](#); [H.96](#); [B.1.12](#); [T.41](#); [MARA.9](#); [V.46](#); [KS](#), *dhiki*.
After hardship, relief.
Faraja also *faraji*. [V](#); [H](#); [SACL.82](#),1042.

3454. Barabara [ndefu] haikosi makona [mipindo]. [NGU](#); [AL](#) 1644.
There is no [long] road without corners [curves].
Nothing is ever perfect

3455. Baridi ya alfajiri lambalamba. [FSM.24](#).
The coolness of the dawn keeps licking.
Every day is a new beginning.
It is commonly understood that the morning dew cleans grass, trees, everything.
Used for almost any situation: misfortune, worries, disputes. Cf. #1505.

3456. Bora kufa macho kuliko moyo. [NGU](#).
It is better that the eyes die than the heart.

3457. Bora kupigwa dhoruba ya dhahiri kuliko ya siri. [SAM.5.6](#); [MS.181](#).
It's better to be hit by a hurricane in the open than in private.
If a calamity befalls you in the open [in public] help may be available. A person accused openly can defend himself.

3458. Chenye kukufukuza hakijasimama, wewe usisimame mbele. [AL](#) 1847.
The danger you flee is not yet standing, so you should not stand up the first.
The early signs should not force you to give up. [AL](#). .

3459. Chura akianguka na mtoto chini si mbALI. [AL.1845](#).
If a frog with young falls, it is not far it falls.
Don't despair when misfortune falls upon you. Don't exaggerate what happened.

3460. Dawa ya maudhi ni sahai. [REK](#).
The remedy of grief is forgetfulness.

3461. Fedheha za mwenziwo usizifurahikie. [MA.114](#).
Don't enjoy the disgrace of your fellow being.

3462. Furaha ya mwenye meno, mwenye mapengo hachekei. [MP.83.10](#), *hacheke*.
What is joy for someone who has teeth is not a joy for one who has gaps in his mouth.
Laughter is for the person who has teeth; how shall one laugh who has none. *Racial proverbs*, p. 586.131.

3463. Gae huwa chombo wakatiwe. [JK.135](#); [AL](#) 1183,
A potsherd becomes a vessel in time.
This proverb has a surface meaning which does not seem true: Potsherds remain potsherds. But the applicative meaning is that a young boy who may not seem to be very promising may yet grow up to become a useful member of society. [JK](#).
No one is hopeless if given the right opportunity. [MM](#).
Even old people are still useful. [AL](#). Cf. #1467.

3464. Giza likizidi, kucha kunakaribia. [EM](#) g4.
When darkness becomes more intense, dawn is near. Cf. #1495, #1497.

3465. Haiko kule afua. [JKP](#).
Relief is not far away.
"The darkest hour is shortly before dawn." [JKP](#).
afua: deliverance from calamity, disaster or ill luck.

3466. Hakuna dhiki wa dhiki. [ZO](#) p40.
There is no extreme distress. Cf. #1635.

3467. Hakuna furaha bila uchungu. [KB.57](#); [AL](#) 1640.
There is no joy without pain.
No rose without thorns.

3468. Hakuna marefu yasiyokuwa [yasiyo] na ncha. [H.36](#); [CM.44](#); [F10.5](#); [A](#) 207.

Hakuna refu lisilo ncha [mwisho] [T.78](#); [MARA.17](#), *lisilo na ncha*; [SACL.666](#); [V.,ncha](#); [MS](#) 103, *mwisho*; [FSM](#) 42, *kirefu*.
There is nothing so long that it has no end.

Hapana neno lisilo na upeo [ukomo]. [SACL](#).965 and 945
There is no word [story, matter] that has no end.

Hakuna kubwa lisilo ukomo [or, mwisho]. [T](#).75; [A](#).207.
There is no matter so big as to have no end.

Hakuna la kudumu, kiumbe uwe na sabura. [MA](#).122.
There is nothing that lasts, mortal, just have patience.

Hakuna lisilo na mwisho. [EM](#) h7.
There is nothing that does not end.

3469. Hakuna msiba usio [kuwa] na mwenziwe. [RECH](#).358; [MS](#).149; [CM](#).42; [A](#).206; [T](#).77; [SACL](#).595, 648; [J](#).,*enda*; [F](#).20.7 has *hapana*; [V](#).90; [KB](#).62, *mwenzake, sibu*; [KS](#),*msibu*.
There is no misfortune which has no companion.
A misfortune seldom comes alone. Cf. #352.

3470. Hakuna shina lisilo na ncha. [NGU](#).
There is no pole without an end. Cf. #1461.

3471. Hakuna waridi bila miiba. [NGU](#).
There is no rose without thorns.

3472. Hapana bahari isiyo mawimbi. [JKP](#).
There is no sea without waves.

Hapana maji yasiyo [na] mawimbi. [J](#): [CM](#).44; [V](#)., *maji*.
There is no water without waves.

3473. Heri nusu (ya) shari kuliko shari kamili. [H](#).43; [F](#).11.17; [SWA](#).36; [B](#).2.29; [L](#).25; [ED](#).91, *kama for kuliko*; [MS](#).146, 153; [FSM](#).49, *nusu shari*; [MARA](#) 2.

Kheri nusu shari kama shari kamili. [MARA](#) 3.
Better the half of an evil than the whole evil.
Better a little trouble than a disaster.
Sometimes used in lending. By refusing to lend to someone, a person might get a dirty face, but it is better than having all the trouble when the borrower is not going to give back.
Evil of refusal is less than the evil of loss.
Facing several evil things, try to choose the least evil. [MARA](#).
Shari, jambo baya: something bad. Cf. #777.

3474. Heri ya kuvujiwa kuliko kunyeshewa. [FSM](#).51.
It's better to be in a leaking house than to be rained upon. Cf. #1456, #1473, #1464.

3475. Heri ya mrama kuliko kuzama. [AL](#) 1880; [KS](#), *mrama*.
The pitching of the boat is better than capsizing. Cf. #777.

3476. Heri ya mvua kuliko umande. [FSM](#).50.
Rain is better than the dew.
Walking in the rain one can protect oneself, but walking in the dew it is impossible to escape the wet grass.
Used also with a nagging spouse when it is impossible to escape the nagging.

3477. Huyu ni chimvi amemchimba mama yake. [J](#)., *chimba*.
This is an unlucky child, it has dug [a grave for] its mother. [J](#).
Chimvi: a person of ill omen, e.g., a child born with front teeth or other peculiarities; a child at whose birth the mother dies, etc. [J](#).

3478. Iizwayo ndiyo ipendayo. [T](#).109; [SACL](#).310; [JKP](#); [AL](#) 1334.
Often what one rejects is what one likes. [SACL](#).
What you have regarded as a misfortune, you often find to be a blessing in disguise. [T](#).
"The one who really loves us is often the one we reject. How often shall we find that the one thing we want most [now] is what we once rejected." [JKP](#).
Iza for kataa: to reject, in poetical Swahili. [T](#). and Lamu dialect. [MM](#).

3479. Ipo siku ya upepo itakuleta karibu nami. [REK](#).
Perhaps a windy day will bring you close to me.
Keep hoping.

3480. Jungu bovu limekuwa magae. [T.119](#); [F.13.9](#); [JKP](#); [V.102](#), *chungu kibovu kimekuwa magari*; [AL](#) 1187.

The deteriorated pot has become potsherds. A bad pot went to pieces.

Said of a bad child who grows up to no good. [JKP](#).

Somebody already in difficulties and gets in greater ones.

Like the flounder out of the frying pan and into the fire.

3481. Kenda karibu ya kumi. [T.137](#); [E.13.9](#); [V.51](#); [KS](#), *kenda*.

Nine is close to ten.

Words of comfort: don't give up now. Patience wins the day. [V](#).

3482. Kenge aliuma sababu ya pumzi. [AL](#) 1851.

The monitor salamander bit because it was out of breath.

In desperation a person hopes that an uncertain solution will appear. [AL](#).

3483. Kidagaa kimemwozea. [NGU](#).

The small sardine has turned bad for So and So.

One's small enterprise has gone bad.

3484. Kidonda cha mwenzako unakisafisha na gunzi, chako unatafuta pamba. [AL](#) 1217.

The sore of your companion you clean with a corn cob, but for your own you find cotton.

Lack of concern for others.

3485. Kila likuepukalo mja, lina heri nawe. [SM](#); [KA](#).

Whatever you lack, human being, it is for your happiness.

God will give you happiness.

3486. Kila mchukuzi husifu mzigo wake. [MARA](#) 2. [KA](#) *mzigowe*.

Every carrier understands his or her own load.

Every person knows what is bothersome. Cf. #512; #731

3487. Kila msiba na mwenziwe. [NGU](#).

Every misfortune has a companion.

Misfortunes never come singly.

3488. Kila ncha ina mwisho. [NGU](#).

Every point has an end.

Someone made fun of. Cf.# 1461.

3489. Kila roho na visa vyake. [AL](#), *kisa*; [AL](#) 1786.

Every soul has its own preoccupations. Cf. #1452

3490. Kila wingu na kikomo chake. [NGU](#).

Every cloud has its end.

Kikomo: stop, cessation.

3491. Kiliacho pa, kijutie. [SM](#).

Whatever cries *pa*, must be sympathised with.

One should be sorry for whatever is in danger of being destroyed, even if it is not our own.

Pa: the noise of a china cup falling and breaking on a hard floor.

3492. Kilio kwa mwenyewe. [AL](#) 1210.

One weeps for those who are bereft.

One does not weep for oneself or hypocritically.

3493. Kipya kinyemi kingawa kidonda. [J](#), *kinyemi*; [T.155](#); [H.52](#); [F.15.26](#); [LOBO](#).87; [A.186](#); [NS.29](#); [V.105](#), *kitu kipya*;

[MS.160](#), *ingawa*; [MARA](#) 2+3 *ingawa + japo donda*; [JKP](#).

A novelty has its charm, even though it be a sore.

A new thing is a source of joy even if it is a sore. A new thing is attractive. [JKP](#).

Kipya kinyemi kingawa kiovu. [SACL](#).389.

A new thing pleases, even if bad.

New songs are eagerly sung. [V](#).

3494. Kiwanja mtu mwona taabu : jua yake, mvua yake. [AL](#) 1381.

The courtyard is like a person, suffering from sun and rain.

Kiwanja mwona taabu, kila mtu kukikanyaga. [AL](#) 1382.

The courtyard is like a suffering person, every one steps on it.

3495. Kiwi heri kukipata kama kukikosa kamwe. [T.163](#); [KB.](#), *kamwe*; [SACL.324](#).
It is better to accept a little evil than to miss it entirely.

Kiwi kiole dawamu kama kukikosa kamwe. [T.163](#); [SACL.706](#); [KA](#); [AL](#), *ola*.
Having a bad thing continually is better than not having anything at all.
A very old proverb.
Dawamu or *daima*: always.
Kiwi or *kibaya*: something bad.
Kiole or *tazama*: look at.
Kama or *kuliko*: than (comparative),

3496. Kizito huonjwa. [TAA](#) 27.
Hardship is suffered by all.

3497. Kosa la ndugu halifiki kwenye mfupa. [NGU](#).
The mistake of a close relative does not reach the bone.
It does not hurt too deeply.

3498. Kuanguka mweleka wa maziwa: hayaamki. [AL](#), *eleka*; [AL](#) 1807.
The fallen breasts of the aging woman don't come up again.
Old age is a fact that cannot be cured. Irreparable damage. Bankrupt.

Anaanguka mwereka wa maziwa. [AL](#) 1807.
That person has gone down like the breast of an old woman. Cf. #1446.

3499. Kuku mnyonge hasemi, machungu yake rohoni tu. [MP](#). 302.4; [AL](#).1831.
A feeble chicken does not speak, it keeps its grief deep in its heart.
Suffering is often mute; what good does it to talk about it? Cf.1387.

3500. Kunde uje, mwamba haukaliliwi. [V.](#), *unda*.
Repair your ship and come back, one does not stay at a reef.
One pays no further attention to the cliff that overturned the boat.
Kunde for *ki-unde*: repair it [ship].

3501. Kupotea kwa ufunguo baraka ya sanduku. [AL](#) 1722.
The loss of the key is a blessing for the trunk. Cf. #1473.

3502. Kurudi nyuma si (siyo) kushindwa. [NGU](#).
To retreat is not the same as giving up.

3503. Kushindwa hufundisha kufanikiwa. [NGU](#).
To be defeated teaches how to succeed.

3504. Kusi huleta mvua. [NGU](#).
The south monsoon brings the rain.
Kusini: south.

Kusi: south monsoon wind, prevailing from May to October.
Probably a very ancient word dating from the early days of trading on the east coast and probably from the same source as Cush, in Hebrew mythology the first son of Ham, and used for the peoples regarded as his descendants, and the land in which they lived, i.e. it was used for Ethiopia, the whole country south of Egypt. In Assyrian this word was *kusu* and in Egyptian, *kos*. The earliest travellers to the regions south of Egypt would probably regard themselves as going to and into Kush, Kos, Kusu, etc. Johnson, *kusi*.

Kussi mja na mtama, kaskazi mja na sui (samaki). [Krapf](#), *kussi*.
With the south wind the boats carry corn to Arabia, but the North winds they carry [dry] fish from Arabia to the Swahili coast.
[Krapf](#).

3505. Kuvuja na kuchuruza hakulingani na wazi. [T.203](#); [SACL.918, 475](#); [ED](#) 24.
Leaking and trickling are not to be compared to the wide open.
Better a leaky roof than none. Do not despise such shelters as you have from the attacks of slanderers, or the inroads of misfortune. [T](#). Cf. #681.

3506. Kuvumbua dawa ya nyogolo, ukiisha kuwa mapengo. [AL](#) 1771.
You discover a cure for toothache when you are left with gaps.
Nyogolo (Maniema dialect), *maumivu ya meno* (Standard Swahili): toothache.

3507. Kwale aliyelala na njaa kichwa chake ni kizuio cha umande. [TS](#) 72/11.
The head of the partridge that sleeps with hunger blocks the dew.

On account of hunger, the partridge is ready to face greater hardship.

3508. La kuvunda halina ubani. [F.20.2](#); [H.58](#); [MARA](#) 10, *cha kuvunja*.

What is rotten has no incense.

There is no incense strong enough to hide a bad smell.

Liozalo halina ubani. [B.3.56](#); [H.58](#).

There is no incense for what is rotten.

Liozalo hunuka. [NGU](#).

What is rotten smells. Cf. #786.

3509. Lenye shina lina ncha. [FSM](#).90.

What has a root has an end.

Everything has an end: suffering, joy.

3510. Lililompata peku na lungo litampata. [J.](#), *peku*; [AL](#) 1624; [KS](#), *peku*.

What happened to *peku* shall also happen to *ungo*.

What happens to the old will also happen to the young ones

Yaliyompata kibeku, ungo pia yatampata. [NGU](#); [EM](#) y2; [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

What got to the old winnowing basket the new basket will also get.

Peku: a worn-out sifting basket.

Lungo [ungo]: the one [basket] being used now. Cf. #107.

3511. Lisiloponyeka huvumiliwa. [EM](#) 19.

What cannot be cured must be endured.

You must live with the problem that cannot be solved.

3512. Machozi ya wazee yanatonesha moyo. [REK](#).

Tears of the elders hurt the heart.

It is painful to see elders weep.

Tonesha or *tonosha*: hurt.

3513. Maji yakimwagika hayazoleki. [MS](#).150; [F.21.11](#); [SWA](#).22; [L](#).41; [B.2.57](#), 1.34; [H](#).60; [ED](#).379; [RECH](#).379; *Kiswahili* March 1973:p.79; [A](#).114; [T](#).111; [KB](#). 146; [RECH](#). 417; [J.](#), *okota*.

If water is spilled, it cannot be gathered up.

Kama maji yamemwagika ndiyo yameshamwagika. [FSM](#).75.

If the water is spilled it's indeed spilled. Cf. #78.

3514. Majini hamna kisirani. [AL](#) 1846.

There is no adversity in water.

No bad luck. Keep on trying. [AL](#).

3515. Malalamiko ya leo ndiyo ya siku zote. [NGU](#).

The complaints of today are the same of every day.

3516. Malalamo siyo dawa. [JKP](#).

Lamentation is not a cure.

Malalamo or *malalamiko*: pleading for mercy.

3517. Maumivu ya kaka kwako usingizi hukosi. [REK](#).

The suffering of your older brother at home does not hamper your sleep.

3518. Mbuzi ya juzi, sipikii mchuzi. [RSP](#).45.

I can cook no relish from the goat of the day before yesterday. Lost things are no longer useful. [RSP](#); Velten. Cf. #584.

3519. Meno pembe hayanyimwa mchezi. [V.](#), *meno*; [AL](#) 1829.

One does not deny a joker flashing teeth.

One can fake joy and hide a pain.

Meno [ya] pembe: teeth like ivory, as a sign of beauty. [V](#).

Mchezi or *mchesi* or *mchekeshi*: a player, a dancer, an actor, a laugher, a joker. Cf. #1458.

3520. Mfa maji haishi kutapatapa. [KS](#), *tapatapa*; [KA](#).

A drowning person does not stop struggling.

Tapatapa: moving around, worrying.

3521. Mfa maji hata banzu hufika limuokoe. [REK.](#)

One drowning in water hopes that even a wood splinter may come to save.
Banzu or *bandu*: a little piece of wood, splinter. Cf. #381.

3522. Mfa maji hukamata maji. [F.25.49.](#)

A drowning person grasps at water.
Clutches at a straw. Cf. 859.

3523. Mhitaji lazima asubiri. [REK.](#)

A person in need must have patience.

3524. Miiba njiani wewe mwenyewe unaikanyaga. [AL](#) 643.

The thorns [you put] on the road, it's you that will step on them.
One who commits blunders must blame oneself. [AL.](#)

3525. Mikunde yangu inaharibika. [T.262;](#) [V.25.](#)

My bean plants have been spoiled.
My plans have fallen through. Cf. #1491.

3526. Mja mtesewa mno, afuae ni karibu. [T.265;](#) [SACL](#) 611.

For a servant of God, being greatly afflicted, the liberator is near.

3527. Mkubwa anaanguka na chumvi majini. [AL](#) 1727.

The important person falls with his salt in the water.
Misfortune falls on rich and poor.

3528. Mkubwa anaanguka na mlango. [AL](#) 1733.

An important person falls with the door [of the house].
Even after entering a thousand times, an accident is possible.
See also heading "Fate."

3529. Mla cha uchungu na tamu hakosi. [F.28.79;](#) [L.54;](#) [MARA](#) 3.

A person who eats bitter things gets sweet things too.

Mla raha na uchungu hula. [B.1.77.](#)

One who eats bliss, eats bitterness also.

3530. Mlala pabaya hangoji usiku kuu alalamike. [NGU.](#)

One who sleeps on a bad place does not wait the whole night to complain.

3531. Mnyama aangukapo shimoni hatoki na manyoya yote. [REK.](#)

If an animal falls in a hole it does not come out with all its hair intact.

3532. Mshale kwenda msituni haukupotea. [F.30.103;](#) [AL.1375;](#) [KA.](#)

An arrow going into a forest is not necessarily lost.
A good deed is not lost, even if it seems so. [KA.](#)
Also: an evil deed or word is not lost. It comes back [AL.](#)

3533. Msiba hauji mmoja. [NGU.](#)

Misfortune does not come singly.

3534. Msiba wa kujitakia hauna kilio. [REK.](#)

A misfortune that is wanted has no lamentations.
Nobody has pity on someone who has brought misfortune upon oneself.

3535. Mtu aliyeanguka majini hawezi kuopoka na vyote. [KB.204;](#) [AL](#) 919.

A person who has fallen in the water cannot save everything.
After a divorce one does not get all of the bride's wealth back. Cf. #1482b.

3536. Mtumbwi unamwagika karibu na kuegesha (kuvuka). [AL](#) 1745; [AL](#), *egama*.

The canoe capsizes near the beach.
Mishaps often happen at the end. Cf. #1421.

3537. Mvua hunyesha wakati huna mwavuli. [REK.](#)

It rains when you don't have an umbrella.

3538. Mvua wa mchana hainyeshei mtu mmoja. [AL](#) 1778.

Day rain does not fall on only one person.

Understood : bad luck.

3539. Mvua ya mwisho kivunja madaraja. [NGU](#).

The last rain destroys the bridges.

3540. Mwaka wa ndui, upele hautavuma tena. [PM](#).83.

In the year of smallpox, scabies loses its right.

When something very bad happens, smaller evils are forgotten.

Also used when somebody very bad succeeds a less bad person in power. [PM](#).

3541. Mweka uporo hula na wenziwe. [REK](#).

One who serves food left over from yesterday, eats it with the family.

Unpleasant things are shared with your own people.

Uporo: left-over food, cold food.

3542. Mwenye mnara chini afika. [AL](#) 1728.

One who has a tower will necessarily come down.

3543. Mwenye shida ni rahisi kupatikana. [NGU](#).

A person in trouble is easy to find.

A person in trouble is looking for help and shows it and is willing to agree with you.

3544. Mwisho wa furaha, [ni] machungu. [MP](#).82.5; [AL](#) 1641.

After joy, grief.

3545. Naije baa, iondoe baa. [KA](#); [SM](#).

May [new] hardship come and take [old] hardship away.

If one hardship takes over from a former hardship, that former hardship probably will be forgotten.

KA has *baa* instead of *baa*, which must be a misprint. *Bua* means a stalk, or stem. It would be nice if *bua* could have the meaning of "undoing *baa*", as in *funga* (tie), *fungua* (untie). But *baa* is a noun, not a verb.

3546. Nasibu sitalilia naumiza macho yangu. [T](#).404; [KA](#).

I will not cry over a mishap and injure my eyes.

It is no use crying over spilt milk.

3547. Ndama yatima hujilamba mgongo. [REK](#).

A motherless calf licks its own back [in desperation].

3548. Ng'ombe akivunjika guu hukimbilia zizini. [MARA](#) 59; [JK](#).118.

When a cow breaks a leg, it goes back to the stable.

In time of need one returns to old friends or family.

Ng'ombe avunjikapo guu, hurejea zizini. [MM](#); [E](#).

When a cow breaks its leg, it is sure to go back to the yard. [E](#).

Ng'ombe akivunjika mguu malishoni, hujikokota zizini kusaidiwa. [KA](#).

When a cow breaks a leg in the meadow, she drags herself to the stable to be helped.

3549. Nguvu ni kuvumilia. [CM](#).53.

Strength is to be patient.

3550. Nikisahau nacheka, nikipumbuka nalia. [AL](#) 1828; [AL](#), *kumbuka*.

If I forget I laugh, if I remember I weep.

If you go on remembering old injustices you will make them more painful.

3551. Nitaunga kingine. [TS](#) 67/8.

I'll do something else.

After having spent all the money, and driven away the spouse, one consoles oneself by saying "I'll find something new."

3552. Njaa ni yako, ya mwenzako ni kizunguzungu. [AL](#) 1213.

Your hunger is really hunger, the hunger of your friend is just a little giddiness.

Other people's pain is always minimized compared to ours.

3553. Nusu ajali si kama ajali nzima. [NGU](#).

Half a misfortune is not the same as a total disaster.

3554. Nyama ya ng'ombe ina mipaka yake. [REK](#).

Beef has its limits.

There is an end to all supply. There is an end to good and bad.

3555. Nyoka apitaye hana madhara. [REK](#).

The snake that passes by does no harm.

3556. Painamapo ndipo painukapo. [F](#).41.3; [B](#).4.83; [FSM](#).175.

Where it slopes down is where it goes up.

There are two sides to a problem. Human conditions change continually for better or for worse.

3557. Pakacha kuvuja nafuu kwa mchukuzi. [RECH](#).424,396.[KS](#), *pakacha*.

A punctured basket is advantageous to the carrier.

Understood is that that person carries goods of someone else.

Kuvuja kwa pakacha, nafuu kwa mchukuzi. [FSM](#).83; [KS](#), *pakacha*.

A leaking basket is the bearer's gain.

Uvuaji wa pakacha ni nafuu kwa mbebaji. [REK](#).

The leakage of the basket is a gain for the carrier.

Used, e.g., at work when the foreman takes away a task from a worker for being too slow. The worker, who did not like that task anyway, but doesn't want to say so openly, will think about this proverb: it's just fine with me. [FSM](#).

Pakacha: a basket sewn with palm leaves.

3558. Pawashapo panakuwa na mwenyewe. [NGU](#)

There where it itches there is also the owner.

When people are hurt, they will let it be known; or Where there are hot feelings, someone will cause them.

3559. Pembe la ng'ombe likivunjika haioti tena. [SWA](#). Sept.1966.

If a cow's horn breaks, it does not grow again.

3560. Penye wimbi na mlango u papo. [J](#)., *mlango*; [A](#). 3Q5; [T](#).460; [ED](#).63; [SAM](#).21.5, [MS](#).66 and [V](#).. *wimbi*; [KS](#), *mlango*

Penye wimbi ndipo penye mlango. [KS](#), *mlango*; [MARA](#) 1, *mawimbi*.

Where the breaker is, just there is the entrance [through the reef] too.

The channel and the reef are close together: safety and danger. Take heart!

Mlango: a door, narrow channel.

3561. Piga kite mama, ujikomboe. [J](#)., *kite*.

Bear down mother, and so deliver yourself.

Piga kite: groan, sigh. [J](#).

Piga moyo konde. [KS](#).

Strike your heart with a fist.

Be brave. Take courage.

3562. Pindi yakikaza mawi, huwa kari8u kwisha. [SACL](#). 750.

It is when hardship is at its worst that it is near its end.

3563. Raha yako, taabu yangu. [MP](#).82.3.

Your joy is my grief.

What is good for one is bad for another. Cf. #1218.

3564. Sahau ni dawa ya waja. [SAM](#).22.1i [MS](#).188.

Forgetting is the cure for human suffering.

Without the ability to forget, life would be unbearable. The remedy for injuries is not to remember them.

Waja: plural of *mja*, human being.

3565. Samaki ikilia machozi yake yapelekwa kwa maji. [KB](#).273.

The tears of a fish are carried away by the water.

About useLess tears.

3566. Shida haina hodi [hakuna isiyemkumba]. [KA](#).

Misfortune does not ask to enter, [there is nobody who does not get it unexpectedly.]

Kumba, pata ghafla: get suddenly.

3567. Shida hapana zisiyemkumba. [SAM](#).22.2.

There is nobody who is not attacked by difficulties. Cf. #1500a.

3568. Shida haziishi. [NGU](#).

Problems never end.

3569. Shida hudhihirisha utu. [EM](#) s3.

Hardship reveals personality.

3570. Shida huimarisha wengine na kudhoofisha wengine. [EM](#) s4.

Hardship makes some people stronger and makes others weaker.

3571. Shida huzidiana. [NGU](#).

Problems produce problems.

3572. Shida ni kama watoto; unavyozidi kuzilea ndivyo zizidipo kukua. [NGU](#).

Trouble is like children; the more you nurse them, the more they grow.

3573. Shida ni mama wa uvumbuzi. [NGU](#).

Necessity [misfortune] is the mother of invention.

3574. Shida za shamba azijua mkulima. [REK](#).

The farmer knows the hardships of the fields. Cf. #1563.

3575. Siku unayojipaka mafuta hukutani na mkweo. [EM](#) s11.

You don't meet your in-law on the day you anoint yourself.

The day you look your best, you do not meet your inlaws. The day you want to show your big catch to your friend, nobody is at home.

3576. Siku utakayokwenda uchi, ndiyo siku utakayokutana na mkweo. [MARA](#) 3; [AL](#) 1772; [MS](#). 95; [MARA](#) 3.

Siku utembeapo mtupu [uchi] utakutana [wakutana] na mkweo. [NGU](#).

The day you go naked is the day you meet your mother-in-law [or father-in-law].

You always carry your umbrella, except on that one day when you get soaked. [MARA](#).

3577. Siku za upungufu ni nyingi kuliko za wingi. [EM](#) s12.

The days of shortage are more numerous than the days of plenty.

3578. Taabu zisizo sababu hukutia taabu, usimtambue bibi wala babu. [REK](#).

Useless trouble will put you in real trouble, don't hurt your grandfather or your grandmother.

Tambua mtu: idiom. Do something that hurts a person..

Taabu or *tabu*: trouble.

3579. Tabu ya leo mdiyo raha ya kesho. [MARA](#) 2.

Today's trouble is tomorrow's bliss.

To encourage people in hardship. It won't last.

Lima leo, uvune kesho. [MARA](#) 2.

Farm today that you may harvest tomorrow.

3580. Tamu tulikula sote, na uchungu vumilia. [T](#).501; [V](#).123; [MS](#).78.

We ate the sweet [things] together, then endure the bitter too. Cf. #891.

3581. Teke hapigwi aliyekwishaanguka. [EM](#) t7.

One who has fallen down is not kicked.

3582. Uking'wafua mnofu, ukumbuke [na] kuguguna mfupa. [KA](#); [KS](#), *mnofu*; [AL](#) 237.

If you consume the tender meat, don't forget to chew the bone.

During peace and joy don't forget that hardship may come. [AI](#)

Work started should be finished. [AL](#).

3583. Ukiona kwako kunaungua, kwa mwenzako kunateketea. [E](#).46.6.

If you see your house on fire, [you may be sure that] your neighbor's is burning even more fiercely.

If you suffer a loss, think about the much greater loss of others.

Ukiona unga wako waungua, wa mwenzio watateketea. [SACL](#).956; [V](#)., *ungua*.

If you see that your cake is burning, think that your partner's is reduced to ashes. [Sacl](#).

Ukiona kwako kumepasuka, kwa mwenzio kumevunjika. [MS](#).

If you see a tear in yours, your neighbor's is spoiled.

Ukiona kwako kwafuka, kwa mwenzio kwawaka. [SM](#).

If you see smoke at your place, your neighbor's is burning.

Said to a person who laments about his misfortune as the end of the world.

Ukisema kwangu kwaungua, kwa mwenzio kwateketea. [NGU](#).

If you say that my house is on fire, [you should know] that your friend's house is burning [even more fiercely].

3584. Ukipata bahati mbaya, usiangalie kichoko. [KB](#).307.

If you get bad luck, don't look at the pain. [KB](#).

Don't give up in despair.

3585. Ukipata kitumie, ukikosa jishukurie. [MS](#).189.

If you obtain something, use it; if you lack it, be grateful.

The meaning is to be grateful to God, the Giver of gifts, hoping that God will reward you for your attitude. If you are grateful for half a loaf God will give you a whole one. [HM](#).

Ukipata kitumie, ukikikosa kijutie. [NGU](#).

If you obtain something enjoy it, if you miss it, regret it.

Ukikosa shukuru, kupata kuna mungu. [KA](#).

If you lack it give thanks; receiving things depends on God.

3586. Ukitafula shari utaipata. [NGU](#).

If you are looking for adversity, you'll find it.

If you look for a fight, you'll find one.

Shari: strife, ill luck, mischief.

3587. Umande haukosi mtu. [PM](#).83.

Dew misses nobody.

Work and burdens should be shared equally by all.

This is also said when somebody asks for special favors. [PM](#).

Cf. #? Umande hauogopi mtu.

3588. Umekuwa nguva huhimili kishindo? [E](#).48.24.

Have you become a manatee, that you cannot bear a shock [wound]?

Nguva: dugong, manatee; a large herbivorous mammal of the Indian Ocean. Cf. #188; #184.

3589. Unaposhuka wa juu, wa chini penyeza guu. [REK](#).

When you come from somebody who is above you, the one below you stabs your foot.

3590. Usifurahie misiba hata hata kwa yako. [NGU](#).

Don't enjoy misfortune, certainly not your own.

3591. Usiku haujaingia, usiseme utalala na njaa. [AL](#) 1844.

Before the night has set in, don't say that you'll sleep hungry.

3592. Usinywe umande, maji yako mbele. [AL](#) 1836.

Don't drink the dew, there is water ahead. Cf. #190.

3593. Usiongeze njugu maganda. [JK](#).146.

Do not add shells to the peanuts.

Do not make a mountain out of a molehill. [JK](#).

3594. Usipokubali taabu, hutaonja raha. [REK](#)

Unless you accept toil, you'll not taste peace.

3595. Usupaosupao ndiyo mmea. [KA](#).

A plant that is well shaken will grow well

Supa, or *peperuka* or *shuka*: shaken.

Supasupa: repeatedly shaken.

3596. Utakula mumbi. [KS](#), *mumbi*.

You'll get trouble.

Mumbi: the bittern, a large bird which makes a noise like a drum. It is considered to be a bird of evil omen. [J](#). Cf. # 763.

3597. Utamu wa asali haupunguzi uchungu wa mvi wa nyuki. [REK](#).

The sweetness of honey does not lessen the pain of the bee's sting.

3598. Utapata saa njema. [JK](#).139.

You will get your lucky hour.

Your lucky time will come. [JK](#).

3599. Uvumilia matata madogo: maisha ya sasa. [AL](#) 1856.

Suffer the small inconveniences in this life.

3600. Waliapo ndipo wachekapo. [FSM](#).198.

Where they weep there also they laugh.

Weeping changes into joy.

But also: While some grieve, others rejoice on account of their misfortune. One's profit is the other's loss.

3601. Wanja wa manga si dawa ya chongo. [F](#).51.3; [KS](#), *wanja*.

The mascara from Arabia is not a cure for being one-eyed.

Notwithstanding belief that it is a remedy for the eyes. Antimony was considered a very powerful curative. [F](#).

To show that a bad deed is bad however explained, and also that a thing that is ordained, cannot be changed. [KS](#).

Wanja hauchujui macho ya kengeza. [NGU](#).

Mascara does not improve the eyes of one who squints.

Wanja sio dawa ya kengeza. [NGU](#).

Mascara is not a remedy for squinting. Cf. #687; #787; #788.

3602. Wateketeza mwili si wateketeza roho. [EM](#) w17.

Those who destroy the body are not destroyers of the soul.

A person sustaining bodily injury may grow better and stronger.

3603. Wema hawana bahati, wana dua na salati. [JKP](#).

Good people have no luck, they have only prayers.

Dua: individual prayer.

Salati: worship, public prayers.

3604. Yajapo yapokee. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2.

What comes, accept it.

Be it good or bad. Live with it. Overcome it according to circumstances.

3605. Yatapita. [EM](#) y.

It will come to pass. Cf. #1461.

3606. Zito hufuata jepesi. [KA](#).

Heavy times follow the peaceful days. Cf. #1455.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Parents - children

3607. Adabisha mtoto awapo mdogo. [MA](#).6.

Teach a child good manners when it is still small.

Rada ya mwana ufito. [MEM](#).296.

A child's discipline is a small stick.

3608. Adabu ya mtoto huwapatia sifa bora wazazi. [MA](#).7.

A child's good manners give great credit to the parents.

3609. Aliyoea binamu hufia vitani. [FSM](#).6.

One who marries a cousin dies in a war.

Judge carefully before undertaking a serious business. In marrying one becomes involved in the life of in-laws, but if one marries a member of the same family, the involvement is much greater. If it is relatively easy to divorce somebody of an outside family, it is extremely difficult to divorce someone who belongs to the same family.

3610. Aliyezaa vibaya husalimiwa na wakwe wake. [KB](#).19.

One who is ill-born will be paid off by the in-laws.

An ill-born child and badly educated is a disgrace to the parents. Refers to the obligation of well educating one's children in view of a happy future. [KB](#).

3611. Amemfanya mumewe ng'ombe ya shemeri. [SACL](#). 835.

She leads her husband like an ox by its nose-ring.

3612. Ana bahati kama mzalia kwao. [REK](#).

She is lucky as one who gave birth at home [in the family].

3613. Anayenyimwa ugali na mkewe huvunja nyumba. [FSM](#).6.

He who is denied food by his wife will break up the marriage.

From a song taught during initiation.

3614. Anayependwa na mama ndiye baba. [NGU](#).

He whom mother loves is my father.

They are looking after me. Their decisions for me are right decisions. cf. #1528.

3615. Arusi jambo la heri. [JK](#).118.

A wedding is a bliss.

3616. Azaaye kinyago akinyonyesha. [KB](#).28.

She who gives birth to a deformed child will breastfeed it.

A mother never abhors her own child, however deformed. Cf. #1530.

3617. Baba n'akanye mwanawe. [JKP](#).

It is up to the father to reprehend his child.

"No one else should interfere in family affairs. Blame the father if the child is undisciplined." [JKP](#).

3618. Baba ni baba lau kama ni kahaba. [REK](#).

The father is the father unless he is a prostitute.

Lau: unless

Kahaba: prostitute, male or female.

3619. Baba wa kambo si baba. [F](#).5.3; [T](#).42.

A stepfather is not a father.

There is a firm belief that stepfathers are unkind and cruel to their stepchildren. [E](#).

Baba wa kambo si baba: kunichukuza mikoba na ufunguo wa shaba. [SACL](#).154; [KB](#)., *chukuza*.

A stepfather is not a father; he is fit to let me carry bags and his brass key [treating me as a servant].

Mama wa kambo si mama. [V](#).96.

A stepmother is not a mother. Cf. #1543.

3620. Bembekeza si unyumba, kukataa kuhangaika. [AL](#) 909.

Caresses are not the same as a marital agreement, the refusal leads to a troubled life.

Marriage is attractive, but is also a great burden.

Unyumba: marital agreement.

3621. Bubu alisema juu ya uchungu wa mwanawe. [AL](#) 1483.

The dumb mother spoke because of the suffering of her child.

It is the conclusion of a story in which the mother recovers speech, in order to remove the danger that threatens her child.

People in charge take care of the interests of the subordinates. [AL](#).

3622. Bubu alisema sababu ya ngoma aliyoacha baba. [AL](#) 896.

The dumb spoke because his father left that person a drum.

One does not harm one's own, however weak one be.

This is used when one member of the family wants to disinherit an orphan of his father's heritage. [AL](#).

3623. Chui anazaa ngawa. [AL](#) 1800.

The leopard gave birth to a civet cat.

Children often disappoint their parents.

Lombe anazaa kenge. [AL](#) 1801.

A land lizard give birth to a water lizard.

3624. Chui mkali lakini wanawe wanyonya. [NGU](#).

A leopard may be fierce, but its offspring suck.

3625. Damu [ni] nzito kuliko maji. [E](#).7.2; [B](#).4.56; [MARA](#).14; [Al](#)., *zito*.

Blood is thicker than water. [AL](#).

A crime does not stay unpunished.

3626. Damu [ni damu] si kitarasa. [EM](#).43.2.

Blood is [blood] not red banana sap.

Kinship is stronger than friendship. [EM](#).

Kitarasa: a type of banana which has red sap. [EM](#). Cf. #1518.

3627. Fadhila umpe mama na mola t'akubariki. [JKP](#).

Give your mother grace and gratitude and God will bless you.

3628. Fahari ya nchi ni vijana wake. [EM](#) f2.

The pride of the nation is its youth.

Understood: if they are knowledgeable and courageous, disciplined and patriotic. They are the hope of the nation.

3629. Fisi hali watoto wake. [REK](#).

A hyena does not eat its offspring.

3630. Fungato haliumizi kuni. [E](#).9.5; [B](#).3.67.

The knot [i.e., in the string round the bundle] does not hurt the firewood.

Often used to mean: tie it well, do your work well.

But also refers to punishment of children. A child is carried on the back of its mother. The knot in the cloth does not hurt the child.

Therefore: take good care of your child. Discipline it well. Cf. #1689.

3631. Furaha ya mtoto aijua mzazi. [EM](#) f11.

It's the parent who knows the child's joy.

Close relationship and love is the means to understand somebody else's feelings.

Cf. #1531, #1564.

3632. Gome huziba gogo, mti humea kwa chane. [NGU](#).

The bark covers the trunk, a tree grows through the small branches.

A family does not grow except through the young ones. The young help the parents.

3633. Hadhi ya mzazi humfanya mtoto ajivune. [EM](#) h2.

A parent's honor makes a child proud.

The child will be encouraged to follow the good example of its parents.

Cf. # 1546A; #1559.

3634. Hana mzee. [TS](#) 78.22.

That person has no parent.

It means that that child has learned nothing. Without parents a child is not educated for life.

3635. Hapalipiki wazazi. [JKP](#).

Parents' kindness can never be paid back. [JKP](#).

3636. Hawashi, hazinyi, hatufai mwinyi. [JKP](#).

He does not light [a fire], he does not extinguish it, he is no use to us as owner.

He is no *pater familias*, who has children and rules with fairness, lighting the household fire [and the fire of passion which results in the birth of children] and extinguishing the fires of disputes. [JKP](#).

3637. Heri kuwa mpenzi wa wazee kuliko kuwa mtumwa wa vijana. [REK](#).

It's better to be the darling of the elders than to be a servant of the young.

Cf. #1546A; 1559.

3638. Heshima huanzia nyumbani. [NESTOR](#) p68.

Respect starts at home.

3639. Hurumia fimbo u[m]haribu mwana. [NGU](#).

Spare the rod and spoil the child.

3640. Hurumia wana wa wenzako, ili wanao wahurumiwe. [NGU](#).

Have mercy on the children of your friends, so that your children may receive mercy.

3641. Isipowasha hunyeza. [MARA](#) 22.

If it does not make you feel hot, it usually itches.

"It" stands for *damu*: blood. [MARA](#). Cf. #1518.

3642. Itakuwaje punda kupanda farasi? [JKP](#).

How could a donkey mount a horse?

"Said when a low class man woos an upper class girl". [JKP](#).

3643. Jino la utoto huzeeki nalo. [NGU](#).

You'll not get old with the tooth of your childhood.

Forget the ways of your childhood.

3644. Jogoo hana shemeji. [AL](#) 968.

The rooster has no in-laws.

The unfaithful and frivolous person neglects in-laws and spouse. [AL](#).

3645. Jongoo halipandi mtungi. [AL](#), *jongoo*; [AL](#) 969; [KS](#).

A centipede does not climb a pot.

About a sexually impotent man.

3646. Katika radhi ya baba huimarika ukoo. [JKP](#).

In the contentment of the father the offspring will prosper.

3647. Kidole kingali kizima kizuri, kikiugua ugonjwa kibaya. [AL](#) 973.

If the finger is intact it is good, but if the finger is sick, it's declared bad.

The husband does not easily tolerate a sick spouse.

3648. Kifuniko kilalie vyema. [JKP](#).

The lid should fit [the pot] well.

"Find a good 'fitting' bridegroom for a nubile girl." [JKP](#).

3649. Kila kitu kina mama, dawa yake na salama. [JKP](#).

Every creature has its mother, its medicine and security.

"No better medicine than a mother." [JKP](#).

Kitu: a thing. Cf. # 698.

3650. Kila mtu na mkwewe. [JKP](#).

Every spouse [has to find a way to live] with his in-laws.

3651. Kinachotoka pua na kuingia kinywa si hasara [haramu]. [AL](#) 907.

What comes out of the nose and enters the mouth is not harmful [unlawful].

If an older brother dies his wife can become the spouse of a younger brother. [AL](#).

3652. Kinaota ku jicho; kingeota ku pua, ningekitoshia. [KB](#).109.

It grows in the eye, but if it grow on the nose, I would remove it.

The meaning is that a member of the family is sooner supported than a stranger, or endured for that matter.

3653. Kinga huliwa tumboni. [FSM](#).73.

A protecting device is given to a child still in its mother's womb.

A child is separated for protection. A new-born is not shown to the world for this same reason. A child is given protecting devices [amulets] because it will meet good and bad people.

But: God has already protected the child for nine months, so don't worry too much about evil spirits: God granted the child to be born, so God will protect the child. [HM](#).

Usigange mahali pa kukinga. [NGU](#).

Don't try medicine on a protected place.

3654. Kinyesi cha mtoto hainuki kwa mama. [EM](#) k15.

A child's stool does not stink to the mother.

A mother does not find it unpleasant to help her child, where other people find it difficult to lend a hand. [EM](#).

3655. Kinywa cha bibi kisipite cha bwana. [AL](#) 924.

The mouth of a wife should not overpower that of her husband.

In the presence of her husband the wife does not take the word.

Cf. #1741; #166; #1640.

3656. Kisichofanana na mwenyewe ni cha kuiba. [MARA](#).30.

What does not resemble the owner must have been stolen.

This proverb is used when talking about how much a child resembles one of the parents in appearance and behavior: well, if it did not, one might suspect something wrong. [MARA](#).

3657. Kisu chako kikikukata unakwisha alani. [EM](#) k.17.

If your knife cuts you, you sheath it.

You don't throw away your knife.

A relative who hurts you is not forsaken and you also try to mend the harm you did.

3658. Kitokacho matumboni ki uchungu. [KA](#); [SM](#).

What comes out of the belly is bitter.

Giving birth is painful and therefore children should be cared for, because they were painfully obtained.

3659. Kosa moja haliachi mke. [F](#).16.36; [MARA](#).32.

One mistake does not warrant the divorce of one's wife.

Give a person another chance.

Kisa kimoja hakimwachi mke. [KB](#)., *kisa*; [SACL](#).401.

One fact does not authorize divorce. Cf. #1555.

3660. Kuamuru na taa, huanza kwa jamaa. [RSP](#).96.

Ruling and obeying begin in the family.

Good government begins at home. [RSP](#).

Taa: A lamp; obedience. Cf. *J.tii*.

3661. Kufunza. Kutunza. [RSP](#).146.

To teach is to take good care [of one's children].

3662. Kukosa watoto kwafanya mtu adharauliwe. [JKP](#).

Having no children makes a person despised.

"The Swahili love children. Big families are a source of pride for both the father and the mother." [JKP](#).

3663. Kuku havunji yaile. [F](#).18.49.

A hen does not break her own egg.

It's hard for a person to harm family or close friends.

Yaile = *yai lake*: her egg. Cf #1560.

3664. Kulea mimba si kazi, kazi kulea mwana. [F](#).18.53; [L](#).36; [KS](#), *mimba*.

It is not hard to nurse a pregnancy, what is difficult is to bring up a child.

3665. Kuoa bibi mzuri ni kupanda mdimu kando ya njia. [AL](#) 939.

He who marries a beautiful wife plants a citrus tree along the road.

3666. Kuoa ni arusi, kuishi wawili ni ngoma. [EM](#) k29.

To marry is a joy, to live together is a dance.

Marriage is only the beginning of a new joint life in a society. There are players who want to get out and players who want to get in.

3667. Kuoa ni kuona mengi. [REK](#).

To marry is to experience many things.

3668. Kuotaota kwa nywele ziliota penye kidevu. [AL](#) 877.

The continual growth of hair extends to cover the chin.

One must support the family members that encroach the household.

3669. Kupendana, kuzaana. [RSP](#).72.

To love each other [is] to bring forth children.

3670. Kupendwa na mke ni kuchukiwa na wazazi. [REK](#).

To be loved by your wife is to be hated by your parents.

Parents are jealous. They don't want to give up their child.

3671. Kuzaa si kazi, kazi kubwa [ni] kulea. [KA](#).

Bearing children is not so difficult but upbringing, that is real work.

Cf. #472; #1527.

3672. Kuzaa si kunya. [REK](#).

Giving birth is not the same as going to the toilet.

About some people who talk easily about sex.

3673. Kuzaliwa kumoja, maisha mengi. [EM](#) k35.

The same birth, but many lives.

Human beings are born in the same way but their lives may be different. Poor, rich, healthy, sickly, strong and weak.

Cf 329, #1105.

3674. Kweli mwana ni mamae, na mlezi akalea. [T](#) 407; [SACL](#). 203, *ndeli*; [AL](#) 415.

The truth is that a child needs its mother, and that a nurse is only a nurse. [SACL](#).

If the child has had no mother, then the nurse would not want to nurse it. [T](#).

3675. Mama akifa, mimi wa ndani sitakufa. [AL](#) 894.

If my mother dies, I of the family, will not die.

I will be taken care of.

3676. Mama hawezi kumkana mtoto, hata akiwa na vilema. [KB](#).154.

A mother cannot repudiate her child, even if it has defects. Cf. #1515.

3677. Mama kwa mwanawe, mtoto kwa mamaye. [SAM](#).13.3; [MS](#).117.

A mother is for her child, the child is for its mother.

In love and suffering they depend on one another; nobody else can substitute.

3678. Mama mmoja mwema hushinda waalimu wa ulimwengu. [NGU](#).

One good mother is better than all the teachers of the world.

3679. Mama msaji baba msonobari. [KS](#), *msaji*.

My mother is like a *msaji* tree, and my father is like a *msonobari*.

The ideal family.

Msaji: a hardwood tree, used for doors and tables.

Msonobari (J.,*msunobari*.): a tall tree, yellow wood, excellent furniture.

3680. Mamae ananunua, mwana hawezi kukua. [RSP](#).9.

Mother is buying [on the market] so the child cannot grow up.

The child is not looked after properly. [RSP](#).

3681. Mam'ako ni mungu wa pili. [SACL](#).499; [AL](#) 1008.

Your mother is your other [or second] God.

Mtu mamae ni mungu wakwe wa pili. [T](#).343.

A mother is a person's second God.

A person looks up to her for advice and follows her orders.
After God, your mother is the most generous. [AL](#).

3682. Mataya hayangalikuwa ndugu zako, hangalikupondea chikichi. [AL](#) 882.
If the jaws hadn't been your relatives, they would not have broken palm nuts for you.
Mataya: jaws.

3683. Matumbo huzaa maradhi. [JKP](#).
The inwards cause disease.
"A mother says this of a child who causes her nothing but trouble." [JKP](#).
Matumbo: here means womb, embryo.

3684. Mayai - ni kuvia au kwanguliwa. [NGU](#).
Eggs either do not come to full completion or are hatched. Understood is that a child may be born defective.

3685. Mcha mke ndugu hazai. [KS](#), *mcha*.
He who reveres his wife as his sister will have no children.

Ukistahi mke ndugu huzai naye. [MARA](#) 3.
If you revere your wife as a relative you will not have a child from her. Cf #1941.

3686. Mcha [mchelea] mwana kulia, hulia yeye. [L](#).44; [H](#).63; [B](#).3. 39; [SWA](#).10; [FSM](#).142. [F](#).23.32; [T](#).274; [A](#) 293; [NS](#) 35; [V](#) 140.
Parents who fear the tears of their child will cry themselves.
If you leave your child doing things without correcting its behavior, you will weep.

Mchea mwana kulia, hulia yeye mkongwe. [ED](#).43.
They who fear the tears of their child, weep when old.
Mkongwe: a sickly, feeble person.

3687. Mdomo wa kasuku ulikumjama kwa ukwe. [AL](#) 915.
The beak of the parrot became crooked at the in-laws.
Living with the in-laws restricts freedom of speech and actions. There are many taboos to be observed.

3688. Mfunze mwanao tabia bora kabla kumsahihisha mwana wa mwenzio. [NGU](#).
Teach your child good behavior before correcting your friend's child.

3689. Mgeni haachiwi yatima. [EM](#) m14.
An orphan should not be left with a stranger to be cared for.

3690. Mgoma kutatwa waponzwa na uzazi. [NGU](#).
The confused stubborn child got in trouble by birth.
If parents are beaten or abused by their children later it is because the trouble started at the children's birth.

3691. Mimba haifichiki. [NGU](#).
A pregnancy cannot be hidden. Cf, # 1297.

3692. Miwili ni pakamao. [AL](#) 1041.
Two [hands] do a massage.
Pakamao from *paka*: rub, apply oil, etc.

3693. Mjane alioa kisiki. [AL](#) 1034.
The celibate marries a prostitute.
The bachelor, perhaps impotent, is reduced to marrying a woman who is despised or [often] sterile.

3694. Mjane hana ongeza lingine, ila la kuoa. [AL](#), *mjane*.
A bachelor has nothing more to do than to marry.
Of somebody who has done all possible.

3695. Mjuku kwetu tunda. [JK](#).118; [AL](#) 983
A grandchild is for us a fruit. [JK](#).
And much appreciated. [AL](#).

3696. Mkata arhamu siwo mwenye fahamu. [MA](#).319.
One who severs relations with relatives is not wise.
Arhamu or *arahumu*: very close relatives; sometimes used conversely for *akraba*: relatives. [MA](#).

3697. Mke wako mpumbaze, nje usilimatie. [JKP](#).
Make your wife happy, do not stay out too long

Pumbaza (Kiamu dialect): amuse.

Limatia or *chelelewa*: be late

3698. Mkeo akikwambia 'niwache', nawe ridhia na mwingine kimbilia. [JKP](#).

If your wife tells you 'Divorce me,' satisfy her wish and quickly marry another.

3699. Mkono hausahau kinywa, hata usiku. [AL](#) 884.

The hand does not forget the mouth, not even at night.

Members of a family are in helpful cooperation, especially in times of misfortune.

3700. Mkono unakinyima kinywa, nacho kitapewa na nani? [AL](#) 885.

If the hand denies to give [food] to the mouth, the mouth will then receive [food] from whom?

About family members helping each other.

3701. Mlimwengu ni mwanawe. [T](#).283.

Human beings depend on their children.

Men's relations to the world depend chiefly on their children for happiness and grief. Cf. #366.

3702. Mtaka na mtamani, watoto hawazaani. [RSP](#).III.

Mr. Wishful and Mrs. Longing do not get children.

Wishes and desires are not enough. [RSP](#).

3703. Mtoto akipenda makamasi yake, mwache ayavute. [AL](#) 450.

If a child loves to sniff his snot, let it sniff.

Don't expect your child to be perfect all the time. Cf.#1539

3704. Mtoto anampenda mama. [AL](#) 982.

The child adores its mother.

3705. Mtoto humuasi baba lakini baba hamuasi. [NGU](#).

A child rises up against its father, but the father does not renounce his child.

3706. Mtoto katika nyumba chechemi ya furaha. [NGU](#).

A child at home is a source of joy.

3707. Mtoto mbaya huponzea akiba yake. [NGU](#).

A bad child endangers what is put aside for him/her.

3708. Mtoto na wazazi wake. [NGU](#).

A child and his parents.

They belong to each other. Children depend on their parents.

3709. Mtoto ni kito, mzigo mzito. [RSP](#).17.

A child is like a precious stone, [but also] a heavy burden.

3710. Mtoto ni mtumbwi, ukiuchonga utakuvusha jito [bahari]. [AL](#) 985.

A child is like a canoe, if you carve one, it will take you across the river [sea].

A child is a security for the future.

3711. Mtoto [kijana] ukimnyang'anya kisu [mwembe], mpe banzi [bamba or kijiti] achezee. [E](#).31.119; [AL](#)917; [T](#).144; [A](#).138.

If you take away a knife [razor blade] from a child, give it a piece of wood to play with.

Pokonya kisu mpe kijiti. [EM](#) p24.

Remove the knife and provide a stick.

Ukimnyang'anya mtoto chikichi, umnyanganye na vitunguu vya pori. [AL](#) 441.

If you take away palm nuts from a child, take away also the wild onions.

Being too strict in educating a child is harmful.

Ukimyang'anya mtoto muwa, umwachie makamasi yake. [AL](#) 449.

If you take away sugar cane from your child, leave its snot.

Parents who expect their child to be perfect delude themselves.

A divorced wife has the right to compensations for the services given to the household she is leaving. [AL](#). Cf. #744.

3712. Mtoto umleavyo ndivyo akuavyo. [F](#).31.120; [MEM](#). 296; [MARA](#).50; [SWA](#).70; [A](#).179; [T](#).369; [V](#).1; [B](#).1.72; [L](#).71; [J](#).,mwana; [KB](#).211; [SACL](#).465; [KS](#), kua.

As you bring up your child, so it will be.

As the twig is bent, so the tree grows. [SWA](#).

Mwana huwa, alivyolewa. [RSP.12.](#)

A child becomes as it was brought up.

3713. Mtoto wa kwanza ni ngao. [E.K.](#)

The first-born is like a shield.

Is an insurance against parental disability or old age.

3714. Mtoto wa mnyama tumboni, wakimpiga mama yake, atafurahi. [AL 895.](#)

The animal young in the belly of its mother, will be happy, if you hit its mother.

Cf. #1529a.

3715. Mtoto wake amepotea katika mgongo wa fisi. [V., fisi.](#)

Their child is lost on the back of the hyena.

The parents did not watch over their child: the child has amounted to nothing.

3716. Mume wa mama ni baba. [F.32.130;](#) [AL 867;](#) [KA.](#)

The husband of my mother is my father.

A legalistic proverb. The child of the mother [in or out of wedlock] is considered the child of her husband, and in case the child is a girl, the bride-price goes to the father, when she marries. The father must be respected even if old, poor or weak. [AL.](#) Cf. #1516.

3717. Mungu wa wenye ndoa, shetani wa wakaa bure. [AL 1031.](#)

God is with a married people, the devil is with those who are idle [the celibates].

3718. Mwaminifu huoa, mwenye hekima hubaki kapera. [NGU.](#)

A believer gets married, the learned stays childless.

In marriage trust is needed.

3719. Mwana huua mzee, mzee haui mwana. [T.363a;](#) [V.117;](#) [KB.209.](#)

The child kills the parent, the parent does not kill the child.

The equivalent of the saying that love comes down, not up. [T.](#)

Small children small worries, big children big worries. [V.](#)

3720. Mwana kidonda, mjukuu kovu. [E.33.141;](#) [B.1.47;](#) [L.72;](#) [FSM.146;](#) [MARA 3.](#)

For a child is a wound, for a grandchild it is a scar.

One is more sensitive to what happens to one's own child than to what happens to a grandchild. [E.;L.](#)

3721. Mwana mkuwa nawe ni mwenzio kama wewe. [E.34. 153;](#) [B.1.47;](#) [AL 880](#)

The child who grows up with you is your companion like yourself.

To encourage people to marry early so that they will have children and enjoy growing up with them. [MM.](#)

Discrimination among siblings is not allowed. [AL.](#)

3722. Mwana mtukana nina kuzima enda akiona. [NGU;](#) [KA.](#)

The child who insults its mother will go and see hell.

3723. Mwana muwi ni dawa ya mlango. [T.368.](#)

A bad child is [after all] a cure of the family.

People are not jealous of that family, so they are saved from people's evil eyes. [MM.](#)

Mlango: door, channel, family. Cf. #1554.

3724. Mwana mwema kumlea na mui mlee. [KA.](#)

Bring up a good child but also a bring up a bad child.

3725. Mwana mwema ni taji tukufu kwa wazazi wake. [FSM.147.](#)

A good child is a crown of honor for its parents.

Used also in talking about citizens and the nation. Cf. #1511.

3726. Mwana mwenzio, mkanye kwa maneno. [NGU.](#)

Reprimand the child of your friend with words. Cf. #1550.

3727. Mwana ni mamake, kwa kambo ni pahali pa kukaa. [REK.](#)

The child is of its mother, for the stepmother it is a place to stay.

The child is the reason that the stepmother can stay.

3728. Mwana wa mbuzi kampakata punda. [FSM 148.](#)

The kid of a goat carries a donkey.

Do not expect that your child will help you along or that it will help you at all.

3729. Mwana wa ndugu kirugu, mjukuu ni mtu mbali. [E. 34.145;](#) [B.1.47.](#)

Your brother's child is like the height of the wall of your house, but a grandchild is quite another person.
The height of the wall is so familiar as to be unnoticed and unknown. [E](#).
Kirugu: the height of the wall. [J](#).

Mtoto wa ndugu ni kirubu. [FSM.L38](#).

A brother's child, however close to you, is never your child. *Kirubu*: something far away, out of reach? [HM](#)

Mwana wa ndugu kirugu, mjukuu mwanangwa. [KS](#)., *kirugu*.

The child of your brother is like a boil, a grandchild is a child loved by many.

Mwanangwa for *mwana wa watu*: a people's child.

3730. Mwana wangu utumwapo, njiani usikawepo, enda rudi mara moja. [JKP](#).

My child when you are sent on an errand, do not dawdle on the road, go and come back at once.

3731. Mwanangu amevunja ungo, cheleko chanduma. [J](#)., *cheleko*; [AJ](#), *cheleko*.

My daughter has reached puberty, and her pregnancy hurts me.

The joy felt at the girl having grown up is so great it hurts the mother. [J](#).

The joy of the daughter becoming pregnant is so great that the mother feels resentment. [AL](#).

Cheleko from *eleka, weleka*: bear children.

Chanduma for *cha ni uma*: it hurts me.

Vunja ungo: to break the hymen. 1. first menstruation; 2. to be deflowered; 3. to reach the age of puberty. Krapf, *ungo*.

3732. Mwanzo wa jino ufizi. [TAA](#) 14.

Before the tooth there is the gum.

Everything has a beginning. The beginning of a child is the parents. So when the child grows up it must not despise its parents in whatever situation they may be, poor, sick or whatsoever, because the child's beginning is from its parents. [TAA](#).

3733. Mwenye kukataa mwana hukataa mwana wa haramu. [AL](#) 905.

The parents who renounce their [legitimate] child, renounce also their illegitimate child.

One who is hostile to close family is also hostile to the greater family.

3734. Mwenye kupata mtoto hakosi mbeleko. [KB.222](#).

She who gets a child does not lack a cradle.

Mbeleko: a piece of calico used by women for carrying a child on their back or hip while at work or walking. Such a cloth is a usual wedding present, made to the bride's mother. [J](#).

3735. Mwenye mwanawe, n'akanye. [T](#) 391; [SACL](#) 325.

Let the parent punish the child.

It is on the parent of the child to reprimand it.

Aliye na mwana na akanye. [AL](#) *na*.

Let the one who has a child reprimand it.

3736. Mwisho wa njia ni nyumbani. [KB.223](#).

The end of the road is home.

3737. Mwongo wa kuku mbanawe. [T](#) 396a.

The hen's importance is among her offspring [T](#).

Mbanawe for *ni wanawe*: it is her young.

Cf. #1545, #1546.

3738. Mwongoe mtoto katika njia inayofaa. [NGU](#).

Guide the child in the right way.

3739. Mzazi hajisifu. [NGU](#).

A parent does not self-glorify.

Mzazi hujisifu. [NGU](#)

Parents glorify themselves.

3740. Mzazi hakati tamaa. [NGU](#).

A parent never gives up.

3741. Mzazi hauwi [hau]. [CAPD](#) 61.

A parent does not kill.

Used in a situation when one feels a parent is neglecting a child.

A parent's action can never be so extreme as to deliberately harm a child.

Cf #1526; #1544.

3742. Ndoa ni ukumbi wa ngoma. [EM](#) n6.

Marriage is like a dancing hall.

In a dancing hall there are different kinds of people. Some enjoy the dance from start to finish, and others enjoy certain parts and dislike others. Those who dislike the dance would like to get out of the hall while others who are outside would like to enter the hall. [EM](#). Cf.#1527b.

3743. Ndoa za haraka huishia majutoni. [EM](#) n27.

Marriages contracted in haste end in regrets.

"Later when each gets to know the other more, one or both of them will regret marriage." [EM](#).

3744. Ndoa ziko mbinguni. [SAM](#) 20.2.

Marriages are made in heaven.

God arranges the marriages. Therefore don't blame yourself if you don't find whom to marry. [SAM](#).

Cf. #1514.

3745. Ndugu muwi afadhali kuwa naye. [F](#).38.7; [T](#).413.

A bad brother is far better than no brother. [F](#).

Ndugu mui heri kuona naye. [KA](#).

It is better to see well with a bad relative.

One day that may be useful. [KA](#). Cf. #1546.

3746. Neno la talaka, silo la dhihaka. [RSP](#).42.

A word of repudiation must not be lightly pronounced. Cf. #1523.

3747. Nimechoka wacha tu, nipumzike. [MM](#).

I am tired, just stop it, let me rest.

A woman telling her husband.

3748. Nyoka akiingia nyumbani, hukimbii na kuihama nyumba. [EM](#)n23.

If a snake enters the house, you do not run and vacate the house.

You kill it.

The meaning is that if a bad person wants to cause confusion and misunderstanding in a family, the family should find a way of removing that person. [EM](#).

3749. Nywele, nywele, zive tele. [RSP](#).146.

Hairs, hairs, may they be plenty.

Refers to the view generally held that many children are a blessing. [JK](#).

3750. Ongoa [ongoza] mtoto njia ipasavyo. [NGU](#).

Guide the child in a rightful way.

3751. Pambo la nyumba ni mwanamke asiyenung'unika. [EM](#)p1.

The non-complaining wife is the decoration of the house.

Such a woman will be able to comfort others.

3752. Pasipo mwanaume, nguzo ya nyumba, nyumba itavunjika. [KB](#).261; [AL](#) 984.

Without a son, the pillar of the house, the family dies.

Male descendants perpetuate the line of the family.

3753. Pendo za mwana zi matakoni mwa nina. [T](#).456 [V](#).53; [SACL](#).684, 965; [AL](#) 932; [KA](#).

The happiness of a child is when its mother's desires are satisfied.

Father's love for a child disappears when the mother dies. [T](#). Father's love for the mother disappears when the child dies. [KA](#)
Matakoni (Kigunya dialect): for *matakwa*: desires.

Pendo la mwana liwa magoni kwa nina. [L](#).86; [AL](#) 931.

The love of a child is on the lap of the mother.

The affection of a child is gratified on mother' lap. [L](#). The child is not loved until the mother finds satisfaction with her husband. [AL](#).
Nina, common in Bantu dialects, or *mama yake*: his or her mother. *Magoni* (Kimvita dialect) for *miguuni*: on the legs.

3754. Pikia mzazi nawe upate tonge. [AL](#), *pikia*; [AL](#) 1077.

Cook for the woman in child bed, so that you also may receive a mouthful.

Receive a favor in return.

3755. Radhi ya baba na mama ni ufalme wa dunia. [REK](#).

The blessing of father and mother is worth an earthly kingdom. Cf. #451; #1559

3756. Radhi ya mama tamu. [AL](#) 1009.

Mother's blessing is sweet.

3757. Radhi ya wazee ni bora kushinda mali. [JKP](#).

The blessing of your parents is better than wealth.

Respect and obey your parents first. [JKP](#).

3758. Radhi za wazee ni fimbo kubwa kwa mwanadamu. [SAM](#).21.1.

A parent's blessing is a great stick [help] for a person.

3759. Shime ya ngoma ina mzazi. [KA](#).

The appeal of the dance has a producer.

To continue a work until it is finished a supervisor is needed.

Shime or *juhudi*: endeavor.

3760. Sikia! Sikia!, ilivunja unyumba. [AL](#) 810; [AL](#),*sikia*.

Listen, listen, spoiled the household.

Listening to gossipers breaks the relationship of man and wife. [AL](#).

3761. Sungura akizeeka humnyonya mamaye. [REK](#).

When a hare gets old it sucks the tits of its mother.

3762. Tangulia kijakazi, uzuri unakungojee. [AL](#) 444.

Go ahead young maiden, good life is waiting for you.

Parents take good care of their daughters until marriage. [AL](#).

3763. Teke la kuku halimwumizi mwanawe. [E](#).45.3; [L](#).94; [B](#).2.20; [H](#).101; [MS](#).163.

A hen's kick does not hurt her chick.

Used when parents chastise their children.

Cf. #1526; #193.

3764. Tembo hashindwi na ulezi wa mwanawe. [NGU](#).

The elephant is not burdened by rearing its young.

3765. Titi la mama litamu, jingine halishi hamu. Shabaan Robert, *Pambo la lugha*, p.27.

Mother's milk is sweet, no other ends desire.

Applied by Shabaan Robert: No other language is so sweet as one's native tongue, nor does it satisfy as well.

3766. Tumbo ni shamba. [AL](#) 1693.

The belly [of a woman] is like a garden.

Productive.

3767. Tunda haliozi juu, ila ugenini tu. [AL](#) 879.

A fruit does not rot high up [in the tree], except when abroad.

Among relatives one shares willy nilly.

3768. Ucheshi wa mtoto ni anga la nyumba. [E](#).45.1.

The laughter of a child is the light of a house.

3769. Uchimvi wa kizibao ulichimba shuka. [AL](#) 890.

The bad luck of the blouse, caused harm to the loincloth.

The abuse of one member of the family is offensive to the whole family.

Uchimvi: bad luck, ill omen.

Chimba: dig, harm, cause trouble. Cf. #1465.

3770. Uchungu wa mtoto "u katika nyonga" ya mama yake. [J](#)., *nyonga*; [B](#).2.53; [KB](#).298, *uchungu wa mwana... ya nina*.

The pain of a child is on the mother's hip.

Women often carry a child astride on the hip. The mother knows the pain of her child.

Cf. #1958, #1564.

3771. Uchungu wa mwana aujua mzazi. [E](#).45.2; [L](#).95; [T](#).565; [KS](#), *uchungu*; [V](#)., *uchungu*.

The pain of a child is known by the parent.

The labor of childbirth is known to the mother. [E](#); [T](#).

Only a mother knows the sorrow of her child. [L](#). Cf. #512.

3772. Udugu wa upanga si mzuri, afadhali udugu wa kisu. [AL](#) 913.

Fraternal relationships of the sword [machete] are inferior to those of the knife.

To understand this proverb one has to understand the difference between knife and machete. The machete is single edged, the African

knife is double edged. A marriage that only cares for their inner circle of relatives [a machete] is not as good as that of a knife, i.e., caring for the in-laws.

3773. Udugu ni kovu. [NGU](#).

Brotherhood is like a scar.
It will last your whole life.

3774. Ujamaa haukusanyi, hugawia. [REK](#).

A family that does not gather together will be divided.
Kusanya: collect, gather together, assemble, amass.

3775. Ujamaa ukiingia kutu, unyonyaji hustawi. [EM](#) u4.

When a familyhood gathers moss, exploitation thrives.
When love and respect for each other in the household erodes by foreign practices, people begin to exploit each other as they become more interested in personal advantages.

3776. Ujana ni tumaini, uzee ni kumbukumbu. [EM](#) u6.

Youth is hope, old age is remembrance.
Youth lives on expectation on what is coming; old people live more on remembering what's past rather than on what's coming.

3777. Ujira wa mzazi aujua mungu. [REK](#).

The wages of a parent are known by God.
God knows what is due to parents.

3778. Ukalamzi wa mtoto sawa na ule wa baba yake. [AL](#) 1799.

The craftiness of the child is the same as its father's.
Ukalamzi: cunning, mischievousness.

3779. Ukibeza la [ya] mkuu, utaona makuu. [NGU](#).

If you scorn [the advice] of your elder, you'll see evil happenings.

3780. Ukigombana na mama asiye mama yako, ni kuchokoza midomo bure. [KB](#).301.

To dispute with your stepmother is to tire your lips for nothing.
A stepmother does not have the same sentiments as a mother.

3781. Ukila na ndege, ule na kuku. [AL](#) 887.

If you eat with the birds, eat also with the chickens.

Ukila na ndege, ukumbuke kuku. [AL](#) 887.

If you eat with the birds, remember the chicken.
Inviting a visitor for a meal must not harm your family.

3782. Ukimlea mwana mwema, na mui mleele; mwema ukimpa mchele, mui mpe chelele. [KA](#).

If you bring up a good child, bring up also the bad one; if you give rice to the good one, give rice husks to the bad one.
Do not throw out the bad child, give it something. Cf #1546.

3783. Ukimwoa mke mpya, hutamsahau wa zamani. [AL](#), *oa*; [AL](#) 927.

If you marry a new wife, you will not forget the old one.
The man with several wives must preserve the rank of his first wife. [AL](#).

3784. Ukioa bibi ueneze kino na mtwangio. [AL](#) 941.

If you take a wife, make also room for the pestle and mortar.
Mtwangio (Kitabwa dialect) for *mchi*: pestle.

3785. Ukiogopa kutumia fimbo, uta[m]haribu mtoto. [NGU](#).

If you are afraid to use the stick, you'll harm [spoil] the child.

3786. Ukiokota njelani, yafaa kuvumulia machafu. [AL](#) 914.

If you collect lianas, you better be ready to suffer dirt.
Lianas for basket making must be split and scraped, releasing lots of dirty matter.
A person who marries must be ready to support the family. [AL](#).
Njelani (Kingwana dialect) also *bugu*, *kamba*: liana, tropical creeper.

3787. Ukiona umeolewa umeoa. [NGU](#).

If you are predestined to be married, you are married.
To be destined by God. What God has decreed will happen. Sacleux.
Olewa: to be taken in marriage.

3788. Ukipata chungu kipya, usitupe kile cha zamani. [AL](#) 975; [AL](#), *pata*.

If you get a new waterpot, don't throw away the old one.

Don't reject what is still used, even if it has lost its shine; the new spouse must not despise the older woman.

Ukipata chungu kipya, usisahau kigae. [AL](#) 974.

If you get a new stone pot, don't forget the old potsherd.

3789. Ukwe ni jalala. [AL](#) 912.

Inlaws are like a refuse dump.

Marriage is costly. The inlaws are always asking for supplements to the brideprice.

3790. Ulimwengu una tata, siikuwe; ambao wamkamata, simtoe. [JKP](#).

The world is full of problems, don't be proud; the one you have, don't let her go.

"It's better to keep a wife than to take a mistress." [JKP](#).

Stikuwe for usijikuze.

3791. Umande hauogopi shemeji. [AL](#) 781.

The brother or sister in-law is not afraid of the morning dew.

A determined person overcomes difficulties. [AL](#).

In certain circumstances one breaks rules.

3792. Umekuwa bata akili kwa watoto? [E.47.22](#); [AL](#) 900.

Are you a duck that your mind is only on your children? [F](#).

About someone who takes care of close family only. [AL](#).

3793. Umtamano, usimwangelie. [JKP](#).

The one you desire, do not look at her.

It would be improper for a gentleman to stare at the woman he fancies. [JKP](#).

3794. Undugu ni firisi [hirisi] hautafunwi kwa meno. [NGU](#).

Brotherhood is like a charm, it is not crushed with teeth.

3795. Upate kumshauria mtoto wa mama yake lazima kukausha macho yako. [AL](#), *jicho*; [AL](#) 783.

To be able to advise the child of its mother, you must be intrepid (have dry eyes).

Someone decisive is also audacious. [AL](#).

3796. Upendo wa mama kwa mwana hauchagui. [NGU](#).

A mother's love for her child is not biased.

3797. Usiache mkeo kwa maneno ya kusikia. [NGU](#).

Don't leave your wife on account of what you heard. Cf. #925.

3798. Uzazi [una] matata, ugumba [una] matata. [NGU](#).

Giving birth has trouble, sterility has trouble.

Parenthood has troubles, spinsters and bachelors have trouble too.

3799. Uzazi wachekwa na mtu gumba: mzazi ajionea uchungu. [AL](#) 1290.

Parenthood is mocked by the childless person: a parent resents the bitterness.

Success of others causes jealousy.

3800. Vitu vya myumbani vinajulikana na panya; basi mwewe anapita juu ataweza kujua vilivyo nyumbani. [AL](#) 903.

The mouse knows about the things in the house; but what does the hawk, that flies overhead, know about things of that house.

3801. Yanda vyote si sawa. [JKP](#).

All the fingers are not the same.

Children of one family may differ. [JKP](#).

3802. Walioana, wataambana [RSP](#).14.

They were married, they will speak to one another

They live together, they will learn to understand each other. [RSP](#).

3803. Walooana wakipendana, na jingi jonzi huepukana. [RSP](#).150.

If two married people love each other, they will avoid much sorrow. [RSP](#).

3804. Wanandugu ni mifereji ya mchwa. [EM](#) w13.

Relatives are like the holes made by the termites.

Those holes are separate, but they merge deep in the same big hole in the earth.

Although brothers may appear to be separated, deep down in their hearts, they are united. [EM](#).

3805. Wazee wakinyamaza watoto watapotea. [NGU](#).

If the elders keep quiet the children will get lost.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Poverty - wealth

3806. Aliye na vyake - haachi. [NGU](#).

People who have their own things do not leave them.
They will care for them.

3807. Aliyetota, hajui kutota. [F.2.18](#); [NGU](#); [MARA](#) 3.

A person who has absolutely nothing, doesn't know what poverty means. [E](#).
People who have nothing at all everyday, are not so burdened by poverty as someone who lost all. [MARA](#).

Aliyetota katota, hajui kutota. [NGU](#).

A different use: A drunkard does not know where he is going.
Repetition of tota stresses the totality of destitution.
Tota, sink down, be drowned.

3808. Ardhi ndiyo mali, hakuna itokayo angani. [REK](#).

The earth is precious, nothing comes from the sky.

3809. Asio mali, hasidi wa mwenye mali. [EM.15.21](#); [KA](#).

A poor person envies a rich one.
The poor do not love the rich and the rich do not love the poor. [KA](#).
Hasidi or *adui*: enemy.

3810. Asiyechakula ana kitoweo. [FSM.20](#).

A person who has no food has some vegetable.
The meaning is that there is nobody who lacks absolutely everything. A poor person has certain other gifts: health, brains, a child. [FSM](#).

3811. Asiyekuwa na wake ana mungu. [KA](#).

A person who has nothing however has God.
God does not forget his creature.

3812. Cha kipofu kimo mkononi mwake. [AL](#) 25.

The goods of blind people are in their hands.
What is held in the hand is really one's property.

3813. Cha kipofu kimo tumboni mwake. [AL](#) 26.

What belongs to blind people is what is in their stomach.

3814. Changu ni bora kuliko chetu. [KA](#).

Mine is better than what is ours.
Because I can use it how and when I want.
Used against communal work.
Cf. # 221; #? Chako ni chako (Success)

3815. Changu si chetu kamili. [REK](#).

What is mine is not totally ours.
A little touch of capitalism.

3816. Cheza mwenye mali, usicheze na mali. [NGU](#).

Play with the owners of riches, don't play with money.

Cheza na mwenye mali, usichezee mali. [NGU](#).

Play with the rich, don't play with their money.

Cheza: play, play a game, spend time with.

Chezea: play with, make sport of, mock.

I was told that *mali* here means brains. Respect their brains, respect their opinion, etc.

3817. Dau la mnyonge haliendi joshi. [B.2.42](#); [J.](#), *dau*; [F.8.3](#); [H.97](#); [MARA.2](#) has *halendi*.)

The boat of a poor person never sails close to the winds.

The boat cannot take it. And therefore has to take longer to get there. [F.](#)

The poor person cannot afford to buy a good sail or a well-built boat to go fast in heavy wind. [MARA.](#)

A poor person cannot compete or succeed if opposed by powerful rich people. [MARA.](#)

The richer you are, the more you can "get away with" and the easier your way will be. [F.](#)

La mnyonge halendi joshi, na likenda joshi litazama. [SACL.193](#); [V.](#), *mnyonge*; [L.15](#) and [V.](#), *mnyonge*, have *haliendi* and *likienda*.

The boat of a poor person can't tack; if it tacks it sinks.

Dau la mnyonge haliendi joshi, likienda joshi ni mungu kupenda. [B.2.59](#).

The boat of a poor person does not sail close to the wind; if it tacks it is because God wills it.

Joshi la mnyonge haliendi vema mpaka mungu akipenda. [MEM.44](#).

A poor person's boat does not tack well but for God's liking.

Jahazi ya mkata haiendi joshi. [KA.](#)

The sailboat of a poor person does not tack well. Cf. #138.

3818. Dirishani upendo huruka, umaskini uvukapo kizingiti. [EM.49.19](#).

When poverty crosses the threshold, love flies out of the window.

3819. Fedha fedheha. [NGU](#); [AL](#) 36.

Money [often] brings shame.

3820. Fedha hufaa kama taa. [JKP.](#)

Money is useful as a lamp.

"Money can be used to buy a lamp. True, but there is more to this proverb. *Fedha* also means silver, which can be used for making mirrors. Lamps and mirrors are symbols of wisdom. A lamp is used for reading, i.e., gaining knowledge. Money is used to buy a palace in Paradise by building a mosque on earth. Used thus, money becomes like a lamp on our path to Paradise." [JKP.](#)

3821. Fedha huzaa fedha. [EM](#) f4.

Money produces money.

To start a business one needs money. It is difficult to get a loan without collateral. Understood is to use money wisely. EM. **Fedha**

huchuma/ hufua/ huzaa fedha. [NGU.](#)

Money harvests/ forges/ produces money. Cf. 1624.

3822. Fedha ilivunja nguu, [na] milima ikalala. [J.](#), *fedha*; [MEM.188](#); [AL](#) 1596; [KS](#), *nguu*. Instead of *fedha* some use *mali*.

Money broke the summit of the hills and they became level.

Money is all-powerful.

Fedha huvunja nguvu na milima ikalala. [AL.1598](#).

Money broke the power: the mountains are leveled.

By reason of spending money one has escaped the use of force. [AL.](#)

Kitu kilivunja nguu milima ikalala. [AL](#) 1599; [KS](#), *kitu*; [MS.](#)

Something broke the summit and the mountains became level. [MS.](#)

Kitu: 1. here means something very precious. [AL.](#) 2. Wealth or money MS. Cf. #109.

3823. Fukuto lamzuia mwenye nyumba asiingie. [AL](#) 102.

The heat in the house prevents the owner to enter.

Excess of possessions restrains their uses. [AL.](#)

Fukuto or *vukuto*: sweat, vapor, body heat; throbbing, smarting.

3824. Fundi hana chombo. [EM](#) f8.

A craftsman has no furniture.

Understood that that person sells every piece made or gives it away thinking that it can easily be made again.

The cobbler's wife goes barefoot.

Chombo: a vessel of any kind, a tool, a boat, a utensil. Cf. 1592.

3825. Ganda la mua [la jana], chungu kaona kivuno. [F.9.1](#); [B.](#) 4.68; [SACL.](#) 421; [L.21](#); [FSM.41](#).

The peelings [of yesterday's] sugarcane is a harvest to the ant.

Something discarded by one may be very useful for another. And, do not despise an old thing. [FSM.](#)

Mua or muwa: sugarcane.

3826. Gari la maskini ni miguu yake. [NGU](#).

The autos of the poor are their legs.

3827. Hadhi bora kuliko mali. *Hekaya ya Abunawas*, p.116.

Honor is better than wealth.

3828. Hakuna aliye mdogo wa mwisho kabisa. [SAM](#).7.2.

There is nobody who is the smallest of all.

There is always somebody who is poorer or more miserable.

3829. Hana asili wala fasili. [I](#),*fasili*; [V](#).132; [KS](#),*fasili*.

So and So has neither root nor offshoot.

Of somebody who has neither family, position, prospects nor connections. The family tree does not go far. [V](#).

Hana asili wala fadhili. [SACL](#).218.

So and So is not of noble origin nor has any [personal] attainments. [SACL](#). Cf. #1580.

3830. Hana habari yoyote, mke wala dume. [KB](#)., *ke*; [SACL](#).339, *nke*.

So and So has no information, from men or women.

Hawafai neno lolote, jike wala dumu. [KB](#)., *ke*; [SACL](#).339.

They are good for nothing, not as woman nor as man.

Hakuja na chochote, hakuja na make wala maume. [SACL](#).339, 495.

That one came with nothing, nothing for men or for women.

3831. Heshima ni bora kuliko mali. [EM](#) h26.

Respect is better than riches.

To be respected is to be valued as a human being. [EM](#).

Cf. #1371, #684, #685, #848, #1033.

3832. Hindi ndiko kwenye [hindi] nguo, na waendao tupu wako. [T](#).95; [A](#).180; [SAM](#).8.6; [MS](#) 22; [AL](#) *Hindi*.

India is the country of clothes and yet there are those who go naked.

Hindi kwa wafuma nguo, na waendao tupu wako. [T](#).95.

India, that is the country of weavers and yet there are some who go naked.

Poverty and riches, good and evil, are often found together. [Sam](#).

3833. Hohehahe jungu la mavi na mkorogwe. [KS](#). *hohehahe*.

Poverty [destitution] is like a big dung hill and its watery mess.

Also: **Hahehohe jungu ...** [MS](#).

3834. Huwapatapi wendani mtu akiwa fukara? [JKP](#).

Where does a very poor person find real friends?

Mwendani or *mwandani*: a combination of *mwenzi*, friend and *ndani* inside [an inside friend]: *bosom friend*.

3835. Jibwa lililo na njaa halichezi na lililo na shibe. [REK](#).

A big hungry dog does not play with a well fed dog. Cf. #1128.

3836. Jicho la mkosi halioni, likiona haliangazi. [MP](#).83.15; [AL](#) 1770 [AL](#), *ona*.

The eye of the unlucky person does not see, even if it sees it does not see clearly.

Even if the poor people are not always miserable, they however are never happy.

Mkosi: poor, unlucky. Cf.#1593.

3837. Kapera hapiki kombe mpaka mwaka wa mavuno. [MP](#).302/3; [JKP](#)

The poor man does not cook his bowl [of rice] until the year of abundant crop. [JKP](#).

Kapela or *kapera*: an unmarried man. Cf. #1597.

3838. Kidege hakina nyumba, nyumba yake mti. [MP](#).82.6.

The little bird has no house, its home is a tree.

This is said of somebody in difficulties. Like a bird on a branch, always on the move.

**3839. Kija maskini kwenu karamuni,
umpe sahani na chakula ndani**

na ndani taama ale kwa salama. [JKP](#) 30g.

If a beggar arrives at your party, give a dish of food and let the person move inside to eat it in peace.

3840. Kikubwa hakitakula kidogo. [AL](#) 45.

The big part [put in reserve in the store] will not eat the small part [added to it].
Save. Be frugal.

3841. Kongoni kwenye mtego hanuki mtegaji. [EM](#) k22.

A trapped hartebeest does not stink to the trapper.
The trapsetter rejoices to get meat even if the hartebeest is found dead.
Someone in need will be happy to get something even if not perfect.

3842. Kuchunga na peku ni kukosa ungo. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

Sifting with a worn out basket means that a good one is missing.
This is applied to a person who is not able to do a bigger or better job. Wearing torn clothing; going barefoot.
ungo: a round flat basket used in sifting grain.
peku: a worn out *ungo*. Cf. #1475.

3843. Kukosa si ila. [JKP](#).

Lacking is not a fault.
"No one can be blamed for not having something." [JKP](#).
Making a mistake is not a defect.

3844. Kuku wa mkata hatagi, na angetaga haangui, na akiangua halei, na akilea hutwaliwa na mwewe. [T](#) 174; [SACL](#) 312; 851.

The hen of a poor person does not lay eggs, and even if she lays eggs, she never hatches, and if she hatches, she never rears the chicks, and when she rears, the chicks are taken by the hawk.
This is not entirely true:

Kuku wa mkata hutaga. Wataka atage la bata? Kuku huyu si mwongo?

The hen of a poor person does lay eggs. Do you want it to lay a duck's egg? Is that hen then not a liar?
Cf. #1621.

3845. Kuombaomba mkono unakuwa kipawa. [KB](#).131; [AL](#) 1258.

Begging begging, the hand turns into a spoon.
Kuombaomba mkono utachongoka. [AL](#) 1257; [AL](#). *chongoka*.
By continual begging the arm will get crooked.

3846. Kwa mnyonge hakuna haki. [FSM](#).85.

There is no justice for a destitute person.
The poor have no rights. Cf. #1421, #1601.

3847. Kwendako mwinyi kwarudi mwinyi. [NGU](#).

Where the well-to-do goes, there the well-to-do returns.

Kwendako wema hurudi wema. [KA](#).

Where kindness goes, kindness returns.
Where good things are done, good things will be returned.

3848. Kwetu kuzuri. [NGU](#).

Our place is nice.
It is nice to be home. Our place is nicer than any place somewhere else.

3849. Maji mafu, [na] mvuvi kavu. [J](#)., *kauka*; [T](#).230; [SACL](#).225; [V](#)., *mvuvi*.

Dead water, a dry fisherman.
At neap tides the fisherman gets little. When the water is dead [low tide], the fisherman does not have a good catch.

3850. Mali mengi adui wengi. [MA](#).274.

Much wealth [brings] many enemies.

3851. Mali ni agizo la mungu. [AL](#) 1702.

Becoming wealthy depends on God's secret design.

3852. Mali, vuli. [RSP](#).81.

Property is like a shade [protection].

3853. Mali ya macho haifungi mtumba. [ZO](#) p.250; [NGU](#).

All the rich things one sees do not fill a bundle.
Mtumba: a bale, bag, bundle, a load, a burden.

3854. Mali ya yeye mpe yeye. [NGU](#).

Give a person what is owned.

3855. Mapenzi ya maskini hayaonekani. [MA](#).292.

A poor person's love is never seen.

A poor person has no means to show love for others by giving presents. Cf. #1596.

3856. Mapesa hutengeneza mapesa. [NGU](#).

Money makes money.

3857. Mashua ya maskini imeshazama mtoni. [RSP](#).105.

The poor person's boat already sank in the river.

Whatever the poor try fails at the very beginning.

3858. Maskini akipata, matako hulia mbwata. [F](#).22.19; [SACL](#).530; [V](#)., *maskini*; [KA](#).

An unexpected windfall and the buttocks of the poor person clack.

When a poor person acquires wealth the buttocks cry like a dry coconut. [MM](#).

When a beggar gets a gift, the buttocks cry for joy.

Kulia mbwata: Mrima dialect. Making the clicking noise with the fingers while pounding grain with a pestle. [SACL](#).

Kupata kwa limbukieni matako hulia pwata. [AL](#), *tako*.

Obtaining something to enjoy for the first time makes the buttocks clack.

Getting something after a long wait is a great joy.

Limbuka: to get something for the first time or to use for the first time after a long wait. Enjoy the first fruit.

Aliyepata fedha hutaka kuiliza. [JKP](#).

The person who got money wants it to make noise.

3859. Maskini hana miko. [SM](#).

A poor person has no taboos.

A poor person does not observe taboos and can eat forbidden food.

Need breaks the law. Cf. #1133.

3860. Maskini hana ndugu. [AL](#) 115.

A poor person has no family.

Somebody who has nothing to share does not attract anybody. [AL](#).

Maskini hana rafiki. [EM](#) m4.

A poor person has no friends. Cf. #1587b, 1600,

3861. Maskini hohehahe, hana mbele wala nyuma. [B](#).2.48.

An utterly poor and destitute person has no front nor behind.

That person has nowhere to look for help or to fall back upon.

The expression *Asiye na mbele wala nyuma* means that a person has no power or rights, a kind of pariah.

Wanijua ni mkata sina mbele, sina nyuma. [T](#).580.

You know I am a pauper, without either antecedents or prospects.

Hana mbele wala nyuma. [V](#).132, [WIKON](#).235.

His/ her family tree does not go far. V.

Huna mbele wala nyuma. [J](#): [KS](#). *mbele*.

You have nothing before or behind you.

In the same line of abuses:

Huyu si fidia ya gidamu ya kiatu cha baba yangu. [J](#).

That one is not worth my father's shoelace.

Wala si fidia ya makamasi yangu. [WIKON](#).235.

That person is not worth my snot. Cf. #1577.

3862. Maskini kama wanamaji wa bwana muyaka. [T](#).247.

Poor as the mariners of Mr. Muyaka.

From a very long poem. Muyaka rounded up all his poor relatives and took them on his ship for a treasure hunt and brought them safely back to Mombasa. (1800?) [T](#).

3863. Maskini mtu kwao ugeni si kitu chema. [T](#).248.

For a person, poor at home, it is not a good thing to be in a foreign land.

3864. Maskini ndiye awe tajiri. [NGU](#).

A poor person may become rich.

3865. Maskini ni mtoto wa kwale: ukimleta mjini, anarudia porini. [AL](#) 825.

A poor person is like a young partridge, if you take it to town, it will return to the wild.

Not being suitable for society. Incurable.

3866. Maskini si yule tu ambaye hana, pia yule amabaye anacho, lakini anataka zaidi. [NGU](#).

A poor person is not only the one who has nothing, but also the person who has, but wants more.

3867. Maskini yoyote asemayo ni makosa. [MA](#).295.

Whatever a poor person says is wrong.

3868. Mbalamwezi taa ya maskini. [NGU](#).

Moonshine is the lamp of the poor.

3869. Mbuzi wa maskini hazai, na akizaa huzaa tasa. [EM](#) m6.

A poor person's goat does not produce, and if it does, it produces a barren goat.

If poor people get some property, however much they try, it does not increase as fast as that of the rich. EM. Cf. #1582

3870. Mfinyanzi hulia gaeni. [J.](#), *finyanga*; [T](#).257; [SACL](#). 545; [E](#).25.51, [FSM](#).108; [V.](#), *gai*; [RECH](#).313; [KB](#).177; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#), *gae*.

A potter eats from a potsherd.

A tailor wearing strips of cloth; a mechanic in a bad car; a chicken breeder eating no eggs; the children of the sheikh or pastor do not know religion, etc. [MARA](#).

Used when people try to get involved in things that are not of their concern, while forgetting their own poor performance. [FSM](#).

Mfinyanzi analifikia gae. [AL](#) 56.

A potter will get [to eat] from a potsherd.

Workers who are not very shrewd will barely profit from their work. [AL](#)

3871. Mfinyanzi hupika kwa vigae. [REK](#); [EM](#) m13.

The potter cooks in a broken pot. Cf. #1574a.

3872. Mkata haisi kula na mkwasi, akianza kula swi hulia kichwani. [SACL](#).305, 569; [T](#).269.

A poor person does not know how to eat with a wealthy person; eating fish that person would start with the head.

It is not always easy to abandon one's former ways.

Haisi: Northern dialect. Negative present irregular of *yua*, to know. *Hajui* in standard Swahili.

Swi or *nswi* or *samaki*: fish.

Mkata haisi kula na mkwasi. [AL](#) 858.

A poor person does not enjoy eating with the rich.

People of different status don't visit each other. Cf. #1608.

3873. Mkata hana kinyongo. [J.](#), *mkata*; [E](#).26.67; [T](#).269a [SACL](#).389; [V.](#), *kinyongo*; [MARA](#) 3.

A poor person cannot afford to have whims. [J](#).

The destitute must have no grudge, and must bear everything. [SACL](#).

A poor person has no contempt [for anything, however mean or trivial]. [E](#).

Mkata is an old word for *masikini*: a poor person. It is now obsolete, except in proverbs. [E](#).

Mtarazaki hana kinyongo. [FSM](#).130.

A person looking for food doesn't feel bad.

Someone seeking food is so accustomed to denials that that person feels no bitterness.

Mtarazaki: someone looking for food.

Nisimbulie unipe, mkata hana kinyongo. [SACL](#).559; [T](#).436; [KA](#).

Abuse me, but give it to me, a poor person is not easily offended.

Simbulia: give trouble, remind somebody constantly of what you have done to help that person when in trouble

Mtashi hana kinyongo ajapowaswa hakomi. [T](#).319b [SACL](#).608; [SACL](#).72, *mkata hana*; [KS](#), *mtashi*.

An earnest pleader does not have scruples and does not stop even if warned.

Mtashi hana haya. [KS](#), *mtashi*.

A needy person has no shame.

Mtashi, from *-taka*, desire: a person who begs, who pleads earnestly, impudently. Cf. #1305.

3874. Mkata hapendi mwana. [T](#).270; [E](#).27.68; [I](#).52; [ka](#); [MARA](#) 3.

Maskini hapendi mwana. [KA](#).

Poor people do not love their children.

They have no material way of showing their love for their children by way of gifts. [F](#).
Cf. # 1743; #1621; #899.

3875. Mkata hapiki kuku, mpaka mwaka wa sotoka. [PM](#). 303.13.

A poor person does not cook a chicken except in the year of chicken pest. Cf. #1588.

3876. Mkata hendi mkele, na angenda mkele, akipakia jahazi mtele tele, hurudi na upele. [T](#).271; [KA](#).

A poor person does not go to Makalla, and even when going to Makalla and filling his vessel with abundance of rice, that poor person returns with scabies.

From a song. To show how hard it is for a poor person to improve his material condition.

Angenda: if one would go.

Mtele for *mchele*: rice.

Mkele for *Makalla* (town in Ethiopia). Cf.1580.

3877. Mkosa jembe halimi. [JK](#).128.

The person who lacks a hoe cannot cultivate.

Poverty begets poverty.

3878. Mkosa kitoweo humangiria. [E](#).27.75.

A person who has no relish, eats dry food.

3879. Mkosefu wa mali si maskini. [MA](#).294.

Lacking money is not [necessarily the same as] being poor.

3880. Mnyonge hana jamaa. [JK](#).128.

Maskini hana ndugu. [AL](#) 115.

A pauper has no kin.

3881. Mnyonge kama kinda la ndege. [REK](#).

Poor and helpless like a young bird.

3882. Mnyonge, msonge. [JK](#).128; [RSP](#).1.

Opress the poor person.

3883. Mnyonge na kiko chake. [NGU](#).

The poor have their pipe.

Their troubles.

3884. Msafiri maskini ajapokuwa sultani. [T](#).310; [A](#) 186, *mfalme*; [E](#).30.100.

Msafiri awapo sultani ni maskini. [KB](#).198.

A traveler is a poor person, even when a ruler.

Travelers encounter many dangers. KB.

3885. Mshairi yu fakiri. [RSP](#).40.

A poet is poor.

Poets are leading an ascetic life, they are men of wisdom and restraint who deserve respect and support. RSP.

3886. Msi chake mwenda zake. [JK](#).128; [JKP](#).

A person that owns nothing, walks alone.

Masikini hatakikani, hajaliwi, hana kitu. [JKP](#).

"The poor is unwanted, ignored, has nothing.

No one wants to have anything to do with a poor relative." [JKP](#).

3887. Mtu akikosa mali hawi mtu mbele ya watu. [J](#).

A person without money is not seen as a person by others.

3888. Mtu akiwa na pesa, utamjua kwa mwendo wake. [JK](#) 142.

By seeing how a person walks you know there is money.

3889. Mtumaini mahari ya dadake hufa mseja. [REK](#).

He who puts his hope on the bride's wealth of his sister will die a bachelor.

Mjeja: bachelor.

3890. Mwenye chake hawezi kukitupa. [AL](#), *weza*; [AL](#) 1787.

You cannot throw away your defects.

Mwenye lake haachi. [AL](#) 1788.

What is natural to a person cannot be shed.

Is permanent, cannot be changed.

3891. Mwenye kupata asimsahau asiyepata. [FSM](#).159.

The person who has acquired wealth should not forget the one who didn't. Cf. #1128.

3892. Mwenye mali ndiye mkosa mali. [KB](#).221.

The rich person is still lacking things.

Greed is often a vice of the rich. Cf. #1615.

3893. Mwenye njaa haamkuliwi. [REK](#).

A hungry person is not visited.

Amkuliwi or *amkiliwi* from *amka*: to visit.

Mwenye njaa hasalamiwi. [REK](#).

A hungry person is not greeted.

Has nothing to give.

Cf. The sultan who has no uji. No: ?

3894. Mzoea punda hapandi farasi. [E.K](#).

A person used to riding a donkey does not mount a horse.

Said by people who feel uncomfortable in a rich and luxurious environment. Cf. #1594.

3895. Ndege za mwituni wapita za nchi kavu kulia. [KB](#).236.

The birds of the forest complain more than the birds of the dry land. [KB](#).

The birds of the forest have plenty to eat, those of the village or town must go to the forest for provisions. The rich have more complaints than the poor.

3896. Ng'ombe wa maskini hazai mapacha. [KS](#), *pacha*.

The cow of the poor does not give birth to twins. Cf #1582

3897. Ng'ombe wa mnyonge hazai, na akizaa ndama wake hukanyagwa na ng'ombe wa mkubwa. [EM](#) n15

The cow of a poor person does not procreate, and if it does, the calf is stepped on by the cow of the boss.

Mbuzi wa maskini hazai. [EM](#) m6.

The goat of the poor does not give birth. Cf. #1582.

3898. Ni rahisi kupata fedha na siyo kuzitunza. [NGU](#).

It is easy to get money, but it is not easy to take care of it.

Easy come, easy go.

3899. Nondo hana nguo za heshima. [B](#).1.32.

Nondo hana nguo shima. [T](#) 437.

A moth has no festive clothes.

Used as an excuse for poor appearance in public.

3900. Nta si asali, nalikuwa nazo si uchunga. [E](#).40.21; [KA](#); [NGU](#).

Wax is not honey; "I had them" is not the same as I am herding them now. [E](#).

Said about people who boast about things they once had.

Nta si asali, nilikuwa nazo, si akiba. [AL](#) 44.

Wax is not honey. "I had them" is not the same as a reserve.

3901. Pele hupewa msi kucha. [E](#).41.9; [AL](#) 1766.

It is when you have no fingernails that you get scabies.

A poor person working hard with his hand cannot keep fingernails and cannot scratch.

A Luo saying has: I am so poor, I scratch myself with a potsherd. At the hight of bad luck. Cf.#3914.

3902. Pesa ni sabuni ya moyo. [NGU](#).

Money is like soap [ointment] for the soul.

3903. Rahisi kuishi kama maskini, vigumu kujifanya tajiri. [NGU](#).

It is easy to live as a poor person; it is hard to make yourself rich.

3904. Si aswili utajiri, ni tunu hutunukiwa. [JK](#).123.

Wealth is not something one owns by original right; it is a gift, it has been given. [JK](#).

3905. Siku ya utajiri, kumbuka siku ya umaskini. [AL](#) 50.

On the day of abundance, remember the day of penury.

Cf. #??? *Siku ya kushiba*.

3906. Simba akikosa nyama hata majani hujilia. [Swahili](#) 2 1968, p.93.

Simba kuzuiliwa nyama kula mayani. [KB](#).282.

A hungry lion will even eat grass.

A desperate person will do anything. [MM](#).

Cf. #452, #1599.

3907. Tajiri huwa fakiri. [JK](#).128.

The rich can become poor.

Cf. #1620, #1607.

3908. Tajiri na maliye, maskini na mwanawe. [RECH](#).505; [CM](#).60; [J](#)., *tajiri*; [V](#)., *maskini*.

The rich and their money are like the poor and their children.

Inseparable and much in love with each other.

3909. Ufukara si kilema, bali pambo la dunia. [REK](#).

Poverty is not a defect of the earth, but an embellishment.

3910. Ukata ukimpata kiumbe hukata. [KB](#).1.

When poverty gets to a person it really hits.

3911. Ukivaa majani, waliwa na mbuzi. [AL](#) 1779.

If you wear a grass skirt, you'll be eaten by goats.

If you debase yourself, others will lower you still more.

3912. Ukulivu huvuta ufukara. [AL](#) 372.

Negligence leads to poverty.

Being tired and being lazy are correlated.

Ukulivu: being tired, being overwhelmed.

3913. Umaskini hauna huruma. [REK](#).

Poverty has no mercy.

It is hard to be poor and hard not to be able to help others.

3914. Upele hupewa wasio kucha. [NGU](#).

Upele huwapata waso kucha. [NGU](#)

Scabies comes to those who have no fingernails.

Without fingernails, there is no scratching. This means that they cannot help themselves.

Cf. # 3014.

3915. Usicheze [na] mali, cheza na mwenye mali. [NGU](#).

Don't play with money, play with the wealthy. Cf. 1571g.

3916. Usiwanyonye wanyonge, ukategemea matajiri. [NGU](#).

Don't suck the poor in the hope to get rich.

Matajiri: rich people, wealth

3917. Utajiri ni kivuli. [REK](#).

Wealth is like a shadow.

It is cool, but can suddenly disappear.

3918. Utajiri ni moyo. [EM](#) u35.

Wealth is a matter of the heart.

Wealth is not possessing many things but having a heart of caring for others and co-operating with them in times of sorrow and of joy.

[EM](#).

3919. Vundo la kinyesi ni malazi ya bata. [SAM](#).26.2.

The resting place of the goose is on a dung heap.

Do not despise a poor person who has only a mat to sleep on, or who eats unappetizing food. [SAM](#)

3920. Vya wageni vinaliwa na kipofu. [AL](#) 125.

The blind eats what's offered to the guests.

A blind person cannot be choosy.

3921. Wa stara hafumbuki, wa mbili havai moja. [F](#).51.1; [MARA](#); [AL](#) 1489.; [Nestor](#) p. 68. has *hasumbuki*; [FSM](#) 203.

A modest person cannot be embarrassed, one who has two garbs does not wear only one.
A protected person has more than one way to get out of a bad situation. [AL](#).
Once you have advanced, you cannot go back to primitiveness. [Nestor](#).

Wa mbili havai moja. [SACL](#). 1016; [V.](#), *nguo*; [AL](#) 1490.
A person who is used to wearing two garments does not wear only one.

Wa stara hazumbuki. [KA](#).
A self-respecting person is not shamed.

Wa sitara hafumbuki, wa mbili havui moja. [SACL](#). 816; [AL](#) 1488.
A modest person is not uncovered: a person with two garbs does not discard one.
A person who is supported by an important personage does not easily submit to a downfall. [AL](#).
Wa stara: a modest person. *Stara* is commonly used in connection with covering of private parts. [J](#).

3922. Walo wakinuka vumba, leo wako ambarini. [SACL](#).57; [MS](#).88; [AL](#) 1795.
Those who smelled bad are today in perfume. Cf. #1615.

3923. Wavaji mvae! Sisi tutavaa kama maiti. [AL](#) 1291.
Wear your elegant clothes! We will dress like corpses.
The poor envy the rich.

3924. Wingi si [siyo] hoja. [NGU](#); [KA](#); [SM](#).
Abundance is not a necessity. [KA](#).
Abundance does not always fill a need.

3925. Ya mkiwa haiti, na ikita hupapata. [L](#).108; [V.](#), *mkiwa*.
The [trade] of a poor man brings no profit, and if it brings profit, it is just an accident. [L](#).
Haiti and *ikita* are forms from *kuta* = *kutaga*: lay eggs. KS.; Sacl. *Papata* for *papasa*: to grope. Cf. #1582.

3926. Ya mkiwa haizai nyike. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#); [AL](#) 1712.
The [cow] of a poor person, does not give birth to a female calf.
It's hard to leave poverty behind.
Mkiwa, *maskini*: a poor, destitute person.
Nyike: female cow.
Cf. #1621a; #1572.

3927. Yote utaweza, ukiwa na feza. [RSP](#).24.
You can do everything, if you have money.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Pride - humility

3928. Aibu ghaibu. [RSP](#).62.

Disgrace is [usually] hidden.

3929. Ajidhaniye amesimama, aangalie asianguke. [E](#).1.6.

Those who think that they are standing should be careful not to fall down.

Said of a successful person who is very proud.

3930. Alimaye kandoni mwa njia huonewa na maharamia. [JKP](#).

A farmer who cultivates near the roadside will be eyed by [highway] robbers.

"If you are doing good business, hide it, for there are always the enviers." [JKP](#).

3931. Aliyeko juu mngojee chini. [J](#)..juu; [CM](#).51, *alioko*; [SACL](#).196; [KB](#).16, *juu*; [V](#). *aliyoko juu*; [FSM](#).15, *aliye*; [AL](#)., *chini*; [KS](#) *Aliye juu*.

Wait below for the one who is above. Cf. #1647.

3932. Amezaye ng'ongo atumaini mkundu. [SACL](#).909.

One who has swallowed a strip of raffia hopes for the best. [Free translation.]

Amezaye tunda zima zima hujiaminisha koo lake. [MEM](#).66.

If you swallow a whole fruit you put your trust in your throat. You do that at your own risk. Somebody who boasts should be ready to be challenged. [MEM](#). Cf. #28, #1663.

3933. Angenda juu kipungu hafikili mbinguni. [T](#).29; [E](#).3.27; [A](#).186; [SACL](#).222, *hangenda*; [V](#).72.

Even if the osprey goes high, it does not reach heaven.

Said of an ambitious person.

Pungu huenda mbio, mbinguni hafikili. [V](#).72.

The osprey goes fast, but does not reach to heaven.

Angepaa kipungu maregeo ni mtini. [JKP](#).

The eagle may soar upwards, but it will return to its tree.

Mwenda juu kipungu hafikii mbinguni. [AL](#) 710; [KS](#).*kipungu*.

The high flying osprey does not reach heaven.

Ungenda juu kiboko, makazi yako ni pwani. [T](#).543; [JK](#).140, *ni majini*; [AL](#) 690.

You may go upcountry, hippo, but your home is at the coast.

In the water. [JK](#).

About humility and keeping old relationships. [JK](#).

Kiboko pake ni pwani maregeo ni majini. [JKP](#).

The hippo's place is on the shore, it will always return to the water.

"A person may pretend belonging to a higher class of people, but one day that person will come down again." [JKP](#).

3934. Asiyeye na kombo, ana doa. [SACL](#).434.

Anybody who has no defect has at least a blemish.

Kila mtu ana doa. [JK](#).118.

Every person has a blemish.

Kila mtu na kidonda chake. [MA](#).215.

Every person has a wound.

Every person has headaches and problems.

3935. Avuaye nguo huchutama. [F.5.45](#), [KA](#).

The one who is naked squats low.

When shame befalls, that person keeps quiet, goes in hiding.

Mungwana kivukwa na nguo huotama. [ED.46](#).

Mungwana akivuliwa nguo huotama. [JK.132](#)

Avukwaye na nguo huotama. [MM](#).

Mwenye kuvuliwa kuotama. [SACL](#). 860.

One who is derobed squats low.

Mtu akivuliwa nguo huotama, hainuki. [KS.otama](#).

If a person is derobed, that person squats and does not stand up.

Otama, totama, chutama: squat.

3936. Bora chako, cha mwenzako masimango. [AL](#) 1394; [AL](#) *masimango*.

What is yours is excellent, what's of your friend is laughable.

Masimango: rejoicing over another's misfortune, reproach.

Cf. #? Donda kwa mwenzako.

3937. Cha mtu mavi, chako sukari. [AL](#) 1395.

Somebody else's good is bad, but yours is like sugar.

Mavi: excrement.

3938. Cha mtu mavi; utakiacha ukiona tu. [AL](#) 1278.

The goods of another person are bad, you'll leave them and you'll be satisfied looking at them.

3939. Chemchem si mtemi, lakini atakaye kunywa maji yake sharti ainame. [EM.35.11](#).

A spring is not a king, yet whoever would drink of it must bow.

A spring has fresh water and one who wants to drink the water must bow down to reach the water. Thus, it is not only the ruler who is respected; there are many other valuable things which, if one wants to get them, must be sought with respect. [EM](#).

3940. Chumvi isipite mboga, isiwe uchungu. [AL](#) 291.

There should not be too much salt in the side-dish, otherwise it will be too salty.

Mboga: meat, fish, vegetables, beans; anything that goes with the staple.

3941. Chungu hakioni kivuli chake. [AL.522](#).

The stone pot does not see its shadow.

People do not see their own faults. Cf #1656.

3942. Chupa iliyokuwa chumvi haiachi utamu. [AL](#) 1796.

The jar that kept salt keeps its flavor.

One does not lose one's good points.

Chupa ya marashi haiishi harufu. [AL](#) 1798.

A jar of perfume keeps its smell.

Marashi: scent of liquid perfume.

3943. Dhambi ikikiriwa ni nusu ya marekebisho. [EM.47](#). 13.

A fault confessed is half redressed.

3944. Donda kwa mwenzako linanuka, kwako halinuki. [AL](#) 527.

The sore of your companion stinks, yours does not. Cf. #1656.

3945. Eleza haja, upate haja. [SAM.6.1](#).

Explain your need, so you get what you need.

Don't be too proud to ask for help. Cf. #1257.

3946. Ewe mtuje, kwambe wali tafi ungalikuwaje? [T.64](#).

Mtuje, if you were a *tafi*, what then?

Between these two despised fishes, the *mtuje* and the *tafi* there is not much to choose in point of delicacy.

Used often to express disdain for people adopting foreign airs.

3947. Faida yapita kiburi. [Holiday](#).

Profit surpasses pride.

3948. Hakuna kiumbe asiye na aibu. [MA](#).124.

There is no mortal who has nothing to be ashamed of.

3949. Hakuna mume wa waume. [KA](#).

There is no strong man among strong men.

There is no man who can defeat all other men.

To stop a booster.

3950. Hasara humficha mwenye mabezo. [NGU](#).

One who despises another will be put to shame.

3951. Howe! Ni ya mwenye kufuma: wewe una "howe" gani? [T](#).99.

A hit! Praise is for the successful hunter; what do you shout about?

A rebuke to somebody who boasts about nothing.

Howe: there you are! The cry of the hunter on taking a successful shot.

3952. Jogoo alikuwamo ndani ya yai. [AL](#) 64.

The rooster has its origins in the egg [as all fowl].

Arrogant people tend to forget their origin.

3953. Jogoo la shamba haliwiki mjini. [F](#).13 7; [L](#).30; [KS](#), *shamba*; [AL](#) 784; [H](#).46; [B](#).2.36; Polome 230; [SWA](#). 16, *Jogoo wa shamba*.

The country rooster does not crow in town.

Somebody of importance in a village is often not so in a town. Country bumpkins are usually laughed at by townsfolk.

An authoritarian husband often loses his arrogance outside his home.

3954. Kenge ni kenge; hawi mamba. [NGU](#).

A monitor lizard is a monitor and never will be a crocodile.

3955. Kiburi ni majuto. [SAM](#).9.6.

Arrogance is followed by regrets.

3956. Kiburi si maungwana. [F](#).14 10; [B](#).1 39; 2. 47.

Majivuno si maungwana. [ZAW](#).173.

Arrogance is not noble.

3957. Kichwa cha kuku hakihimili kilemba. [MARA](#) 26; [KS](#), *kichwa*; [AL](#) 926.

The head of a chicken cannot support a turban.

A worthless person should not be invested with authority. Cf. #188; #1664.

3958. Kieleacho huzama. [TAA](#) 10.

What floats will sink.

Whatever is up will not last.

3959. Kila muacha samboye hwenda ali mwanamaji. [T](#).180; [SACL](#). 792; [A](#).95; [SAM](#). 9.9; [KA](#); [KS](#), *sambo*.

Everyone leaving his own vessel becomes a common sailor.

3960. Kila ndege mwenye mkia ni lazima aringe. [JKP](#).

Every bird with a tail must show off.

3961. Kima alijua jina la mti sababu ya kuzomewa na watu. [AL](#) 702.

The monkey learned the name of the tree, because it was jeered by people.

One who has been ridiculed away from home, brags at home. [AL](#).

3962. Kipofu kiongozi wa kiwete. [JKP](#).

The blind one is the lame one's guide.

In many vital matters people claim to possess expert knowledge, which they do not have. [JKP](#).

3963. Kizuri hakikosi ila. [KS](#), *ila*.

There is nothing so beautiful that it has not a blemish.

3964. Kufa soni kuona taabu. [AL](#) 1523; [TS](#) 83/1.

Too much shyness means trouble.

If one is too ashamed to beg, that person will be in trouble and may die of hunger. It is better to lower oneself than to die. Cf. #1206.

3965. Kufukuru ya bibi-kisamvu alimwita mungu mjomba. [PM](#). 64; [AL](#). 703.

The blasphemy of Mrs. Cassava-leaf was that she called God her uncle.

Mrs. Cassava-leaf was the housekeeper of Dhanis and ruled over her brothers, whom she disowned. She went as far as to say that she did not know them anymore, because God was her uncle...after the departure of Dhanis, she lived woefully. [PM](#)

Glory and rejection are close together.
This is said of people in power who look down upon others.

Mama anna anasema mungu ni mjombe wake. Maniema dialect. [AL](#) 705.
Mother Anne says that God is her uncle.

3966. Kuhorahora si kwema, mara hanguwa mbichi. [ED](#).21.
It is not good to hit fruit with a long stick, suddenly a green one will come down. [ED](#).
From a war song of Amu:

He herero he!
Kuhora-hora si njema
Marra ni kwanguwa mbichi
He herero he! [SACL](#).286.

It is not good to show your audacity, one is soon defeated.
Hora-Hora, a figure in a war song, proudly defying the enemy. Sacleux.
Hura: German exclamation, hurrah!

Kuhurahura si kwema mara uchangia mbichi. Lamu dialect. [JKP](#).
"Stoking is not good, suddenly you will get into the unripe." [JKP](#).
Changa: collect.
"Poking in an old fire may result in waking up the flames as soon as one uncovers ["unripe"] coals.
Young ["unripe"] people must be kept under the supervision ["covered"] of their elders who are more experienced ["burnt"].
Do not disturb family relations, do not stir up sons against fathers. [JKP](#).

3967. Kusemasema kwa ndege hulimpatisha jina. [AL](#) 723.
On account of its loquacity the bird got its name.
One who is boasting too much will make mistakes.

3968. La kwanza udhalili, la pili ukamili. [RSP](#).131.
First humility, then perfection. Cf. #1668.

3969. Lake mtu halimtapishi bali humchefusha. [F](#) 20.3;[AL](#) 1789; [L](#). p 112.
One's foul-smelling sore does not sicken oneself but merely disgusts.
Although a stinking wound may disgust a person, it does not make him sick.
One can live with one's own faults. A parent may get disgusted on account of a child's behavior, but does not reject the child.

3970. Maji hunywa maji yote. [JK](#).134.
Water drinks all water.
The earth drinks all water.
A humble person will receive more than a haughty character, and a modest person will acquire more learning than someone who believes to know much. [JK](#).

3971. Maji ya pondo hayataki tanga. [I](#). pondo; [B](#) 3.24; [SACL](#).757; *uondo*.
Shallow water does not require a sail.
A punting pole is sufficient.
One has to adjust to different situations.

3972. Maji yakijaa hupwa, mpanda ngazi hushuka. [E](#).21. 10; [CM](#).53 [MARA](#) 3.
When the tide is high, it will ebb; a person who climbs a ladder comes down.

Mpanda ngazi hushuka. [H](#).71; [B](#).2.22; [MARA](#).44.
One who climbs a ladder, usually comes down.

Mpanda ngazi hushuka, usingie ujingani. [V](#) *ngazi*.
A person who climbs a ladder comes down, don't do a foolish thing.

Mpanda madaraja yuyashuka. [MA](#).345.
One who climbs up stairs must climb down too. Cf.1649a.

3973. Majivuno hayatakuletea chochote. [NGU](#).
Pride does not bring you anything. Cf. #?? Majisifu

3974. Mata hayakuwa mata, siuze magambaire. [T](#).249.
The arms [bows] were not arms, much less the slings.
If the properly educated fail, how about the rabble? [T](#).
Siuze for *siulize*: don't even ask.

Kamba haikuwa kamba itakuwa kambaa? [MM](#).

If the rope is not a rope, how about palm leaf strips?

3975. Mbunge akili kichwa chake. [JKP](#).

The counselor's brain is his head.

Is his pride.

"A pun on *kichwa*, head or pride. Many men of state have more imagination than true intelligence..." [JK](#).

3976. Mbwa hubweka nyumbani. [EM](#) m7.

A dog barks at home.

A dog knows its home and the inmates. Has self-confidence. In danger it will protect the people. If it barks it shows its domain. If it goes to another place the environment is unfamiliar, and this is not its domain. A person has self-confidence and shows his capabilities when in familiar surroundings. [EM](#). Cf #1637,

3977. Mchuzi ni maji. [T](#).352.

Gravy is water.

There is no gravy without water.

Do not despise people or things because they are common; often they are indispensable. Cf. #1131.

3978. Mkwea mnazi msubiri chini. [EM](#). m22.

Wait for the palm tree climber at the bottom.

If a person in a high position despises you, just be patient because that person will come down.

3979. Mpanda ngazi hushuka. [NGU](#); [BM](#) 2.

One who climbs a ladder will come down.

Mpanda ngazi hushuka, mungu pweke hutukuka. [JKP](#).

The climber of a ladder will come down, only God is truly high.

All people will die, even the powerful. [JKP](#).

Tukuka or *kuwa tukufu*: to be honored, respected.

3980. Msema "siwezekani," simsadiki. [JKP](#).

The one who says "I am invincible," do not believe that person.

3981. Msoma pweke hakosi. [ED](#).41.

The one who reads alone makes no mistakes.

Without criticism from others one thinks highly of oneself. [ED](#). Cf. #1343.

3982. Mtaka nyingi nasaba hupata mwingi msiba. [E](#).30. 109; [L](#).61; [FSM](#).129; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#), *taka*.

One who boasts about ancestry will see plenty of trouble.

Sooner or later that person will meet someone who knows the real truth. [E](#); [MARA](#).

Nasaba: offspring.

3983. Mtu atwapo na ghururi mbele ni maumivu. [T](#) 335.

A person possessed by vanity will see much suffering ahead.

Twawa for *twaliwa*: to be caught.

3984. Mtu haoni aibu yakwe, huona ya mwenziwe. [T](#).452.

You do not see your own defects, but those of your neighbor.

Lao hawalioni. [MA](#).250.

Their own they don't see. Cf. #1656.

3985. Mtu hawezi kumeza jua. [AL](#) 694.

Nobody can swallow the sun.

3986. Mungwana ni kizingiti. [ED](#).47.

A gentle person is like a lintel.

Accepting everything calmly even when stepped upon.

3987. Mwenye mapengo akicheka ulimi huficha. [NGU](#).

When a person laughs the tongue hides the gap between the teeth.

Everyone tries to hide own mistakes and those of the family.

3988. Mwenye sifa hajisifu. [NGU](#).

A respected person does not boast.

3989. Ni shakwe nina mbawa zangu: maji yatanipatapi? [SACL](#).828; [T](#).431.

I am a sea-gull, I have my wings: where can the sea get me?

3990. Nyani haoni kundule, huliona la mwenziwe. [T.438a](#); [F.40.22](#); [KS](#), *nyani*.

The ape does not see its own hind parts, it sees that of its fellow.

We see the faults of others but not our own. Cf. #1653.

3991. Nyingi ghubari huficha ari. [RSP.130](#).

A cloud of dust covers shame.

Of someone who tries to cover mistakes by artful means, or blinds the employer by making the dust fly.

3992. Panzi kuingia motoni kajiona mkuu kama moto. [T.452](#).

The grasshopper, entering the fire, felt as great as the fire.

The reason why the grasshopper went into the fire was that it thought in its temerity that it could extinguish the fire.

3993. Pete ukuvikayo mangi, ifiche kibindoni. [EM](#) p20.

You should hide in your loincloth the ring awarded by the king.

If you receive an honor, don't publicize it.

Mangi: king of the Wachagga.

3994. Si kila mwenye makucha huwa simba. [E.44.6](#).

Not all that have claws are lions. Cf. #1185.

3995. Sijione mtu wa heshima. [KB.276](#).

Don't imagine yourself praiseworthy.

Avoid boasting.

3996. Sione tanga la nguo kasahau la miaa. [T.490](#); [A. 120](#); [SAM.22.4](#); [MS.77](#).

Do not dream about a cloth sail forgetting the matting one.

Be content with what you have, and what has served you well.

Miaa or *miyaa* or *miwaa*: leaves of the Dwarf palm, used for making mats, sails.

Cf. #925. #1438; #.? Usile kwa sahani ukasahau bunguu.

3997. Tangawizi kafa bure, mwenye viungo ni majano. [AL](#) 707

The ginger died in vain, it's the tumeric that makes the gravy.

The ginger is like a person, whose contribution is not fully appreciated. The tumeric, that gives the color, takes all the praise, while the ginger that gives the taste is not mentioned.

3998. Tujivune hatimaye. [JKP](#).

Let us praise ourselves at the end.

Do not count your chickens before they are hatched. [JKP](#).

3999. Uchache wetu si wingi wao. [RECH.551](#).

Our lacks are not their greatness. They are not better than we are. [RECH](#).

Wao: theirs; can change to *wenu*,: yours, or other possessive pronouns.

4000. Ukila na lupao, usisahau mkono. [Swahili.46/2](#), Sept.1976 p.14.

If you eat with a spoon, don't forget your hand.

Many people used their fingers instead of a spoon or fork while eating. If you have climbed the social ladder, don't forget those who did not.

Lupao or *kijiko*: spoon.

4001. Unalalia kirago, unajitandea uchaga. [AL](#), *uchaga*; [AI](#) 693.

You sleep on a mat and cover yourself with a screen.

About sleeping in the open, or under a roof with holes.

Someone poor as Job should not boast.

Uchaga: a screen or fence.

4002. Unavaa meno, unajitandia midomo. [AL](#) 692.

You have teeth and cover yourself with your lips.

Each of us has received natural gifts; no need for boasting.

4003. Upaa wa kanga haustahamili mzigo. [T.547](#); [MS.92](#).

The crown of a guinea fowl cannot support a load.

Said of a "little" person getting too big a responsibility.

Upaa wa kanga haustahimili jua. [KA](#).

The crown of the guinea-fowl cannot stand the sun.

A weak person cannot fulfill a big job. Cf. #1640; #188.

4004. Usijifanye kuku mweupe. [E.48.32](#).

Do not pretend to be a white chicken.

Do not pretend other than you are. Cf. #1118.

4005. Usikune kibuyu mbele ya mwenye upaa. [MM](#).

Don't scratch your little calabash in the presence of a bald person.

Don't try to impress others.

4006. Usimwige tembo kula miiba. [EM](#) u30.

Don't imitate the elephant in eating thorns.

Be modest in your thinking and behavior.

4007. Ungwana si jadi kubeli. [SAM.26.22](#); [KA](#).

Nobleness is not the same as a noble ancestry.

Nobleness comes from the heart.

Jadi or *asili* or *ukoo*: origin.

Kubele or *tukufu*: honorable

4008. Wale wakinuka vumba leo wako ambarini. [AL](#) 1795.

Those who smelled are today in ambergris (perfume).

The parvenu tries to cover the reminders of his origins. [AL](#).

4009. Waliochokipeleka wazungu usijaribu kukifanya wewe. [AL](#) 714.

What the Europeans brought, don't try to make it also.

Don't immitate them blindly.

4010. Za mtu ni mbili--akili na haya. [V.](#), *akili*.

The [best qualities] of a person are two--intelligence and modesty. Cf. #1643.

4011. Zingwizingwi lipe nguo ulione mashauo. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 3.

If you give clothing to a big fool see giant boasting.

Zingwizingwi: a big stupid giant.

Mashauo or *kiburi*: pride, self-glory. Cf. #1640.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Prudence

4012. Aendao polepole atafika mbali. [JKP](#)

The one who goes slowly will get far.

4013. Aendaye polepole hana budi afikile. [JKP](#).

The one who walks carefully will certainly arrive.

4014. Aitikaye hutazama kwanza. [NGU](#).

The one who assents usually will get the first look.

4015. Ajali haijajiri, heri mbele ufikiri. [RSP](#) 66.

Before the accident happens, better think carefully.

4016. Alalaye usimwamshe, ukimwasha, utalala wewe. [F](#).2 14; [B](#) 2.39; [H](#).10; [MS](#).143.

Do not wake up one who sleeps: if you do, you will sleep yourself.

Let sleeping dogs lie.

Usimwamshe aliyelala, utalala wewe. [F](#) 49.35; [WIKOM](#).188.

Do not wake up one who sleeps; you'll sleep yourself.

Cf. #510.

4017. Aliye kando haangukiwi na mti. [T](#) 15; [A](#) 225; [F](#). 2.16: [MS](#).8; [NS](#).18; [V](#) 30; [SACL](#). 68, 328.

A tree does not fall upon someone who stands aside.

Do not unnecessarily expose yourself to danger, or involve yourself in quarrels.

4018. Aliye mbali ufimbo haumfiki. [MA](#).38.

One who is far away will not get hit by the stick.

Implied is that one should keep distance from people fighting.

Cf. #1671.

4019. Aliyekula kitu cha mamba asifike kwa maji. [AL](#) 634; [KB](#) 21.

The one who ate what belongs to the crocodile should stay away from the water. Cf. #1678.

4020. Amina ni kuamini. [NGU](#).

Trust is having confidence.

It comes by practice and experience.

4021. Amini lakini usipite mpaka. [NGU](#).

Have trust, but do not go too far,

4022. Amzinduaye simba hana budi kuliwa. [AL](#), *zinda*; [SACL](#). 1044.

A person who scares a sleeping lion will be devoured.

Don't expose yourself to danger.

Zindua: wake up suddenly from a deep sleep.

But Sacleux (1044) has **amzinduaye simba hana buni kuliwa**.

The one who awakens a lion with a start does not have an ostrich to eat.

Either the lion will eat the ostrich or set it running.

This is either a misprint or a word play.

Buni: ostrich.

Hana budi: he/she must, no way out.

4023. Anayejitoma hakosi. [NGU](#).

The person who enters with determination will not fail.

4024. Anayekanyaga utelezi asiopgopi kuanguka. [NGU](#).

A person who tramples on anything slippery must not be afraid to fall.

4025. Asiyeshoka, mwepuka nyoka. [RSP](#).109.

If you have no axe, avoid the snake.

If you cannot argue well, avoid a clever person. [RSP](#).

4026. Asiyangalia huishia: ningalijua! [SAM](#).3.16.

One who does not consider the outcome will end with an "If I had known."

4027. Asiyemjua simba atazame mtegowe. [SAM](#).4.20.

One who does not know a lion should look at a lion-trap.

Before starting anything look; explore possible dangers.

4028. Atekaye maji mtoni hatukani mamba. [EM](#).18.28.

Someone drawing water from a river should not insult the crocodile.

Do not provoke a stronger person. Cf. #1673.

4029. Athari ya kidole hasara ya mwili. [SAM](#).4.23.

A sore finger hurts the whole body.

If one member of the household is bad or sick, the whole house will suffer.

4030. Atupaye jiwe atupa lililo dogo. [NGU](#).

One who throws a stone throws a small one.

4031. Boriti ya nyumba, ifupishe nyumbani. [EM](#).29.19.

A rafter for the house should be shortened at home.

Otherwise it may be too short to use.

Look before you leap. [EM](#).

4032. Buibui saa nyingine huuma. [FSM](#).28.

Sometimes a spider bites.

Do not provoke people thoughtlessly.

Usually a spider is not harmful to humans, but is capable of hurting if provoked.

4033. Chaka la simba halilali nguruwe. [KA](#).

A pig does not sleep in a lion's den.

Used by a person who hates to live in a place of harassment.

Chaka: a densely wooded place.

4034. Cheche akilia, ficha kuku. [EM](#).34.7.

When the skunk cries, hide the chickens.

4035. Cheche cha moto huchoma msitu. [EM](#).34.8.

A small spark of fire can burn down a forest.

Cheche dogo litajieneza mji mzima kuwaka moto. [MEM](#) 141.

A little spark will spread and set a whole city on fire.

Cheche dogo hufanya moto mkubwa. [MEM](#).140.

A small spark makes a great fire.

Cheche huzaa moto. [NGU](#).

A spark creates a fire.

Small beginnings.

4036. Cheche ikiachiliwa yaanguza mji. [NGU](#).

A spark left alone burns the town.

Cheche isipozimwa huteketeza mji.

A spark that is not put out burns a town. Cf. #1682.

4037. Chui hakumbatiwi. [EM](#).37.15.

A leopard is not embraced. Cf. #1711.

4038. Chukua maji hata ufikilie katika maji, usiyamwae uliyo nayo kwa tamaa ya maji ya mbele. [T](#).508.

Carry water till you arrive at water, do not pour out what you have in hopes of "water on ahead."

Chukua maji hata usikilie maji. [JKP](#).

Carry water until you perceive water.

"Do not use all water until you are certain of being near a well." [JKP](#).

Sikilie: hear, perceive.

Fikilie: reach, arrive at.

4039. Daraja ukilibomoa ujue kuogelea. [EM](#).45.6.

If you destroy a bridge, be sure you can swim.

4040. Dimbwi la maji ulijaribu kijiti. [EM](#).49.18.

Measure the depth of a pool of water with a rod.

Before attempting to do a project you should examine its possibility first. [EM](#).

Cf. #1725.

4041. Dudu liumalo silipe kidole. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

Don't extend your finger to an insect that bites.

Beware of evil people. Don't associate with them.

Cf. #1681; #1683; #1711; #1866; #1869.

4042. Fimbo inayopiga mbanda, uitupilie mbali. [KB](#).51.

The stick that hit your rival, throw it far away.

You the wife of a polygamist throw far away the stick which your husband has used to beat another wife. A punishment given to a close neighbor can also become yours. [KB](#).

4043. Fisi akila mgonjwa, mzima funga nyumba. [T](#) 603.

When the hyena ate a sick person, [you] healthy person close your house.

4044. Fungato hayumizi mkono. [SACL](#).235; [MARA](#) 2; [JKP](#); [NGU](#); [AL](#) 778.

What is well tied does not hurt the hand.

Fungato: a well-tied bundle, so nothing sticks out or slips out. Such a load is easy to carry.

"Tie well does not hurt the hand. On the ships, ropes that hold sails, yards and nets have to be carefully tied and knotted. If one slips, the sailor will have to hold it, so his hand will hurt". [JKP](#).

Fungato hainyong'onezi mikono. [NGU](#).

Tying well does not tire the arms. Cf. #1519

4045. Gongga gogo usikilize mlio wake. [F](#).9.2; [SM](#)., *gota*.

Knock the log in order to hear the sound it makes.

Test it first. Make inquiries.

4046. Hadhari kabla hatari. [KS](#), *hadhara*; [NGU](#), *thahadhari*.

Caution before danger.

Hadhari or *tahadhari*: to be cautious, to take care.

Cf. #1694; #1717a.

4047. Hadhari yavuta heri [EM](#) h1.

Caution brings blessings.

Cf. #1669, #1694, #1717A.

4048. Haifai kumtukania sungura miguu yake mikubwa na tembo akiwa pale. [KB](#).56.

Don't berate the hare for its big feet when the elephant is close by.

4049. Hakuna mzaha wa shingo. [T](#).635e.

There is no ridicule of the throat.

The throat is too vulnerable.

4050. Halla! Halla! Mti na macho. [F](#).9.2; [B](#).3.67.

Watch out! Watch out! A stick and eyes.

Take care, so you do not get a stick in the eye.

A warning against carelessness.

4051. Hasara hufika mwenye mabezo. [F](#).10.11; [KS](#)., *hasara*.

Loss befalls a careless person.

Hasara ya mtu kukosa akili. [EK](#).

To lack good sense is a great disadvantage.

From a song by Siti binti Saad:

*Si hoja uzuri, na sura jamali,
Kuwa mtukufu na jadi kubali
Hasa ya mtu kukosa akili.*

One does not need beauty and a kind face or the desire to be agreeable in order to be exalted. The loss of a person is the lack of good sense. Eastman, p. 201.

4052. Hekima, salama. [RSP](#).60.

Wisdom [creates] well-being. JK.

Wisdom saves.

4053. Ikiwa tumbo ni laini, huli machicha. [EM](#) i11.

If you have a tender stomach, do not eat dregs.

Do not attempt to do something which will harm you.

Machicha: the residuum or lees of oil-producing seeds.

4054. Jihadhari kukalia kuti bovu. [NGU](#).

Beware of sitting on a bad branch.

Beware of what you put your trust in.

4055. Kenge akitembea, jongoo anajianaika. [AL](#) 638.

When the monitor lizard is out walking, the centipede takes it easy in the sun.

Anika: expose to the sun.

4056. Kikwea mnazi, uufumbate. [EM](#) k10.

To climb a coconut tree be sure that you can encircle it with your arms.

If you want to undertake a difficult task, be sure you can master it, otherwise do not attempt it.

4057. Kimya chataka ukumbuu kiunoni mtatile [mtatie]. [AL](#) 214.

Silence asks that you tie a belt round your waist.

Careful planning is needed before taking a decision. Tying a belt stands for doing something big.

Ukumbuu: a sash, a belt.

Kimya: silence, stillness, quietness.

4058. Kobe haumi mguu wa chui. [KB](#).115.

The tortoise does not bite the paw of a leopard.

A meek person does not fight a stronger one.

4059. Kondoo hafuati mbwa wa mwitu. [NGU](#).

A sheep does not follow a jackal.

4060. Kozi halei kuku wa wana. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

The goshawk is not the foster mother of a hen with chicks.

It would be like leaving the cat in charge of meat in the cooking pot.

Kozi: the East African Goshawk; eats chickens.

Kuku wa wana: a hen with chicks..

Cf. # 1686a. #?? Oto la kuku usililaze kichwechwe (Mara 20)

4061. Kufunga sana kulala nje. [NGU](#).

Locking up tightly means sleeping outside.

You may shut yourself out.

4062. Kukalia kisiki ng'wang'wale. [FSM](#).82.

Sitting on a stump is like being in danger of falling off.

About people who criticize constantly, such as a woman who is always blaming her husband for everything, and does things that could cause a divorce. HM, FSM.

FSM cites #357A to explain its meaning. [Kuti kavu kuanguka si ajabu. a dry leaf falling off is nothing to be amazed at.]

4063. Kuku haruki bila hatari. [NGU](#); [AL](#) 938.

A chicken does not fly when there is no danger.

4064. Kuku mgeni hakosi kamba mguuni. [E](#).18.50; [MEM](#). 253; [MARA](#) 3; [AL](#) 938.

A new fowl does not lack a string round its leg.

A foreigner is looked upon with distrust and is observed carefully. [E](#).

A strange woman is watched more closely. [AL](#).

If the rope breaks and the chicken walks in the neighborhood people know that it is a strange chicken. A stranger in the village cannot hide. [MARA](#).

Kamba mguuni:rope on the legs so the chicken stays put.
Cf. #1118.

4065. Kutia ugali katika vitunga. [JKP](#).

Putting porridge-flour in baskets.

"To lay in food supplies, store away something for a rainy day." [JKP](#).

4066. Kwenye ulificha kibuyu, usitupe mafiga. [AL](#) 52; [TS](#) 36/1.

Don't throw your cooking-stones where you have hidden the calabash,
Your impulsive reaction may spoil your design.

4067. Likishika mkoma liue, kesho litakamata mzima. [NGU](#).

If it took a leper kill it, tomorrow it will take a healthy person.

Understood, a dangerous animal: hyena, leopard, lion.

4068. Majani ya karibu uzimishe moto. [AL](#) 504.

Extinguish the fire in the grass near you.

4069. Majivu yenye kupoa huunguza nyumba. [KB](#).150.

Ashes which have cooled burn down the house.

Cf. #1708A.

4070. Mambo ni maarifa, si nguvu. [T](#) 236; [SACL](#). 484.

Know-how, not force [is the way to do things].

One must proceed thoughtfully. Violence is useless.

4071. Mbele ya kuvuta tumbako, yafaa kukohoa. [KB](#).168; [AL](#) 179.

Before you start smoking tobacco, you better cough first.

One ought to weigh the pros and cons before starting something.

4072. Mbuzi siivunje zizi, jicho la nje haliizi. [JKP](#).

Goat, don't break the pen, the eye outside does not refuse.

"Girls should not leave the parental home before they marry. Their restless eyes may spy handsome but scrupulous men, when they look out." [JKP](#). *Iza*: refuse.

4073. Mfukuza kicheche porini kisha mwonye kuku asitembee kichakani. [NGU](#).

Chase the skunk into the wild, then warn the chickens not to go into the bush.

4074. Mfukuza nyoka kwa mikono mitupu hajui afanyalo. [REK](#).

People who chase away a snake with bare hands don't know what they are doing.

4075. Mheshimu shetani akikaa kitini. [NGU](#).

Honor a devil sitting on a throne.

4076. Moto usioweza kuuzima usiwasho. [EM](#) m25.

Do not kindle a fire that you cannot put out.

Do not start something which you cannot control, for you may fail and perhaps damage yourself.

4077. Mtaratibu hushinda mwenye nguvu. [J](#),*taratibu*; [SACL](#). 608: *Uwapo mtaratibu wamshinda mwenye nguvu.*

A careful man usually accomplishes more than a violent person. Cf. #1217.

4078. Mto ukijaa hulala pembeni. [AL](#) 505.

When the river is high, one sleeps on the bank.

Wait until it is safe to cross the river.

4079. Mtu halali karibu na mto, uwapokuwa umekauka maji. [A](#).260; [T](#).338; [SAM](#).17.28.

A person must not sleep near a river, even though its waters have dried up.

Do not put yourself in danger.

4080. Mtu huulizwa amevaani, haulizwi amekulani. [T](#). 341; [F](#).32.125; [KA](#); [AL](#) 1156

People are asked about what they are dressed in but not about what they have eaten.

People do not care what a person does at home, but if that person goes out, then that person is in public, and will be questioned.

A person is not asked about secrets, but about obvious things. KA. Indiscreet questions are not answered. [AL](#).

4081. Mwangalie ayari huyu alioko mtini. [RECH](#).18.

Watch out for the scoundrel who is in the tree.

Somebody above you is the one you must watch out for.

N.B. For more, see the story "Wasafiri wawili na Simba" (Diva, *Hadithi za Esopo*, II, p.15), about the breaking of a promise of mutual

help in case of danger.

4082. Mwenye kuvizia samaki hachokozi maji. [AL](#), *via*; [AL](#) 195.

One who is stalking fish must not upset the water.

4083. Mwenye kuwa na macho hapiti katika njia mbaya. [AL](#) 629

One who has eyes does not pass along a bad road.

4084. Mwenye nguvu mpishe. [E](#).36.163; [B](#).2.22; [H](#).84.

Let the strong-one pass.

You can't do anything else. [E](#).

Discretion is the better part of valour. [H](#).

CF. #491.

4085. Nguruwe aendealo ndilo atendalo. [I](#), *nguruwe*; [T](#).422; [V](#).86; [AL](#) 89.

What a pig goes for, is what it does.

All roads are straight to a dirty mind. [V](#).

The passionate just follow their desires. [AL](#).

But T. has; A pig always minds his own business. T. bases this on a saying often connected with this proverb: *Hukusikia alilosema nguruwe?* "Haven't you heard what the pig said? Well, the pig didn't say a word, went straight to the feeding ground to rut up the ground and feed."

4086. Nguvu hazinunuliki. [SAM](#).20.4

Strength cannot be bought.

A person should not squander his talents.

4087. Nyumba ya mnandi haingii ila mnandi mwenyewe. [T](#).443; [SACL](#). 575.

None enter the nest of the cormorant except the cormorant itself.

The cormorant's nest is said to be attached by a sort of cable to the bottom of the sea. It is in this habitation, crank and flimsy though it be, that the cormorant is supposed to sit and hatch its young; hence, it may be, the above saying: Into such a crazy thing no other bird would venture, even if it might. [T](#).

4088. Oto la kuku usililaze kichwechwe. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

Don't put a skunk in a hen's nest.

The skunk will eat the chicks.

Kichechwe or *kicheche*: a big skunk.

4089. Pa chakachaka hapatupwi jiwe. [REK](#).

Don't throw a stone in a dark bush.

You might hurt somebody or a wild animal might come out.

4090. Palipozimika moto ogopa jivu. [FSM](#).176.

When the fire has gone out beware of the ashes.

Cf. #1681, #1698.

4091. Panya wengi hawachimbi shimo. [REK](#).

When mice are many they don't dig a burrow.

Safety in numbers.

4092. Penye siafu yafaa kupita mbio. [AL](#) 503.

Where there are safari ants one should pass quickly.

Don't expose yourself to danger, pain or abuse.

4093. Penye uvuli ndipo nimwekapo mwanangu. [T](#).459; [MS](#). 65.

The place where there is shade is the place I lay my child down.

I do not consult one hostile or incapable [ignorant?] about my cherished designs. [T](#).

Penye uvuli ndipo mtu alazapo mwanawe. [T](#).459.

It is only in the shady place that a person lays her child down.

4094. Sicheze na mbwa, takula shafu. [ED](#).70.

Don't play with a dog, it'll bite your calves.

Do not associate with bad people, not even lightly. [ED](#).

4095. Sicheze na paka vue. [A](#).119; [T](#).497a.

Do not play with a wild cat.

Sicheze na...: don't play with. Understood as referring to dangerous people, morally or socially.

Vue or *chaka*: a dense pad of forest or thicket of long grass.
Cf.#1683.

4096. Sicheze na tezo, itakuvuaza. [T](#).498; [ED](#).81.

Do not play with an adze, it will wound you.

Be careful with people who can hurt you.

4097. Sile viambiwa ni sumu: alae havimlichu, humpeleka kuzimu. [SACL](#).472.

Don't eat what is called poisonous; it does not spare the one who eats it, but takes that person to the world hereafter.

Licha or *likiza*: let go, dismiss.

Cf.#1340.

4098. Sime ukiikimbia, usingie kwenye ala. [EM](#) s16.

If you flee from the sword, don't hide in the scabbard.

If you try to escape a danger, don't place yourself where it can be more dangerous. [EM](#).

Sime: a large knife or short two-edged sword.

4099. Simpandi punda asiye na matandiko. [T](#).489; [A](#).207; [V](#)., *punda*.

Don't mount a donkey which has no saddle.

Do not embark in any scheme that is not well matured or not understood well.

Cf. #1715.

4100. Sisafirii chombo kipya. [T](#).492.

Don't travel in a new vessel.

Sisafiri katika chombo kipya kuacha kikuukuu. [KA](#).

Don't travel in a new vessel leaving the old one.

Also: don't leave an old trustworthy friend for a new one, one hardly knows.

Cf. #1714; #1661; #925.

4101. Sishindane na maji yatakumeza. [ED](#).69; [JK](#). 125.

Do not fight against water, it will swallow you up.

Don't fight authority.

4102. Siuchezei muhogo mchungu. [V](#)., *muhogo*; [JKP](#).

Do not play with bitter cassava.

It is poisonous if not cured.

Cf. #1719, #1711, #1712, #1714.

4103. Subiri ukikuta mto umefurika. [EM](#) s24.

If you find the river flooded, wait.

Wait for the right moment to do something.

4104. Taratibu taratibu, heri kuliko matibu. [RSP](#).47

Careful, careful is better than medicine.

4105. Tazama kabla hujaruka. [NGU](#).

Look before you jump.

4106. Tazama wendako, ya mungu mengi. [NGU](#).

Look where you are going, anything is possible.

Ya Mungu mengi : the things of God are many.

4107. Tazama ya kale ubashiri yajayo. [NGU](#).

Consider the things that have passed, they predict what is coming.

Tazama yajayo. [NGU](#).

Look at what is passed.

4108. Tuondoe silaha za kutuharibu, kabla hazijatuharibu. [NGU](#).

Let's get rid of harmful weapons, before they harm us.

4109. Tusitukane wakungu, kuzaa bado kwaja. [REK](#).

Let's not insult the midwives, when birthing has not yet come.

4110. Ukicheza na mjinga atakutoboa jicho. [REK](#).

If you play with a fool, he'll pierce your eye.

Fools set stools for wise men to stumble at.

4111. Ukienda mbele - usisahau kutazama nyuma. [NGU](#).

If you go forward - don't forget to look back.
Remember where you came from.

4112. Ukila na jahili usimshitue. [KA](#).

If you eat with a cruel people, don't startle them.
If you cooperate with fools, be careful to tell them what you are doing, because they could make things difficult for you.
Jahili, mjinga, baradhuli: a fool, ignorant, cruel.

Ukila na kipofu, mridishe. [REK](#).

If you eat with a blind people, satisfy them.
Ridisha: cause to be content, satisfy, please.
Cf.#167. 510.

4113. Ukila samaki angalia mwiba. [NGU](#).

If you eat fish look out for a bone.

4114. Ukimfungia kambuluku mzigo, uangalie miguu yake. [AL](#) 289.

If you burden a dwarf antelope, observe its legs.
The legs are very thin.

4115. Ukimwamsha aliyelala, utalala wewe. [CAPD](#).

If you wake up one who sleeps, you will sleep yourself.
Cf. #1670

4116. Ukisisitiza amani huleta ugomvi. [NGU](#).

If you admonish constantly about peace you provoke a quarrel.

4117. Ulipoficha kisukari, usilie ngawa. [AL](#) 60.

When you have hidden the sweet sugar banana, don't call the civet-cat.
Don't invite a thief. Probably the end of a story in which the civet eats the banana. [AL](#).

4118. Unapokunywa maji fikiri yametoka wapi. [NGU](#).

When you drink water think where it comes from.

4119. Unapotoka nje tazama mawingu. [NGU](#).

When you go outside look at the clouds.

Ukiingia nyumbani tazama nyuso. [NGU](#)

When you enter a house look at the faces.

4120. Usicheze maji yanayosimama. [REK](#).

Don't play in still waters.
Still waters run deep.

4121. Usicheze na mwana wa chui. [PM](#) 84.

Don't play with the young of a leopard.
Its claws will grow.
Cf. #1710, #1712.

4122. Usicheze na simba, ukamtia mkono kinywani. [E](#) 48.30.

Don't play with a lion, putting your hand in its mouth.
That would go too far. [E](#).

4123. Usiende choo chini ya mchikichi. [TS](#) 126/50.

Don't relieve yourself under a palm tree.
When a bunch of palm nuts is cut, it may fall in excrement.

4124. Usikamate kuku kama mgeni yupo pa mlango. [AL](#) 719.

Don't grab a chicken [for dinner], at the moment a visitor is at the door.

4125. Usiloweza, sibebe. [JK](#) 125.

Do not carry what you cannot.

4126. Usimchekelee chui anayeficha kucha zake. [KB](#) 326.

Don't laugh at a leopard that hides its claws.
Be careful with those in power.

Ficha kucha: hiding the nails. Means to hide one's power, evil intentions, or meanness.

4127. Usinunue ndezi aliyefungwa mfukoni. [KB.327](#).

Don't buy a wild animal enclosed in a bag.

Don't buy a pig in a poke.

Ndezi or buku: a rodent living in swamps.

4128. Usiombe kukutanana na simba. [JK.146](#).

Do not pray to meet a lion.

Do not ask for trouble. [JK](#).

4129. Usishue dau na maji yajaa. [JK.141](#); [KS](#), *shua*.

Do not launch the boat while the water is high.

4130. Usiupige teke mchokoo. [NGU](#).

Don't kick a sharp stick.

You will get hurt.

Mchokoo: a pointed stick for digging or a fishing spear.

4131. Usiishtaki upepo ukiangusha tundu la ndege. [AL](#) 305.

Don't blame the wind if it overthrows a bird's nest.

It's the fault of the bird that built a poor nest.

4132. Usiweke mayai yako yote ndani ya kikapu kimoja. [NGU](#).

Don't put all your eggs in one basket.

4133. Usiyavuke maji usiyoweza kuyaoga. [E.49.43](#)

Do not cross water that is too deep for bathing.

Cf. #1686.

4134. Wavutapo yuachie, waachiapo tuvute. [EM](#) w20.

When they pull we should let go, and when they let go we should pull.

Take it when the other gets tired. Wait for your turn.

4135. Wende polepole na utaratibu: utakamata mkia na kima. [KB.346](#).

Go slowly and carefully, and you will grasp the tail of the monkey.

Be crafty if you want to know the character of somebody. [KB](#).

4136. Zizini mkitia chui: majuto hayaishi. [SACL.1047](#); [T.600](#).

If you put a leopard in the fold, the regret of it never ends. [T](#).

You will never stop to be sorry. [SACL](#).

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Reputation (of persons and places)

4137. Anayelaumiwa ni yule mwenye bahati mbaya. [MULIKA](#) no.1 (1971?), p, 10.
The unlucky person is always blamed. Cf. #689.

4138. Avumaye baharini papa, kumbe wengine wapo. [H.17](#); [E.5.57](#); [B.3.57](#); [KS](#) papa.
The one who is famous in the sea is the shark, but then there are others.
It is not the only pebble on the beach. Cf. #1757.

4139. Chombo kilichopikiwa samaki, hakiachi kunuka vumba. [E.7.5](#); [SWA.19](#); [B.3.50](#), 4.56; [H.26](#); [L.14](#); [KB.42](#), *hakiachi harufu*; [MS.44.17](#), *hakikosi*; [KS](#), *vumba*.
A pot in which fish has been cooked keeps a fishy smell.

4140. Chui ageuke doa moja lake. [JKP](#) 604.
Let the leopard change just one of its spots.

Chui hageuki madoadoa. [JKP](#) 606.
A leopard cannot change its spots.

4141. Chui ni mnyama wa hatari: ana bahati ya shetani. [B.3.67](#).
The leopard is a dangerous animal: it has Devil's luck.

4142. Damu ya kunguni balaa. [EM.44.3](#).
The blood of a bug is misfortune. [EM](#).
If a bug is scratched, it emits a bad odor which is easily recognized by people who then pursue it. But there are insects such as a fly, which don't have that odor even if badly scratched. This means that there are people who, if they make a mistake, however slight, are easily found out and punished seriously for it. But there are others who, however great the damage they cause, nothing ever seems to happen to them. [EM](#). Cf. #1729.

4143. Fisi hastahili kutumwa nyama. [REK](#).
A hyena is not worthy to be served meat.
About ungrateful and wasteful people.

4144. Gongwa ni mwina wa kina. [T.68](#); [SACL.382](#), 650.
Mombasa is a deep hole.
It swallows one up.
Kina: deep water, too deep to stand in.

Gongwa ni mwina wa kisa. [T.69](#).
Mombasa is a dark hole.

4145. Jina jema hung'aa gizani. [E.12.3](#); [B.1.39](#).
A good name shines in the dark.

4146. Jina jema lashinda mali nyingi. [NGU](#).
A good name is better than many riches.

4147. Jungu kubwa huficha ukoko. [NGU](#).
A big cooking pot hides the hard-burnt food.

4148. Jungu kuu halikosi ukoko. [E.13.10](#); [B.4.41](#); [L.3I](#); [NGU](#); [AL](#) 864; [JKP](#); [KS](#), *ukoko*; [T.444](#), [A.73](#), [V.118](#): *nyungu*; [FSM](#) 59; [V.](#), *chungu*.
A big pot is not without some crust.

In a big family there are sure to be some squabbles. [F.](#); [T.](#)

In a large family there is always something to eat. [L.](#)

In the family circle one always finds assistance, even if it is inconvenient or is reduced to the bare essential. [AL.](#)

This proverb is used for old people, because they understand the need for storing things. So we should go to them for advice or help.

When the family have eaten their fill, the servants and the poor may scrape the crusts from the pot. A rich man may always have odd jobs to do for his poorer brethren. [JKP.](#)

Jungu kuu: A large cooking pot used for big party cooking.

ukoko: food that clings to the pot.

4149. Kendwa hayendwi, mkenda kumi, hurudi kenda. [L.](#) 33; [SACL.](#)340; [V.](#), *Kendwa*; [AL](#) 508.

Kendwa is not a place to travel to; if you number ten in going there, you will number nine when coming back. [L.](#)

One will die. [V.](#)

Kendwa: a place near Mombasa which had a bad reputation. Cf. #1928.

4150. Kijito kinaweza kukauka maji, lakini jina hubaki. [EM](#) k9.

The stream may dry up, but retains the name.

If a person with a good name, due to his services, declines in his performances, his reputation will still continue.

4151. Kikiharibika ni cha fundi, kikifaa ni cha bwana suudi. [T.](#)145; [A.](#)139; [SAM.](#) 9.7. *Swedi*; [KA.](#)

If it is spoiled, it is the artisan's fault; if it will do, it is the rich Mr. Suudi's work.

The rich take all the credit for that for which their money pays, the hireling gets none and often is blamed.

4152. Kila mkosaji hujishuku. [NGU.](#)

Everyone who makes a mistake loses some self-esteem.

After a mistake one blushes.

4153. Kila mtu huona mzigo wa mwenzie ukuti. [EM](#) k11.

Everyone thinks that the burden of a companion is as light as a dry coconut leaf.

4154. Kisauni kutamea mvinde? [T.](#)156.

Will the Kisauni grow the casuarina?

The general meaning is: What good can come from ...?

This saying is used by putting whatever name is a propos. e.g., *Ajabu Mvita kumea mvinde*. A wonder a person from Mombasa growing a casuarina.

Kisauni: a creek near Mombasa.

Mvinde: casuarina, a feathery conifer.

Kutamea barani mivinde, nani kwao pasipo na wende. [JKP.](#)

Will there grow casuarina trees inland? Who has no friends in his own town?

"Every man grows and prospers in his homeland". [JKP.](#)

4155. Kongowea haimenzi mgomba. [T.](#)164.

Mombasa will not grow the banana-tree.

From a song about the haughty inhabitants, by Muyaka. [T.](#)

As the soil so are the people. Cf. #1220.

4156. Kongowea hayebu mwenyi makuu. [SACL.](#) 199.

Mombasa cannot stand the pompous.

-ebu: a little-used word meaning *-taka*: to want, desire.

4157. Kubomoa ni rahisi kuliko kujenga. [EM](#) k24.

It is easier to pull down than to build up.

It's easier to see another's faults and destroy that person's reputation than to see the better side and give praise.

4158. Kuku hawekwi shahidi, wala hajui sheria. [T.](#)173; [A.](#)72; [SAM.](#)10.16, *haekwi*; [MS.](#)183; [AL](#) 925.

A fowl is not set as a witness nor does it know the law.

Used when people talk about things they know nothing about.

4159. Lisemwalo lipo; ikiwa halipo, lipo nyuma linakuja. [F.](#)20.8; [KB.](#)140; [H.](#)59; [SWA.](#)21; [AL](#) 1891; [MS.](#)133;

What is being talked about is here; if it is not here, it's coming along behind. [E.](#)

Liambiwalo liko liko, na likiwa haliko li njiani laja. [JKP.](#)

Anything people say is there, and if it is not there, it is on the way

"It will come soon because people talk about it." [JKP.](#)

Isipokuwa itakuwa, itatendeka. [AL](#) 1890.

If it has not arrived yet it will, and it will be done. Cf. #1416.

4160. Maskini haokoti, akiokota huambiwa kaiba [keba]. [F.22. 20](#); [B.1.75](#); [MARA 3](#).
Poor people do not pick up things; if they do, people say that they have stolen them.

4161. Mbwa koko mkali kwao. [KS](#), *mbwa*; [AL](#) 1585.

A bush dog is fierce when in its own.

A loose running dog has the reputation of being bad among its own. [AL](#).

People outside the law have nowhere to go. Cf. #? Mbwa hubweka nyumbani... #1637.

4162. Mpe mbwa jina mbaya halafu umnyonge. [NGU](#).

Give the dog a bad name and then strangle it.

4163. Mpemba akipata gogo hanyii chini. [F.29.94](#).

If the natives of Pemba can get a log, they don't relieve themselves on the ground.

Nothing but the best. [E](#).

4164. Mpemba hakimbii mvua ndogo. [F.29.95](#).

A native of Pemba does not run away from a little rain.

Because when it rains in Pemba it falls heavily. [MM](#).

4165. Mpemba hashoni tomo dogo. [F.29.96](#).

A native of Pemba does not sew a small container. [MM](#).

They do everything big.

Tomo: a basket-like container, sewn with palm leaves (*miyaa*); intended to carry grain or food. [MM](#).

4166. Mrima nyarima, usipoliwa na nyani, utaliwa na kima. [L.57](#); [SACL](#). 590; [V.](#), *Mrima*.

Mrima is a land of pitfalls: if you are not eaten by baboons, you will be eaten by monkeys.

Mrima is the coastland between Vanga and the mouth of the Rufiji River, facing Zanzibar. It used to have a bad name among travellers. Here, baboons stand here for the inhabitants of the towns, and monkeys for the inhabitants of the country.

Nyarima = *ni ya rima*. *Rima*: a pit for catching big game. [L](#); [SACL](#).

4167. Mtoka mbali hana sheria. [AL](#), *mtoka*; [AL](#) 1398.

Someone who comes from afar has no law.

Sheria: law, justice.

A traveler does not observe law, but it can also mean that a stranger does not obtain justice. A stranger is always under suspicion.

Cf.#331A, Msafiri kafiri.

4168. Mtu huyu ndiye kijogoo wa mji siku hizi. [RECH](#).197.

This person is the town rooster nowadays.

About a notorious character.

4169. Mvita ina mambo tumbi-tumbi. [SACL](#). 910.

Mombasa has things in great quantities.

Tumbi-tumbi or *kocho-kocho* or *teletele*: in abundance.

4170. Mvita kwa mwenda pole, mwenda kwa haraka hukwaa dole. [T.360](#).

Mombasa is for the person who goes gently; a person in haste will hurt his toe. Cf. #1159.

4171. Mvita, mji wa ndweo. [SACL](#). 673

Mombasa is a town of drunkenness.

4172. Mwarabu harabu. [V.](#), *Mwarabu*.

An Arab is a destroyer.

A nasty play on words. *Mwarabu* [Arab], *mharabu* [a destroyer]. Cf. #1925.

4173. Mwenye lake haliwachi. [MM](#); [JK](#) 129.

One cannot leave one's character behind.

Said of people who try to hide their faults or pretend to be what they are not; well, they cannot, at some time they will show their true self. [MM](#).

We cannot change our character, we just have to learn to live with it.

This cryptic proverb was explained to me by means of an example: *Alikuwa na mkono, sasa vilevile ana mkono*: That person had sticky fingers and now still has sticky fingers. [JK](#).

4174. Mwenye tumbo ni tumbole, angafunga mkaja. [F.36. 168](#); [FSM](#).155.

She who is pregnant is pregnant, even if she wraps herself with a wrap-around.

You don't achieve something by merely pretending you have achieved it. [E](#).

Mkaja is the cloth a woman wears round her stomach after giving birth, to reduce the stomach [E](#).

One of the presents usually made to the bride's mother at marriage. [J](#). Cf. # 1354.

4175. Naona hutoki unguja, umekunywa maji ya kiponda. [SACL](#). 604.

I see that you have not left Zanzibar, you have been drinking water from the Kiponda fountain..

Unguja [Zanzibar] comes from *ungo* [flat basket] and *jaa* [full]: a flat basket full of people. [V](#). But Krapf suggests that the name may be related to *unguza* [to scorch], on account of the great heat troubling people at certain times.

Kiponda: a well known fountain in Zanzibar.

4176. Ni msimbo wa milele, hata kesho kiyamani. [T](#).430; [SACL](#). 596.

It is an imputation dishonorable forever, until the Resurrection. [Sacl](#).

4177. Nyama wote wangawako, mkuza-pezi ni papa. [T](#).438; [SACL](#). 568; [KS](#), *pesi*.

Though all the creatures be there, the lifter of the [dorsal] fin is the shark.

There are many dangers in the sea, but the only apparent one is the shark. However, the experienced mariner knows how many are not on the surface. [T](#). Cf.#1729.

4178. Pemba peremba. [SACL](#). 744.

Visit Pemba prudently.

Pemba peremba ukija na winda utarudi na kilemba. [KS](#), *peremba*.

Visit Pemba Island carefully: if you go with a loincloth, you come back with a turban.

Peremba: to go with care.

4179. Samaki wote hunuka, walimshuku kambale. [MP](#).302.7

All fish smell, but they suspected the catfish.

If a fish stinks, one suspects at once that it is a catfish.

A bad reputation always follows you. [MP](#).

4180. Tamu ya chai sukari. [EM](#) t2.

The sweetness of tea is the sugar.

Although the tea is praised, what makes many people like tea is the sugar in it. So a person's reputation derives from personality and not from appearance.

4181. Ukihama mji, haifai kunya mavi. [AL](#) 37.

If you move your homestead, it's not nice to leave your excrement behind.

Don't leave a bad reputation behind you.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Secrets

4182. Amejiua kwa kisu chake. [MA](#) 51.

So and So has committed suicide with his/her own knife.
Someone telling a secret to someone not trustworthy. Cf. #1803.

4183. Anayeishi chini ya mti ndiye ajuaye riziki ya mchwa. [REK](#).

The person who lives under the tree is the one who knows the life of the termite.
Riziki: livelihood, needs for a living.

4184. Anayekueleza ya nengine atawaeleza wengine ya kwako. [EM](#).11.12; [KA](#).

One who tells you about others will tell others about you.
Who chatters to you will chatter of you. [EM](#). And is not your friend. [KA](#).

4185. Angakaanga, tu chini ya gae. [F](#).3.26; [KA](#).

Whenever someone fries, we are under the potsherd.
Someone always learns about a secret; it always leaks out somehow.

Mngakaanga bizi tu chini mwa taya. [KA](#).

Whenever you roast maize we are under your jaw.

Mukikaanga bisi, sisi tuko chini ya gae. [JKP](#).

If you fry popcorn, we are already at the bottom of the pan [lit., potsherd]. [JKP](#).

This is said when a secret is uncovered.

Bisi or *bizi*: maize, corn, grain.

Tu or *tuko*: we are.

Taya: jaw

Gae: potsherd.

4186. Asemae nageuke jiwe. [T](#).31.

May the person who tells turn to stone.
A quite common saying, based on a fairy tale, in which the hero turned to stone. [T](#).

4187. Asio siri, hanong'onezwi neno. [EM](#).15.22, [JKP](#); [KA](#).

To someone who cannot keep a secret no word can be whispered.
Cf. #1768; *Siri ni ya mtu mmoja*. # ?

4188. Bembe lako usimweleze mwenzio. [NGU](#).

Don't tell your friend about your sweet gifts.
Keep your secrets to yourself.
Bembe: pastry, sweetmeats, esp. of a lover's presents of dainty dishes sent as a sign of affection or regards, especially at the end of Ramadan. Johnson.

4189. Chembamba kina siri kubwa. [REK](#).

A small thing can hold a big secret.

4190. Domo kaya samli kwa mwenye ng'ombe. [KS](#).,*domo*.

A blabber of home secrets is like butter for the dairy farmer.
A secret heard is profitable for the blackmailer.
A farmer praises his butter, a blabber touts stories.
Domo: one who lets out secrets, a blabber.
Kaya: village or homestead.

4191. Faragha ya nyani huishia kokoni. [KS](#),nyani; [AL](#) 752.

The secret of a monkey finishes in the jungle.

The secret of a monkey ends at the mangrove, where it meets its fellows.

Don't trust chatterboxes.

Faragha: a place without people, open spaces; secret, hiding place.

Kokoni: in the undergrowth, jungle, mangrove swamp.

4192. Funika kombe mwana haramu apite. [MARA](#) 3. [E](#).9,6; [KB](#). 54; [E](#).9,6; [KS](#),mwana haramu; [L](#), haramia and L.20 have *kawa* instead of *kombe*.

Cover the plate till the illegitimate child passes.

This proverb enjoins that care be taken not to disclose anything secret in the presence of illegitimate children, who are believed to be particularly mischievous. [F](#).

People shut up when an illegitimate approaches. [MARA](#).

Do not disclose a secret to people who have no right to know. [L](#).

Kombe: bowl, plate.

Kawa: a cover.

Mwana haramu: not legal offspring.

4193. Gogo la choo, la ona mengi. [NGU](#).

The beam of the outhouse sees a lot.

4194. Habari za nyumbani simfunilie jirani. [MA](#).118.

Do not reveal family matters to a neighbor. Cf. #1771.

4195. Hamna, hamna, ndimo mliwamo. [T](#).82; [E](#).10,4; [AL](#) 1744.

It is not in it, it is not in it; [and suddenly] that is where it was. [F](#).

There is nothing inside! There is nothing inside! It is in that [vessel, at least] that food is [wont to be] eaten. [T](#).

The difficulty of this proverb comes from the reading of the word *mliwamo*. It seems that F. understands it as coming from *kuwa* [to be], but T. translates it as coming from *kula* [to eat].

Hamna, hamna, ndimo mliomo. [MM](#).

It is not in, it is not in and there it is in.

The meaning is that: Although everybody said "It is not there," nevertheless it was there. The exception proves the rule. [T](#).

About people denying their secret involvement, or about people who pretend not to know, they are the ones who know. [MM](#).

Waliosema hayawi mbona [sasa] yamekuwa? [NGU](#).

Those who said it does not happen, well it is here now. Cf.#76.

4196. Hapana [hakuna] siri ya watu wawili. [E](#).10,8; [H](#),38; [B](#).2. 26; [SWA](#).34; [MS](#).44,7; [MARA](#) 3; [KS](#),siri.

There is no secret when shared by two people.

Only one person can keep a secret, and that is yourself. [SWA](#).

Hakuna siri ya watu watatu. [KB](#). 60.

There is no secret when shared by three people.

4197. Kashifu nda mungu. [JKP](#).

Revelation pertains to God.

Kashifu: reveal a shameful secret.

Nda or *ni ya*: is of [God].

4198. Kikiwaka na moshi utazuka. [TAA](#) 8.

If something burns, smoke will rise up.

No secret will remain hidden. Things done in great secret will be revealed and acknowledged.

4199. Kilicho chali chako, kilichofunikwa usifunue. [FSM](#).69.

What lies on its back is yours, what is covered do not uncover.

Don't bother with things that do not concern you. What is open for inspection becomes your legitimate knowledge and everyone else's.

What lies on its back is open.

Chali: what lies on its back.

4200. Kilicho ndani ya ngoma chajuliwa na aliyeitengeneza. [KB](#).103.

What is inside the drum nobody knows but the one who made the drum.

The maker of a drum puts a pebble or seed inside the drum. Only God knows all the secrets of everyone. [KB](#).

Cf. # 1774.

4201. Kuchamba kwingi, kuondoka na mavi. [E](#).17,41; [AL](#) 300.

With excessive cleaning, you chance to leave with excrement.

Leave well alone! You won't improve matters by going on tinkering. [E](#). ([Free translation.]

The more you stir, the more it stinks.

Said to somebody who worries too much.

Kuchamba: cleaning after a call of nature. Cf. 360A.

4202. Kunena ni kutolea. [JKP](#).

Speaking is giving away.

4203. Kuta zina masikio. [REK](#).

Walls have ears.

4204. La chumbani halizungumziwi barazani. [EM](#) 12.

That which should be kept in the room, should not be discussed on the verandah.

Where a person not concerned may hear it. This implies that one should not discuss family scandals or quarrels in public. Cf. #1771.

4205. La upenuni halisimuliwi nje. [SAM](#).12.2.

Things from within [the family] should not be told outside. Cf. #1766.

4206. Limbukeni hana siri. [KS](#), *limbukeni*; [MS](#); [ZO](#) p252; [AL](#) 13.

The first time user has no secrets.

Don't tell any secret to that kind of person.

Kupata kwa limbukeni, mataka hulia mbwata. [AL](#) 14.

One who receives something for the first time, his behind clacks.

One who receives something much desired is in high spirit.

Limbukeni: a person who gets something for the first time, a new toy or salary, bicycle etc. Cf. #1587.

4207. Macho hayali, ushahidi wa kuona tu. [AL](#) 1276.

Eyes don't eat, they are only witnesses.

Envy is sterile. [AL](#).

4208. Macho hayana pazia. [E](#).21.2; [B](#).2.9; [KB](#).143; [FSM](#).92.

Eyes have no screen.

They see all that is in view, good or bad, and cannot be blamed for what they see.

Jicho halina mpaka. [NGU](#).

The eye has no boundary.

Macho hayana mipaka. [AL](#) 465; [AL](#), *paka*.

The eyes have no borders. They see all.

4209. Majumba makubwa husitiri mambo. [E](#).21.12; [MARA](#) 3.

Big houses conceal a lot.

The big houses of our rulers and important people hide much badness, although they are supposed to be an example for other people.

Great people are not always in the big houses. [MARA](#).

4210. Mambo ya ngoma nda ngoma, hwishia papo ngomani. [A](#).305; [T](#).241; [SACL](#). 668, first part; [SAM](#).14.4, *huishia*; [KB](#).156, first half; [KA](#); [AL](#) 261.

Matters concerning the dance belong to the dance, they are wont to finish there at the same dance.

It is useless to fret about things that happened. [SAM](#).

Tell no tales out of school. [T](#).

Everything in due time. [AL](#).

Nda ngomani nda ngomani. [KA](#).

What is of the drum belongs to the drum

Mambo ya ngomani nda ngomani. [KA](#).

The things of the drum/dance are of the drum/dance.

Nda for *ni ya*: are of. Cf. #1769.

4211. Mambo ya nyumba (ni) kunga. [KA](#); [JKP](#); [KS](#), *kunga*.

The matters of the house are deep secrets.

"Never discuss internal conflicts outside the house. The family should always present one face, join ranks to face the outside world."

[JKP](#).

Mambo ya nyumba kunga, makuti kuungaunga. [TAA](#) 24.

Happenings at home are secret, keep the branches constantly together.

The things that happen in a family are secrets of that home. There is no perfect household. Every family has its minor evils, but an

outsider must not know. [TAA](#).

4212. Matako ndiyo yajuayo kiti kizuri. [NGU](#).

It is the behind that knows a good chair.

4213. Mbwa halali na mafuta tumboni. [KB](#).171; [AL](#),*tumbo*.

A dog cannot sleep with its belly full of fat.

A fool does not keep a secret. One doesn't sleep well with a problem that has to be solved or with a secret to keep. [AL](#).

4214. Mchawi akifichua mirimo ya wenzake huuawa. [KS](#), *mirimo*.

A witchdoctor who reveals work-secrets of companions, will be killed.

Mirimo: works of the witchdoctors or wizards.

4215. Mdomo siri ya gunda. [KA](#); [SA](#).

A mouth with a secret is like a trumpet.

An evil tale travels wide and loud.

Gunda, baragumu: horn (musical).

4216. Mjuvi wa siri ni yeye mwenyewe. [T](#).276.

The Knower of secrets is He Himself.

God only is the possessor of secrets.

4217. Mlango unaona mamba ya ndani, na ya nje. [AL](#) 459.

A door sees what is happening inside and outside.

A domestic of the house observes all that is going on among the habitants. [AL](#).

4218. Mtaka unda haneni [or hasemi]. [E](#).30.110.

A person who desires to create something does not announce it. That person just turns them into facts. [F](#).

Mtaka unda hanadi. [MM](#).

One who wants to create things does not announce it publicly.

4219. Mtambi wa nyumba mbili hawi mdhabidhabina. [T](#).31g; [SACL](#). 606,654.

A person who goes from one house to another must not become a gossip-monger.

Who frequents two houses must not be a mischief-maker. [SACL](#).

4220. Mtu akitaka tenda, lake huchimbia shimo. [JK](#).123.

A person wanting to act digs a pit for his plan.

Do not disclose your plans, your enviers may spoil them. [JK](#). cf. #1786.

4221. Mtu halali naneno moyoni. [AL](#) 747.

A person does not sleep with a concern on the heart.

Neno: word, matter, affair. Cf. # 1775

4222. Mtu siri husema na moyo wakwe. [T](#).348.

A person speaks of a secret within the heart.

And keeps the secret hidden.

4223. Mtumi wa kunga haambiwi maana. [E](#).32.127; [J](#),*kunga*; [L](#).68; [B](#).1.64; [WIKON](#).188; [V](#).133i [SACL](#). 452.

One who conveys a secret message is not told its meaning. [J](#); [L](#). One who gives a secret away will not be told another secret. [E](#).

Kunga: secrets, especially privacies of domestic life, or secrets given at initiation ceremonies.

4224. Mvungu mkeka. [E](#).33.134; [AL](#) 959.

The space under the bed is like a mat.

There may be somebody there! [E](#).

The best place of the mat is its fold.

The selfish husband takes the best place. [AL](#). Cf. #1762.

4225. Mwana ndani hajulikani. [PM](#).83.

The sex of a fetus is unknown.

The future is not known.

4226. Mwosha hadhuru maiti. [FSM](#).164.

The corpse-washer does not harm the body.

And keeps all the secrets. Cf.#514; #565; #566; #567; #656.

4227. Mwosha husitiri maiti. [F](#).37.176; [AL](#) 1228.

The corpse-washer conceals the corpse.

And therefore it seems that the corpse like a miser, does not want to give anything away. Muslims fear to look at a naked corpse. Sacl, *mayiti*.

4228. Mzika pembe ndiye mzua pembe. [T](#).398; [SACL](#). 657; [A](#).292; [F](#).37.180; [VM](#).51; [KB](#).230.

The burier of the ivory is also the one who brings the ivory to light.

One who has a secret is the only one who can reveal it.

In trading up-country, Arabs sometimes purchase ivory that they have not the means of transporting to the coast. In that case they bury it and keep the secret to themselves until they return with another caravan. [T](#).

Wafichapo ndipo watafutapo. [FSM](#).200.

Where they hid it there also will they look for it.

Be logical, be sensible, reason things out. You must go to the competent person to solve a problem.

4229. Ndoto njema haihadithiwi. [SAM](#).20.3; [MS](#).186.

A good dream must not be revealed.

If you get a lucky break you should not talk about it, otherwise people may harm or slander you. [SAM](#).

Keep your pet projects to yourself.

4230. Nguo chafu husafishwa uani. [EM](#) n16.

Dirty clothes are washed in the backyard.

Dirty clothes should be washed in a private place.

Don't publicize your weakness. [EM](#).

4231. Niwatupie kuku mchele? [KB](#).240.

Am I to throw my rice at the chickens?

Should I reveal my secrets? Cf. #1788.

4232. Njama haina ndugu. [NGU](#).

A secret meeting has no brother or sister.

Evil is planned in secret and secret must be kept.

4233. Nyamaza kilema apite. [NGU](#).

Keep quiet, let the cripple pass. Cf. #1765.

4234. Nyumba kubwa husitiri mambo makubwa. [KA](#).

A big house [family] hides big things.

Like quarrels, jealousies, etc. Cf. # 1773. #427. #428.

4235. Penye kuku wengi hapamwagwi mtama. [E](#).42.11. [B](#).1.64; [FSM](#).179; [T](#).457; [MARA](#) 2.

Where there are many fowls, millet [or rice] is not scattered.

It is not advisable to disclose a secret in the presence of a number of people.

Penye kuku wengi usimwage mtama. [B](#).2.17; [CM](#).50; [MS](#).48.12i [L](#).87, [H](#).96. [SWA](#).49; [MARA](#) 2; [KS](#),*mtama*.

Do not spill millet where there are many chickens.

Be careful what you say in front of many people.

4236. Sahani iliyofunikwa, kilichomo kimesitirika. [F](#).43.1; [T](#).469; [MS](#).72; [KB](#).*fînika*; [SACL](#). 222, *husitirika*; [KA](#).

Sahani ilofunika, kilichomo husirika. [JK](#).121.

When a plate is covered, its contents are hidden.

Many uses: Keep your mouth shut. But also, to encourage women to dress modestly.

4237. Sikio halilali na njaa. [F](#).44.7; [KB](#).277.

The ear does not go to bed hungry.

There is always plenty of gossip.

4238. Siri bin siri, ikizidi itatoka. [PM](#).303.9.

Secret son of secret, if overrated it will come out.

A secret too well guarded will be given away in the end.

One taking too many precautions will draw attention.

Siri bin siri or *Siri ya ndani*: an inside secret, hidden secret.

4239. Siri ya jikoni aijua mpishi. [BM](#) 16, *Hadithi za Bibi*.

The secret of the kitchen is known by the cook. Cf. 1791A.

4240. Siri ya mtu aijua mtu. [EM](#) s18.

A person's secret is known by that person.

A secret is known by the keeper.

Siri ya mtu haijui mtu. [EM](#) s19.
The secret of a person is unknown.

4241. Siri ya mtungi aijuae kata. [FSM](#).183; [EM](#) s20.
The secret of the water pot is known by the ladle.
To know the inside of a situation, the best way often is to live it.

Siri ya mtungi muulize kata. [KA](#).
Ask the ladle about the secret of the waterpot.

Ukitaka siri ya mtungi uliza kata. [REK](#).
If you want to know the secret of the waterpot, ask the cover.
The cover is always with the pot and is present to all what is going on.
Kata: dipper, ladle, often made of coconut shell; calabash.

4242. Siri yako usimmambie mwanamke. [CM](#).62; [A](#).120; [T](#).491.
Don't tell your secret to a woman.

4243. Uhenga haambiwi mwana. [L](#).97; [V](#).,*uhenga*.
A child is not told what happened in the old days.
It's only the adults who know about past events. Sacl.
Uhenga: ancient times, history of past centuries. Sacl.

4244. Ukimficha jogoo kwenye pakacha kuna wakati atawika. [WIKON](#).218.
If you hide a rooster in a basket, he will crow sometime.
People will know about it.

4245. Ulipopata hazina, usichimbie mchana. [RSP](#).143.
If you have a treasure, do not dig it up by daytime. [RSP](#).
Beware of jealousy. [RSP](#).

4246. Urefu wa kisima hujua kamba. [TAA](#) 29.
The rope knows the depth of the well.
The rope that goes down with the bucket knows how far to go to reach the water level. The one who finished a project knows about its hardship and joy. Cf #1791A; #512; #514.

4247. Usemalo ng'ambo ya mto lasikilika na vyura. [AL](#) 751.
What you say across the river is heard by the frogs.
People are eager for secrets.

4248. Usiku ni libasi bora. [NGU](#); [KS](#),*libasi*.
Night [darkness] is an excellent cover.
Libasi or *lebas*: clothes, raiment.

4249. Usionyeshe usoni, usikiayo moyoni. [RSP](#).140; [MM](#).
Do not show on your face what you feel in your heart. Cf. #1795.

4250. Wakati hufichua yote. [REK](#).
Time uncovers all.

4251. Wanong'ona mwiko kukahoa. [NGU](#).
Those who whisper must abstain from coughing. Cf. #1764.

4252. Watu siri huibiana: [ndio hali ya duniani]. [JK](#).123.
People steal secrets from each other; [such is the way of the world]. [JK](#).

4253. Ya mwaka ujao, wapi wajua? [RSP](#).89.
Where are they who know [the affairs] of next year?

4254. Ya wenzako chunguni, yako kigaeni. [EM](#) y8.
The affairs of your companions are in the pot, your own are in a potsherd.
People speak openly about the affairs and mistakes of others, thinking that their own are little and unknown.

4255. Yalahu yalam, mambo siri kwa mungu. [NGU](#).
I swear by God, secrets are with God.

4256. Yaliyo mumo ya mumo. [JK](#).130.

What is inside is inside.
Keep your secrets. [JK](#)

4257. Yenu finikani kanda. [JKP](#).
Cover yours with mats.
Hide your faults. [JKP](#).

4258. Yuajifanya chongo angaona. [T.596](#); [MM](#).
Someone faking blindness of one eye although seeing well.
Said of people who pretend not to see what is happening to suit their conveniences. [MM](#). Cf. #1180.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Speech - silence

4259. Ahadi na mithaki ni deni katika haki. [JKP](#).

A promise and a vow are debts indeed.

Mithaki: having strength, having perfection.

4260. Ahadi [ni] deni. [J](#),ahadi; [B](#).1.52; [T](#).6; [SACL](#). 45; [MARA](#).2; [SAM](#).26.; [V](#).4.

A promise is a debt.

Ahadi ni deni, na deni ijuzie. [SACL](#). 196; [JKP](#).

A promise is a debt, and a debt obliges.

Juzia: to be obliged.

4261. Ahadi ni mtu, msi ahadi si mtu. [JKP](#).

[Keeping] a promise is [being] a real human, one who does not [keep a promise] is not a real person.

4262. Ahadi si neno, ngoja hatima. [AL](#),hatima; [AL](#) 1540; [AL](#) 1541.

A promise is nothing, wait for its fulfillment.

AL 1541 has *baadaye*, afterwards, instead of *hatima*.

4263. Ahadi zina sharuti. [JKP](#).

Promises have obligations.

4264. Ajuaye mengi hasemi mengi. [EM](#).8.4.

One who knows much does not say much.

Ajuaye mengi husema machache. [NGU](#).

The one who knows much says little.

4265. Alindaye ulimi wake, alinda nafsi yake. [NGU](#).

People who watch their tongue take care of [guard] their soul.

4266. Aliye mwema msifie, muovu mnamalie. [JKP](#).

Praise a good person, keep silent about a bad one.

4267. Ambiwaye ngano nae ana zake. [JKP](#).

People who are told tall stories, have their own to tell.

"Said when a story is not believed." [JKP](#).

4268. Amejifunga kwa ulimi wake. [A](#).173; [T](#).22; [SACL](#). 234.

It is the tongue that bound its owner

What was said lightly has come to pass, and has caught up with that person.

Msi hadhari hujifunga kwa ulimi wake. [SAM](#).16.21.

If you are careless, you bind yourself with your tongue. Cf. #1841.

4269. Amekuja hapa akatoa mavi yake. [KS](#) mavi.

That person came here to tell dirt.

Mavi: excrement, nonsense.

4270. Anayenguruma siye anayekula nyama. [NGU](#).

[The animal] that roars is not the one that will eat meat. cf. # 1852; # 1852.

4271. Asiyekubali utani si mtani. [ED](#).16.24.

A person who cannot take a joke is no joker.
Don't make jokes on people if you cannot take a joke yourself. Cf. #1883.

4272. Aso hasanati wala thawabu hufungwa kitaya kama rikabu. [KS](#),*rikabu*.

People who have no kindness or gifts have their jaw tied like a camel's.

Hasanati or *hisani*: kindness, favor, goodness.

Thawabu: God-given gifts, rewards.

Rikabu: an animal used for riding; a camel, horse, donkey.

Kitaya: lit., a small jaw.

Tia tayani mwa punda: put the bridle on a donkey's jaw.

4273. Awezae kufahamu, yatasha nusu salamu. [RSP](#).39.

For a person who understands, half a greeting is enough.

4274. Binadamu ana macho mawili, masikio mawili na mdomo mmoja. [EM](#).28.16.

A human being has two eyes, two ears, but one mouth.

Watch and listen twice before speaking once. [EM](#).

4275. Bora ni kusoma, kuliko kusema. [RSP](#).61.

Study is better than talking.

4276. Chunguni yaingiayo ni mambo yatufaayo. [JKP](#).

The only useful things are those that can be put in a pot and eaten.

"Said by a wife to an unemployed, loquacious husband." [JKP](#). Cf. #1830.

4277. Debe shinda haliachi kutika. [H](#).98; [B](#).2.36; [MARA](#) 3.

A half empty tin never fails to make noise.

Empty vessels make the most sound. People with little knowledge talk most.

Debe shinda haliachi kusukasuka. [MARA](#) 3.

A half filled tin does not stop shaking.

Debe tupu haliachi kutika. [EM](#).47.11.

An empty tin cannot stop sounding.

Debe tupu haliachi kuvuma. [F](#).8. 5- [B](#).2.42.

An empty tin never stops making noise.

Debe shinda: half-empty tin; is used figuratively for bastards and people of low offspring. In Swahili custom it is very bad for a woman to have a baby out of wedlock. That child is called *mwana haramu* (a bastard) and whenever that person does something bad or shameful or lacks good behavior, this proverb is mentioned. This proverb is used to show that if you want to know a person look at his deeds and behavior.

4278. Demokrasi si domokrasi. [EM](#).47.12.

Democracy is not democracy.

Actions, not mere words.

Democracy is a way of life, and freedom and discipline are its bases. Democracy is to rule by mere talk, a lot of words without actions.

[EM](#).

Domocrasie: a word formed with *mdomo* (mouth).

4279. Fikara ndogo hufanya mtu asema sana. [NGU](#).

Little thoughtfulness causes a person to say too much.

4280. Gumzo jingi uwongo mwingi. [EM](#) g8.

Much talk, many lies. Cf. #1834, #1850.

4281. Gumzo ni asusa ya safari. [EM](#) g7.

Talk is the *asusa* of a journey.

"*Asusa* is the snacks which are taken while having drinks to enable a person to take a lot of drinks without harming the body. It weakens the power of the drinks. Conversation during a journey makes the traveler forget the difficulties and the distance of the journey without getting tired too soon. Cf. Make short the miles with talk and smiles." [EM](#).

Asusa: n. food of any description eaten when drinking beer, spirits &c., but usu. well-cooked meat." Johnson.

4282. Habari ina shindo. [T](#).71; [J](#).,*shindo*.

News always comes with a kind of shock.

Habari ya mbali ina kishindo. [T](#).71; [KB](#).,*kishindo*; [SACL](#).407.

News from far comes with éclat. [T](#).

4283. Habari ya mbalamwezi, kung'aa na kufifia. [PM](#).85.

News of the full moon, to shine and to fade away.

Do not believe all the rumors one hears in the evening; in the morning, they fade away.

4284. Hakuna kovu ya masimango. [KB](#).58.

There is no scar for slander.

Moral evil cannot be cured.

4285. Halifai neno jike wala dume. [JKP](#).

Nothing will be of any use, neither male nor female.

"Too much talking." [JKP](#).

4286. Haliharibiki neno midomo ikikaa pamoja. [EM](#) h8.

No word is spoiled if the lips stay together.

Cf. #1219A; Contrast #1821A, #1824.

4287. Hana kaba ya ulimi. [T](#).83; [B](#).1.29.

So and So has no lining to the tongue.

4288. Haongezwi muongezi. [T](#).85.

To the words of a gossip nothing is added.

4289. Hawamfii mtu kinywa. [AL](#) 619, [Al](#),fa.

One does not kill oneself for what people say.

All words should be taken with a grain of salt. Words are not reliable enough.

4290. Haya haya mdomo ulikunjama. [AL](#),haya; [AL](#) 1572.

For being overly shy, the mouth get crooked.

Too shy to speak up.

Of one who is too servile, without defending oneself. [AL](#). Cf. #1206.

4291. Haya ya mno, kwale alikufa. [AL](#) 1524; [AL](#),kwale, mno.

Haya ya mno ilimwisha kwale. [AL](#) 1525.

Too much shame killed the partridge.

The partridge died of hunger because it did not ask for food or shelter.

This is also sometimes said ironically when somebody overeats. Cf.#1206.

4292. Heri kukunguwa kidole kuliko kukunguwa ulimi. [J](#),kwa; [V](#).147; [KB](#).71; [SACL](#). 278; [T](#).90; [E](#).11,16.

Heri kujikunguwa kidole kuliko kujikunguwa ulimi. [E](#). 11 16; [B](#).1.29; [MARA](#) 3; [BM](#) 5; [KS](#); [MARA](#) 3.

Heri kwa ya dole kuliko kwa ya ulimi. [KS](#),kwa.

Better to stumble with the toe than with the tongue.

Heri kukuwa kwa guu kama kwa ulimi. [ED](#).90.

Better to stumble with the foot than with the tongue.

The toe may be very painful, but the harm the tongue can do, can bring much greater pain and trouble. [EM](#).

Bruising your toe is your pain, but your tongue hurts other people. It's difficult to soften other people's pain. [MARA](#).

Mtu hujikunguwa guu hakikunguwa ulimi. [KS](#),kunguwa.

A person stumbles a toe, but not the tongue.

4293. Hicho ni chuo cha mwangoma, cha majini pepo: endao kifyoma hukiacho papo. [T](#).93.

This is the book of Mwangoma about the demons: the person who is going to read it, leaves it forthwith.

About an unpleasant subject of conversation, which you would rather not enlarge on. [T](#).

4294. Himili mzaha, hamna jeraha. [RSP](#).10.

Tolerate a joke, there is no wound in it.

It does not hurt. RSP. Cf. #46.

4295. Huamba ulimi, ni mimi, ni mimi. [RSP](#).16.

The tongue says, it is me, it is me.

Talkers always talk about themselves. [RSP](#).

4296. Hukunyima tonge, hakunyimi neno. [ZO](#) 254.

So and So refused you food, but did not stop you speaking.

4297. Husema kama upatu. [JKP](#).

He talks like a cymbal.
A chatterbox. [JKP](#).
Upatu: a dish-shaped gong.

4298. Huwezi kuwaza, bila kunyamaza. [FSP](#).56.
You cannot think, without holding your tongue.

4299. Jibwa lenye kelele haliumi. [EM](#) j9.
A big barking dog does not bite.
A person who talks a lot and threatens others does not harm others.

4300. Jimbi tawikia jimbi, awikapo tawikia. [JKP](#).
A cock will crow to a cock, when he crows the other one will crow too.
"People will gossip, and what one person says will go around."JKP.
Jimbi, jogoo: cock.
Tawikia for *atawikia*: will crow.

4301. Jogoo mjanja huwika. [NGU](#).
The clever rooster crows.
It is the work of the rooster to crow in the morning. It is its duty.
Let people know what you can do, what you are worth.
Saa ya shamba : the clock in the village.

4302. Kalamu iambiweyo kakurubia kujiri. [JKP](#).
A pen [a word] that has spoken brings the event nearer. [JKP](#).
"A word spoken in anger may cause unwanted reactions." [JKP](#).
Kurubia for *karibia*: come close, approach. Pate dialect.
Jiri for *fika*: come.
Kalamu: a pen (a pen is used to write words).
Iambiweyo for *yaambiwayo*: what is said.

4303. Kavaa kinu kajambika mchi. [KS](#), *ambika*.
She put on a mortar and holds on to the pestle.
Of someone who interferes with other people's business.

4304. Kila mwenye choo huenda yaani. [JKP](#).
Everyone who has a need goes to the rubbish heap.
"All people slander". [JKP](#)
"The rubbish heap was and is also the latrine, in the middle of a group of houses, to be used collectively." [JKP](#).

4305. Kimya hakileti maudhiko. [MA](#).187.
Silence does not bring harm.

4306. Kimya kilimaliza miti porini. [REK](#).
Silence finished the trees in the forest.
For not protesting the evil done.

4307. Kimya, kimya si ujinga, ni maneno ya kupeleleza. [MP](#).82.8
Silence is not necessarily foolishness, it could be spying. [MP](#).
Be suspicious of dormant waters. [MP](#)

4308. Kimya kingi kina mshindo mkuu. [F](#).15.21; [V](#).kimya; [T](#).151; [J](#).kimya; [JK](#).,mkubwa; [RECH](#).207; [KB](#).106; [SACL](#) 382; [KA](#); [KS](#),
mshindo.
Much silence has a mighty noise.
A long silence is followed by a mighty noise. A too-long silence has harmful consequences. [KB](#).
A person who remains silent and does not contribute in daily conversation is considered very dangerous. Often such a person does
fearsome things. [KA](#).

Kimya mshindo mkubwa. [JKP](#).
Silence is a big noise.
"Silence predicts storm, silence indicates your enemy is premeditating a big move." [JKP](#).

4309. Kimya ni sifa ya maiti, yu hai husema. [MA](#).188.
Silence is an attribute of the dead, one who is alive speaks.

4310. Kinywa kengele, miguu mayugwa. [AL](#) 1140.
The mouth like a bell, the legs like the *mayugwa*.

Those with nice words are not the ones who will pay. [AL](#).

Mayugwa: taro, a green vegetable, tasting like spinach when cooked. The plant has big leaves and the fragile long stems look like legs.

4311. Kinywa [ni] jumba la maneno. [F](#).15.24; [B](#).1.29; [KA](#) has *kanwa* instead of *kinywa*.

The mouth is the home of words.

Kinywa jumbe la maneno. ([V](#).,*kinywa*; [T](#).126; [SACL](#).,*kanwa*; [KB](#).,*jumbe*; [SACL](#).,*jumbe* 328.

The mouth is the magistrate [ruler or master] of words.

Or: The mouth is like a chief having under his orders the words of speech. [KB](#); [SACL](#).

About the duty of controlling one's words.

Cf.#? Watu ni gamba hawakosi la kwamba (KA) (under Women-Men)

Jumba: big house, palace.

Jumbe: chief, head person.

4312. Kua uone. [JKP](#).

Grow up and see.

"Said to a child who is asking too many questions." [JKP](#).

4313. Kuambiliwa kuna uwongo, mara kumi ukajionee. [AL](#) 624

Hearsay is full of error, go and see yourself even ten times.

4314. Kuambiwa si kusikia. [NGU](#).

Being told is not the same as understanding.

4315. Kusema kiwi huona kitakuja. [JKP](#).

Speaking evil you will see it comes back.

"Persons with evil tongues will soon find they are slandering themselves." [JKP](#).

4316. Kusema kusema, hapoi kilema. [RSP](#).147.

Talking, talking does not cure the cripple.

Too many words serve no purpose. [MM](#).

4317. Kusema mengi si haja. [JKP](#).

No need to say much.

There is no need for many words.

Kusema si huja. [JKP](#).

To speak many words is not [winning] an argument.

Kusema si hoja, kazi ni kufanya. [JKP](#).

Talking is no necessity, the essence of the job is to get it done.

4318. Kusema ni kuzuri, na kutosema ni kuzuri. [Holiday](#).

Speaking is good and silence is good

Hotuba ni fedha na kimya ni dhahabu. [MEM](#).302.

Speech is silver and silence is golden.

4319. Kusema si kutenda. [NGU](#).

Speaking is not the same as doing.

4320. Kusoma siyo sawa na kuambiwa. [NGU](#).

Reading is not the same as being told.

4321. Kwamba kwema kwenye shukurani ni kumpa mtu atakayo. [JKP](#).

Speaking good words of gratitude is giving a person what is needed.

4322. Kweli ya mdogo si uwongo wa mkubwa. [EM](#) k39.

A little person's truth is not [as acceptable as] the big person's lie.

A little person may say the truth about something, but this will not be believed as well as the lies which an important person may say about it.

4323. Kwenda na wajinga maneno hayeshi. [NGU](#).

Going with fools and words never ends.

4324. Lamba asali, usisaili. [RSP](#).68.

Just lick the honey, don't ask any questions. Cf. #166.

4325. Lifaalo kueleza lieleze, lisilofaa limeze. [V.150](#); [JKP](#).

What is worth explaining, explain; what is not worth, swallow it. One who speaks little has little to answer for. [V](#).

4326. Lililopo ndilo litemwalo. [MARA 2](#).

What is, is spoken about.

People speak about the things that are present. So, don't do bad or stupid things, because people will speak about it. [MARA](#).

4327. Lilo moyoni, ulimi huiba. [MARA 3](#); [KA](#).

What is in the heart, the tongue steals.

Secrets want to be told and often come out inadvertently.

4328. Linda ulimi kama mlimi. [JKP](#).

Watch your tongue like a farmer [watches his crop].

"In Africa farmers must constantly watch their crops lest they are eaten by birds, monkeys or wild pigs. In the same way, the words we have spoken may be misused by our enemies to harm us." [JKP](#).

4329. Lugha mbaya hueleweka upesi. [EM 111](#).

Bad language is soonest learned.

It is easier to learn what is evil than what is good.

4330. Lugha mbaya uvundo. [NGU](#).

Bad language is like a stench.

4331. Maji yaliyotulia yana kina kirefu. [NGU](#).

Still waters are deep.

4332. Maji yavumayo hayana meno. [FSM.93](#).

Roaring water has no teeth.

Barking dogs seldom bite. Cf. #1852.

4333. Makaa hayakoki nyama. [V.50](#); [STEERE](#), p.194.

Charcoals do not roast the meat.

Dead embers do not roast meat.

Fair words butter on parsnips.

Ajabu makaa hayakoki nyama. [MM](#).

It is a surprise why the charcoal did not roast meat.

Said of people who do not perform as well as they could.

4334. Mamanwa arubaini, mafumo arubaini. [T.233](#).

Forty mouths are like forty spears.

Ndimi arobaini, mafumo arobaini. [JK.131](#)

Forty tongues, forty spears.

Ndimi kumi ni mikuki kumi. [JKP](#).

Ten tongues are ten javelins. Cf. #1860.

4335. Makukuu ya tai si mapya ya kengewwa. [SACL](#). 857; [KS,tai](#); [AL](#) 1186.

The carrion, food of the big vulture, is not fresh meat for the hawk.

The words of the old people have nothing pleasant for the young. [SACL](#); [AL](#).

4336. Mambo yafaayo watu ni yangiayo chunguni. [T.242](#); [KB, chungu](#); [SACL.156](#).

The matters which are of use to people are those which go into the pot.

People are foremost worried about bread and butter issues.

Cf. #4276 **Chunguni yaingiayo..**

4337. Maneno fedha, majibu dhahabu. [L.43](#); [V.,maneno](#).

Words are silver, but answers are gold.

Not words but results.

Kusema fedha, kujibu dhahabu. [MM](#).

Speaking is like silver, but replying is like gold.

4338. Maneno makali hayavunji mifupa. [E.22.16](#); [SM](#); [KA](#).

Hard words break no bones.

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. [E](#).

Meno makali hayavunji mfupa. [NS](#).17.

Sharp teeth do not break a bone.

Stay away from quarrels. [NS](#).

Cf. #1856.

Maneno makali yavunja mfupa. [KA](#).

Hard words break a bone.

Hard words can hurt a person very deeply, as painful as the breaking of a bone.

4339. Maneno mazuri baraka. [NGU](#).

Kind words are a blessing.

Maneno mazuri kama maua yana rangi yake. [NGU](#).

Nice words are like flowers: they have their own color.

4340. Maneno mema humtoa nyoka pangoni. [E](#).22.17; [SWA](#).17; [MARA](#) 3.

Pleasant words will draw a snake from its hole.

With kind words one may calm down a dangerous person.

It is easier to catch flies with honey than with vinegar. [SWA](#).

Maneno matamu humtoa nyoka pangoni. [SM](#); [MARA](#) 3.

Sweet words will draw a snake from its hole.

Usage in a newspaper: *Pamoja na zana zao wanamuziki hawa wanaoweza kumtoa nyoka pangoni, si wengine bali na Wana Jikomoro.* (*Nchi Yetu* #163, Julai 1978). With their instruments these musicians, who can draw snakes from their holes, are no others than the Wana Jikomoro.

Neno jema lilitoa nyoka pangoni. [NS](#). 22.

A good word draws a snake from its hole.

Kauli njema ilitoa nyoka pangoni. [KB](#).90.

A kind word made a snake come out of its hole.

To obtain something by trick or flattery.

4341. Maneno mengi maradhi. [B](#).1.29.

Many words are like a disease.

Chattering and talking nonsense are signs that the brain is giving way.

Maneno mengi uwele. [B](#).1.29.

Many words are like a sickness.

Maneno mangi ukongo. [T](#) 243; [SACL](#).,ukongo; [AL](#) 726.

Many words are like a sickness.

Talking too much is a weakness of old people. [AL](#).

Maneno mengi huvuta fadhika. [MA](#).284.

Many words call forth a lot of disgrace.

Talkativeness reveals one's faults, weaknesses. [MA](#).

Maneno mengi hula akili. [FSM](#).80.

Many words consume the brain.

4342. Maneno mengi ya kweli husemwa katika dhihaka. [NGU](#).

Many a true word is spoken jokingly.

Dhihaka: mockery, ridicule, scorn.

4343. Maneno ni kama fumo yakitoka mdomoni hayarudi. [MA](#).285.

Words are like spears, once when they leave the lips they never come back.

Watch what you are saying. [MA](#). Cf. #1828.

4344. Maneno ya mpole yampoza mwenye hasira. [AL](#) 817; [AL](#), pole.

Words spoken by a kind person pacify an angry one.

4345. Maneno yaombolezayo na machozi yasemayo. [NGU](#).

Laments are expressed by tears.

4346. Mbele ya kusema uzungushe ulimi mara saba kinywani. [KB](#).167.

Before you speak, turn your tongue seven times in your mouth.

4347. Mche mnyamavu: ana ngoma za midomo. [T.253](#); [SACL. 627](#); [AL 765](#).

Mistrust a taciturn person, that person has lips like a drum.

Has lips for an oration. [SACL.](#)

4348. Mdomo wako mmbeya unautambua mwenyewe. [FSM.104](#).

Your gossiping mouth tells you what you really are.

Deep inside you know what you really are..

Mmbeya or *mmbea* (from *-umbea*): tale-bearer, gossip, scandal monger. [T.](#)

4349. Meza ndogo, maneno mengi. [AL 1746](#).

The table may be small, but the palavers are many.

When unimportant things seem to be important.

4350. Midomo tawala, amani kulala. [RSP.77](#).

Control your lips, to sleep in peace.

4351. Mja kiwa sawa, kambiwa yu kombo. [JK.131](#); [AL 1397](#).

Even when a person is straight, they will say there is something crooked with him.

Even if the newcomer is correct, they'll say that he is imperfect. [AL.](#)

A stranger is suspect and criticized.

Mja. (from *kuja*, coming): a newcomer, a stranger.

Mja or *binadamu*: a human being. [KS.](#), *mja*.

Cf. #787; #884; #985; #986; #1481; #1838.

4352. Mnyamaa kadumbu. [E.28.88](#).

One who keeps silent lasts. [E.](#)

4353. Mrogi hasemi. [NGU.](#)

A sorcerer speaks not.

Keeps silent about evil intent. Keeps away from people.

4354. Msafiri hodari ni uvumi. [REK.](#)

A brave traveler has many tall stories.

Uvumi: gossip, rumors, tales.

4355. Msi kucha kwambwa nyamba. [KS](#); [SM](#).

One who is not afraid to be slandered is a fool.

Kwambwa or *kusemwa*: spoken evil of.

Nyamba, duni: a fool

4356. Msi lake ana mungu. [JK.139](#).

The one who does not have any [word] has God.

"God suffices as a witness." Koran 24,6,

Eloquence is not necessary.

Aso wake ana mungu. [MM.](#)

If you have no one, you have God.

4357. Mtemewa mate mengi hulewa. [FSM 134](#).

One who is spat upon often enough gets intoxicated.

If somebody is told a thing over and over again that person will finally believe it.

4358. Mtenda mema hasemi, akisema hatendi. [FSM.132](#).

One who does good does not speak about it; if that person does speak [about it] that one does not do [good] deeds.

Also used regarding people who talk a lot but perform poorly.

4359. Mtu huanza kumega tonge kwanza, haanzi kupanua kinywa. [NGU.](#)

A person starts breaking a piece of bread first, the mouth is not opened first.

Think before speaking or doing things. Wait for your time. In due time.

4360. Mtu huchongewa na ulimi wake. [J.,chonga](#); [B.l. 19](#); [T.340](#); [KB.,chongea](#).

A person is betrayed by one's own tongue.

A shut mouth keeps one from strife.

Ulimi mchongea kichwa. [FSM.190](#).

The tongue betrays the head.

Puts the head in trouble. Cf. #1803.

4361. Mtu kikwambia neno, sijibu upesi mno. [JKP](#).

If someone tells you something, do not answer too quickly.

4362. Mtu kipofu haulizwi unaonani. [MA](#).382.

A blind person is not asked, what do you see. Cf. #1703.

4363. Mungwana ni kalima. [JK](#).133.

A gentleman is [as good as his] word. Cf. #916.

4364. Mwamba na wako hukutuma umwambie. [KA](#).

A slanderer of your friend sends you to tell your friend.

Don't talk bad to someone's friend, because that person will tell the friend.

Mwambe wako hukutuma umwambie. [TAA](#) 21; [AL](#) 760.

Speaking evil about someone to your friend is the same as sending your friend on a mission to tell that person about the bad thing you said.

Mwamba: slander.

4365. Mwambie anayekubali kusikiliza. [NGU](#).

Tell it to the person who is willing to listen.

4366. Mwana mbeya hupozea kiporo chake. [NGU](#).

A child that slanders another gives away leftover food [in order to pacify the one slandered].

4367. Mwenda kimya hagombani na mtu. [FSM](#).154.

One who walks in silence quarrels with nobody.

Moreover, people respect the silent one because that person is more difficult to understand. [FSM](#).

4368. Mwenye kelele hana neno. [CM](#).51; [B](#).1.52; [E](#).35.157.

A noisy person has no message.

4369. Mwenye kwenda kiraguni harudi bure. [FSM](#).158.

One who goes to the meeting place will not come back with nothing.

Going to the place where people gather to talk things over will enlighten us about happenings, whether true or false. However, because it is also a place of gossip, it can also mean that if you go and listen to gossip, you'll return with many problems.

4370. Mwenye msiba haulizwi nguo chakavu. [KB](#).217; [AL](#).128.

When someone wears mourning clothes you don't ask why.

Chakavu: old, spoiled, torn or discarded.

4371. Mzaha na mahali pake. [NGU](#).

A joke needs its own time and place.

4372. Mzuia midomo utartibu mwingi. [KB](#).231.

If you control your mouth you have much prudence.

4373. Natuone ndipo twambe, kusikia si kuona. [E](#).38.2.

Let us see, then we can talk, hearing is not seeing. Cf. #1333.

4374. Neno jivi ni jeraha la moyo. [KA](#).

A bad word wounds the heart.

Neno jivi ni kidonda cha moyo. [MARA](#) 2.

An evil word wounds the heart.

It does not heal easily, is not soon forgotten.

Evil words build a lasting hatred.

4375. Niliona, niliona! Watakufanya mbona. [RSP](#).21.

I saw it, I saw it! They will make you a witness.

Do not talk too much, you might be called to account for it. [JK](#).

4376. Nyama ya ulimi tamu. [KA](#).

Flattery is tasty.

Idle praise is sweet.

It is better to use kind words than words that hurt.

Nyama ya ulimi: meat of the tongue, [idiom], flattery, empty words of praise in order to obtain a favor.

4377. Panya anasema na mwamba, mwenye neno halijui. [PM](#).303.12.

The mouse said to the joist, the one we talk about suspects nothing.
We are often ignorant of what people say or think of us.

4378. Paukwa pakawa ... [T.454](#).

It came to pass and it happened ...

A phrase used in starting a tale.

The end of the story: *Kigano na kihadithi kikomele hapo*. The little tale and little story ends here. [T](#).

4379. Panapo maneno mengi dhambi haikosi. [KB.262](#).

Where there is an abundance of words, sin also is not lacking.

4380. Sema ujalo. [NGU](#).

Say what you know.

Don't say what you don't know.

4381. Shairi ni maneno mazuri ya mawazo matamu. [NGU](#).

A poem is made of nice words and fine thoughts.

4382. Shimo la ulimi mkono haufutiki. [F.43.4](#); [B.1.64](#).

A pit [dug by] the tongue cannot be covered up by the hand.

A word is past recalling.

4383. Silaka kubwa ulimi. [NGU](#).

A big weapon is the tongue.

For cure and harm.

4384. Simba mwenda kimya ndiye alaye nyama. [F.44.12](#); [SACL.382](#); [KA](#); [CM.42](#); [NGU](#).

The lion which moves silently is the one that eats the meat.

Simba ambaye ni mgwizi, halii. [JK.145](#).

A lion that hunts does not roar. [JK](#).

Simba angurumaye si mwindaji. [FSM.93](#).

A roaring lion is not a hunter.

Simba angurumaye kachoka kuwinda. [NGU](#).

A roaring lion is tired of hunting.

4385. Sitapiki nyongo harudi kuramba. [KA](#); [SM](#).

I don't vomit bile and come back to lick it.

A word spoken cannot be taken back. About nasty words or deeds. Used, e.g., in a divorce.

4386. Sumu ya neno ni neno. [NGU](#).

The poison of a word is a word.

Abuse going from bad to worse.

4387. Tajiri akinong'ona husikika, maskini akipayuka hasikiki. [REK](#).

A rich person whispering is heard, a poor person fulminating is not heard.

4388. Tone hutoza dosari ambalo ndoo tele haitoshi kuliondoa. [EM t17](#).

A drop can cause a stain that a bucketful of water cannot remove.

Stain here represents an insult or bad word.

4389. Ukiona neno, usinene neno: ukinena neno litakujia neno. [J.,nena](#); [SACL.676](#); [B.1.29](#); [MEM.91](#); [NGU](#).

If you see anything, do not say anything; if you say anything, something will happen to you.

Ukiona neno, usiposema neno, hupatikani na neno. [F.46.7](#); [A.140](#), [T.525](#), [L.99](#), [V.49](#), *hufikwi na neno*; [SAM.23.4](#).

If you see something and say nothing, you will not suffer.

4390. Ukitembeza zaidi ulimi, kinywa kinaharibika. [AL 766](#).

If you move your tongue too much, your mouth will be harmed.

The silent people and the babblers are asocial people.

4391. Ukitolea habari, usinene kwa mafumbo. [JKP](#).

When you tell news, do not speak in riddles.

Do not slander by allusion. [JKP](#).

4392. Ulimi hauna dawa. [CM.50](#).

The tongue has no remedy.

Wounds inflicted by the tongue are incurable. Cf. #855, #856.

4393. Ulimi hauna mfupa. [F.47.17](#); [L.102](#), [B.2.24](#); [CM.50](#); [H.105](#); [T.532](#); [SWA.38](#); [J.,ulimi](#); [MARA.16](#); [NS.72](#); [JK.138](#); [V.13](#); [KB.316](#); [KS. mfupa](#).

A tongue has no bone.

Is unreliable. Word and deed are two. [KB](#). Cf. #854, #856.

4394. Ulimi hujiganga wenyewe. [NGU](#).

The tongue cures itself.

You cannot put medicine on the tongue. Cf. #2047.

4395. Ulimi huponza mwili. [NGU](#).

The tongue endangers the body.

By provoking fights.

4396. Ulimi mtamu humwondoa tembo shambani. [EM](#) u17.

Sweet language makes the elephant leave the plantation.

Gentle coaxing often removes a danger. Cf. #1833.

4397. Ulimi ukuchome kwa chakula, sio kwa maneno. [EM](#) u18.

Food should burn your tongue, but not words.

It's better to be hurt than hurt others.

4398. Ulimi umewekewa ngoma ya miamba. [EM](#) u19.

The tongue is surrounded by a stone fort.

The tongue should be guarded within the wall of teeth.

4399. Ulimu unabaki katikati ya meno. [AL](#) 728.

The tongue stays in the middle of the teeth.

We are surrounded by enemies. Be careful of what we say.

4400. Ulimi unauma kuliko meno. [F.47.18](#).

The tongue hurts more than the teeth. Cf. #1833, 1854.

4401. Usijitende ng'ombe, ukatoa ulimi kutia puani. [T.553](#).

Do not act like a cow, sticking out your tongue and putting it into your nose.

Do not put back into your nose what has come from your mouth, [i.e., a promise]. [T.](#)

Said of somebody who does not keep promises, or denies what has been said.

Ng'ombe usijitende. [T.553](#).

Don't act the cow!

4402. Usikaange mbuyu ukawaachia wenye meno watafune. [F.48.33](#).

Do not roast baobab kernels and let those who have teeth chew them.

Don't start quarrels among other people by telling tales. [F.](#)

Cf. #? "If you roast maize [*mbisi* - popcorn] you roast it for people who have teeth". *Racial proverbs* 586.148.

Kaanga mbuyu: to deceive, to start a quarrel. Idiom.

4403. Usinene kwa mayowe, apitao kasikia. [JKP](#).

Do not speak loudly so that a passerby hear it.

4404. Usiposema utakonda. [AL](#) 767.

If you do not speak up, you'll get thin.

A silent person is pushed back and cannot hope to have a happy life. [AL](#).

4405. Usiseme ni haki unachoweza kuuliza kwa upendeleo. [NGU](#).

Don't say that it is your right if you can ask for it as a favor.

4406. Usitangaze ya njiani kabla kupeleleza. [NGU](#).

Don't speak about what happened on the road before investigating.

Tangaza: publish, advertise; proclaim

4407. Waache waseme mchana, usiku watalala. [EM](#) w1.

Let them speak in daytime, at night they will sleep.

Those who speak against you cannot speak all the time. So you should not mind so much. [EM](#).

4408. Wasemapo ndipo wasikiapo. [FSM.201](#).

Where words are spoken there also words are heard.
Be careful what you say. Make your good ideas heard.

4409. Wasemayo ni kweli; hata hayajafika, sharti yafike. [AL](#) 1892.

Spoken words are efficacious; even if not yet realized, they surely will come through. [AL](#). Cf. #1742.

4410. Wasikilize wote wasemao lakini washangilie wachache wasemao busara tu. [NGU](#).

They may listen to all the speakers, but applause [only] the few who make sense.

4411. Watasema mchana, usiku watachoka [watalala]. [KA](#)

Those who speak a lot during the day, are tired [sleep] at night.

Slanderers get tired at the end. So don't worry too much about them.

4412. Watu ni gamba, hawakosi la kwamba. [JKP](#).

People are like gramophones, they never stop talking.

Gamba [*chombo kitoacho sauti*]: an instrument that speaks.

Kwamba or *kuamba* or *kusema*: to speak.

4413. Watu wamba, wasiposema huamba. [V](#),*amba*,

People are chatterboxes; if they do not talk in public they do it in secret.

Or: If they do not converse they talk nonsense. Said of the Swahili. [V](#).

4414. Watu wana ndimi nyingi. [JK](#).131.

People have many tongues.

Referring to the talk of the town. [JK](#). Cf. #1828.

4415. Yaani, yaani haivunji mfupa. [EM](#) y1.

I mean, I mean, does not break a bone.

Empty words do not achieve anything. [EM](#).

4416. Yanayozungumzwa mengine na yanayotendwa mengine. [FSM](#).204.

What is said and what is done are different.

4417. Yateue ya usemi, na utawale ulimi. [JKP](#).

Choose eloquent words and control your tongue. *Teua*: choose.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Stealing

4418. Cha kuokota si cha kuiba, cha mfalme kina mwiba. [NGU](#).

Finding is not stealing, but what belongs to the chief has a sting.

All things found on the shore belong to the chief.

Cha mfalme kina mwiba. [NGU](#).

What belongs to the chief has a sting.

Mwiba: a thorn, sting of a bee or insect.

4419. Dhana haishiki mwizi. [JKP](#).

Suspicion does not catch a thief.

Dhana: a thought, idea, notion, suspicion.

4420. Makovu si alama za wizi. [REK](#).

Scars are not signs of theft.

Thieves cannot be easily recognized.

4421. Mali ya wizi haina baraka. [AL](#) 35.

Stolen goods have no blessing.

4422. Mbwa hawezi kula furushi waliomfungia shingoni. [MP](#).227.20.

The dog cannot eat the bundle they tied to its neck.

One is not allowed to dispose of an object put in one's charge. [MP](#).

4423. Mkamatwa na ngozi ndiye mwizi. [F](#).26.65; [KB](#). 184.

The one who is caught with the hide is the thief.

4424. Mla cha mwenziwe na chake huliwa. [B](#).1.7, [F](#).27. 78; [SAM](#).15.13; [FSM](#).121; [MS](#).119; [KS](#), *mla*.

If you eat another's food [without permission] you will have your own food eaten. [E](#).

If one gets help one should help others as well. [FSM](#). Cf. #639.

4425. Mla kuku wa mwenziwe miguu humwelekea. [F](#).28.80; [NS](#).13; [JKP](#); [MARA](#).

One who devours neighbor's fowl [will be discovered because] the fowl's footprints will show the way..

The footprints will show that the fowl went in, and did not come out again. [E](#).

"Adultery leaves revealing traces of gifts that he offered to the wife of someone else." [JKP](#).

Evil deeds will come to light. [MARA](#).

4426. Mlia ashitakiwe, meiba fupa mwenyewe. [RSP](#).134.

The one who shouts "So and So be accused," is the one who stole the bone.

4427. Mtu akaaye na wevi ataleta nini kama si wivi? [J](#)., *leta*; [WIKON](#). 182.

A person who lives with thieves comes forth with stolen things. Cf. #210.

4428. Mtume mwizi kukamata mwizi. [NGU](#).

Send a thief to catch a thief.

4429. Mwezi na mtembezi, kiza na mwizi. [JK](#).130.

Moonlight and a loafer are like darkness and a thief.

They go together.

4430. Mwibaji na watwana, mlipi ni mwungwana. [F](#).36. 170; [AL](#) 1247.

A thief and rogues, the one who pays is a free person. [E](#).

A thief and slaves, the one who pays is the owner. It is the free person, owner of the slaves, who pays for their misdeeds. [AL](#).
Mtwana: male slave; rascal, rogue, ill-bred person. Cf. #944.

4431. Mwivi haibi na mnyaka hanyakui. [T](#).395.

The thief does not steal and the snatcher snatches not; you don't believe it, do you?
On the impudence of thieves. [T](#).

4432. Mwivi hang'olewi mtango. [T](#).393; [B](#).2.45.

The cucumber is not plucked up for a thief.
A person is not going to make it easy for a thief.

4433. Mwivi hataki kuibiwa. [REK](#).

A thief does not want to be robbed.

4434. Mwivi mkavu alimwambia mwenye munda, "M". [T](#).396

The impertinent thief said to the owner of the garden "M".
The owner asked the thief to give back what the thief had stolen and the thief said "M", what's next?
Munda: plantation, garden.
Mkavu: dry (eyed).

4435. Mwivi siku zake arobaini. [B](#).2.45; *Swahili* Mar.1967, p.109; [NS](#).26; [SAM](#).19.43; [KS](#), *mwizi*.

Siku za mwizi ni arobaini. [B](#).2.16; [H](#).91; [SWA](#).25.

The days of a robber are forty.
A thief is bound to be caught.

Mwizi sikuye ni moja. [JK](#). 145; [AL](#) 822.

The day of a thief is one.
The luck of the thief is probably short. [AL](#) Cf. #1349.

4436. Mwizi haibi mara moja. [WIKON](#).197.

A thief does not steal once only.

4437. Mwizi hajidumbi [or *hajistaki*]. [SAM](#).19.42.

Thieves do not accuse themselves.
A thief does not admit being bad, and does not like to be thought of as bad. See note #1839.

4438. Mwizi huwa zaidi akikamatwa. [NGU](#).

A thief becomes a greater thief if caught.

4439. Mwizi ni mwizi, kanuna mwizi mkubwa au mdogo. [REK](#).

A thief is a thief, there is no big or small thief.

4440. Paka hawekewi kitoweo kulinda. [SAM](#).21.2.

A cat is not put guard over food.
A thief is not put to watch over precious things.

4441. [leo] pwagu na pwaguzi wamekutana. [RECH](#).451; [KS](#), *leo*.

[Today] A thief and a better thief have met.
A thief has been caught by a more cunning thief. There is always someone better.

Pwagu hupata pwaguzi. [F](#).43.22.

A thief finds a bigger and better thief. Cf. #751.

4442. Shirika wa mwizi ni mwizi. [NS](#).25.

The company of a thief is a thief.

4443. Taa haachi mwibawe. [SAM](#).23.1; [KA](#); [SM](#).

The skate [fish] does not shed its spiny pikes.
Don't follow bad people. Don't trust them.
Taa, a skate, a fish with stickles.
Mwiba: a thorn, a fishbone.

Taa haimziwii mwizi. [MM](#).

Light does not prevent a thief [from stealing]. Cf. #1190; #390; #391; #399.

4444. Ukimtendea mwizi vizuri, mwishowe atakuibia. [REK](#).

If you treat a thieves nicely, they'll rob you at the end.

4445. Usimkanie vyanda vitano. [JK](#).129; [AL](#) 1790.

Do not think that that person does not have five fingers.

That person stole once and will steal again. One does not change one's behavior. Once a thief always a thief. [AL](#).

4446. Waanikaji wengine, waanuzi wengine. [EM](#) w2.

Some put their clothes out to dry and others remove them.

"If a person has a plan another may undo it." [EM](#).

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Success - failure

4448. Achekwaye ndiye afanikiwaye. [KER](#).

The one who is laughed at is the one who succeeds.

4449. Akipewa amependelewa, nikipewa nastahili. [KA](#).

If somebody else is awarded that person is favored, (but) if I am awarded I have earned it.

Used when someone is jealous.

4450. Alo na jaha humwambia heri na asofaulu humwambia habalu. [JKP](#).

If you succeed people say nice things to you, but if you fail they call you irresponsible.

Alo for *aliye*: the one who.

Jaha: honor, glory, prosperity.

Habalu or *habali*: irresponsible.

4451. Ameangukiwa kikuti kibichi. [SACL](#). 68,373.

A green palm-leaf has befallen on So and So.

Somebody has been lucky. A poor person has found good fortune.

Instead of *kibichi* [green, fresh], *chema* [good] is also used.

Ameangukiwa na msiba. [SACL](#). 68.

That person has encountered misfortune.

4452. Ametoa mleli. [J](#), *mleli*.

That person has put out a tail-feather.

One is prospering. [J](#).

4453. Anayeonja asali huchonga mzinga. [E](#).3.24.

Someone who tastes honey makes a beehive.

Nothing succeeds like success.

4454. Asiyekubali kushindwa si mshindani. [E](#).4.34; [H](#).96; [L](#).7; [B](#).2.34; [RECH](#).356; [MARA](#).7; [SWA](#).63; [KA](#); [V](#).78.

One who does not admit defeat is not a good fighter.

He should not fight.

We must recognize that there are things in life that some people can do and others not. [KA](#).

Said to one who has been defeated.

Asiyekiri ushinde hakuwa mshindani. [T](#).33; [SACL](#). 974.

One who does not acknowledge the possibility of being worsted, has never engaged in the struggle. [T](#).

4455. Chako ni chako, usidharau cha mwenzako. [NGU](#).

Yours is yours, but don't despise your friend's. Cf #1895.

4456. Fedha ni matokeo, si msingi wa maendeleo. [KS](#), *tokeo*.

Money is the result, not the foundation of progress.

4457. Filimbi ya mwisho ndiyo huamua mshindi. [REK](#).

It is the last whistle that tells the winner.

4458. Hakuna kilicho kitamu kuliko kilichopatikana kwa shida. [REK](#).

There is nothing sweeter than what has been obtained at great effort.

4459. Hakuna kipato bila maumivu. [NGU](#).

No gain without pain.

4460. Hakuna zaidi mbovu. [J,zaidi](#).

There is no increase which is bad. [J](#).

Hapana ziada mbovu. [E.10.9](#).

There is no harm in an increase. [E](#).

Hakuna zaidi mbovu: fungato haiumizi mkono. [T](#). 79.

There is no ill increase: bind-well does not hurt the arm.

Sometimes applied to explain the acceptance of a gift of no great value. [T](#).

4461. Halipati! Halipati! Lapumbaza. [SACL.763](#); [T.80](#); [AL 1383](#); [KA](#).

A repeated miss. That is very hard to take.

Although the repeated attacks of an enemy may fail of their object, yet they seldom fail to worry a person. [T](#).

Halifai, halifai, lapumbaza. [KA](#); [MARA 2](#).

It's useless, it's useless, it satisfies.

It happens that some people mock others who do things that seem to be a waste of time. But as long as they like it, let them be. [KA](#). To show that there is no thing or person totally useless, even if some people think so. [MARA](#).

4462. Hamna sifa zisizo na msingi. [REK](#).

There is no honor without reason.

Respect must have been earned.

4463. Kamba ya mali haivutwi kwa nguvu. [PM.83](#)

One does not pull the rope of riches with force.

One should not force one's luck.

4464. Katika mawindo ya ndezi hakuna ngozi. [AL 1659](#).

While hunting the big *ndezi* rats don't expect to obtain [nice] skins.

The hides are covered with sharp spikes and therefore they are useless.

4465. Kilima uzuri mbali, karibu kuna mabonde. [AL 1674](#).

From afar the hill is nice, close by there are valleys.

Kilima uzuri mbali, karibu kina majuto. [AL 1675](#).

From afar the hill is nice, close by it causes regrets.

Nothing is perfect.

4466. Majaliwa si mamoya. [J,jalia](#).

All talents are not alike.

4467. Maji yasimwagike wala mtungi usivunjike. [T.232](#); [SACL.618](#).

Without either the water being spilt or the pitcher being broken.

A wish for a safe journey. Cf. #1233.

4468. Mgala muume na haki umpe. [KA](#).

Give the Gala man his right.

Give a person praise if earned, and blame if earned. [KA](#).

Mgala muue na haki umpe. [ZO p34](#)

Kill a Gala and give him his due.

Gala or *Galla*: "A great nation consisting of many tribes in East Africa....They were a few years ago almost entirely destroyed by the Somali." [Krapf](#).

4469. Mnywa maji kwa mkono [mmoja] kiu yake i palepale. [T.297](#); [E.29.89](#); [L.55](#); [SAM.15.16](#); [SACL.417](#); [KB.193](#).

One who drinks water with [one] hand, will remain thirsty.

Of somebody who does his work half-heartedly.

4470. Mpata leo, si mpata kesho. [NGU](#).

The receiver today is not [necessarily] the receiver tomorrow.

What you receive today is what you have, what you receive tomorrow is uncertain.

4471. Mpigia sifa bahati yake ndogo. [AL, piga](#); [AL 1741](#).

Someone aspiring after fame has little chance.

4472. Muonja asali, hutupa ugali. [RSP.101](#).

One who has tasted honey, throws the porridge away.

4473. Mwangwana anajilaumu mwenyewe, pumbavu hulaumu wengine. [NGU](#).

Gentle people blame themselves; fools blame others.

Pumbavu: a dumb, stupid person, a fool.

4474. Nadhari njia ya peponi. [SAM](#).20.1.

Good judgement [planning] is the road to happiness [success].

4475. Nguvu nguvu hayafani. [AL](#) 209.

Using force constantly is unsuccessful.

4476. Pato ni kutunukiwa: ni mola na mwenye huba. [AL](#) 1703.

Becoming prosperous depends on God and on a generous friend.

Huba or *heba*: friendship, love, desire.

4477. Rangi hairushi puto. [EM](#) r11.

It is not the color that makes the balloon fly.

A person should be judged by his humanity. *Puto*: balloon.

4478. Tende? Tendeje! Nyama? Nyamaa! Pembe? Kipembe! [T](#).504.

Dates? What can I do? Cattle? Hold your tongue! Ivory? The prison!

The profit on dates is "so-so"; on cattle, "not worth mentioning," and as for the ivory trade, disputes are so common and litigation so dangerous, that most ivory traders at some time or another make acquaintance with the inside of a *gereza* (prison). [T](#).

This monologue on the disadvantages of trade is for one who is seeking to enter trade. [T](#).

4479. Tumbiri kukosa bungo, alisema, "li uchungu." [T](#).510; [V](#).124; [SACL](#). 910.

The monkey failing to get the *bungo*, said: "It is bitter."

Bungo: fruit of the rubber liana (*landolphia*). Resembles a lemon.

4480. Ukitaka kuoga, usiogope baridi. [AL](#) 154.

If you want to take a bath, you should not be afraid of the cold.

4481. Usigombane na shani ya mungu. [SAM](#).25.15.

Do not quarrel with the glory of God.

Glory manifested in a person's success. Be not envious. [MM](#). Cf. #809.

4482. Vyako, vyako na wenzio: vikikupata ni vyako peke yako. [E](#).51.5; [B](#).2.47.

The good that befalls you is yours and your friends'; the evil that befalls you is just your own. [E](#).

Success has many fathers, but failure is an orphan.

Chako chako peke yako, kikikufika kina wenzako. [SAM](#).5.2.

What is yours is yours alone, but if it gets you it gets to your friends.

When a good thing happens to you it is yours alone, but when a calamity befalls you, you share it with your friends. [MM](#).

4483. Washindwapo ndipo washindapo. [FSM](#).199.

Where there are losers there also are winners.

One should not give up too easily and should try to learn why one has failed and take the means to do better next time.

4484. Ya kunya haina wingu. [T](#).594; [V](#).29.

[The rain] that pours has no clouds.

The gifts of fortune are unexpected.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Thrift - waste

4485. Akiba haiozi. [E.1.7](#); [J.](#), akiba; [B.2.34](#); [RECH.7](#); [H.4](#); [KB.6](#); [SWA.1](#).

A reserve never goes bad.

Always comes in useful. [J.](#)

A person with foresight will know prosperity. [KB.](#)

Akiba si mbaya, mlafi ni mkata. [NGU.](#)

Reserve is not bad, a glutton is a pauper.

Mla: an eater, a consumer, one who eats.

Mlaji: someone addicted to food

Mlafi: a glutton, gourmandizer

akiba si mbi ingawa ni kumbe, siku ya kivumbi hutia motoni. [SM.](#)

A reserve is not bad, even if it a husk of a coconut, in a day of need put it in the fire.

4486. Aliyemnyima mwenzake nyama ya ndezi, paa akanyima nyama ya mbogo. [AL](#) 1235.

To one who refused a companion meat of a rodent, the gazelle denied buffalo meat.

The egoist must not expect help from others.

Ndezi: the name of a kind of rat.

Mbogo or *nyati*: buffalo.

4487. Aliyezowea kupokea kutoa ni vita. [SM.](#)

For a person accustomed to receive, giving is like a war.

Said of a hard, selfish person, a miser. cf. #304.

4488. Awekaye ukindo hula na mwenziwe. [FSM.22.](#)

One who puts down 'an enough' eats with a companion.

Every person who puts the spoon down will eat with a companion.

The meaning of *ukindo* is not clear. It may stand for *ukingo*, a screen, act of warding off. So if someone puts the remaining food behind the screen, there would be something to share with friends later. [HM.](#) Cf.# 4492

4489. Cha baili huliwa na mende. [NESTOR](#) p.36.

The property of a miser is eaten by cockroaches.

4490. Choyo ni shina la maovu yote. [MEM.](#)149.

Avarice is the root of all evil.

4491. Furushi analochukua mwenzako kiunoni huwezi kulifungua. [AL](#) 1122.

The bundle that your companion carries on his hip, you cannot open.

Don't count on a stingy companion. [AL.](#)

4492. Kila mweka mwiko hula na wenzawe. [FSM.22.](#)

Everyone who puts down the spoon will eat with companions.

Mwiko has the double meaning of spoon and taboo. It is also possible that *mwiko* originally stood for *mwiku*, food left over. The translation would then be: Every time a person stores left-overs, that person will eat with companions. Be thrifty. [HM.](#) Cf.# 4488.

4493. Kimbuzi na kimbuzi hununua jahazi. [JK.](#)134.

A little goat and another little goat will buy a boat.

Small savings accumulate to big savings. [JK.](#)

Kibuzi is more common than *kimbuzi*: a little goat. [SACL.](#)

4494. Kisichofaa leo kitafaa kesho. [NGU.](#)

What is of no use today will be useful tomorrow..

4495. Kisokula mlimwengu, sera nale. [F.16.28](#); [KA](#).

What is not eaten by a human being, let the devil eat it. [E](#).

A human being should do only good things and leave evil to the devil. Said to a drunkard.

4496. Kula mali; mchanga hauliki. [KB.126](#); [AL](#),*la*.

Eat your wealth; sand is not edible.

Eat what you have, sand [in your grave] is not tasty. [AL](#).

Enjoy your life before being in your grave. [AL](#).

4497. Maji ya kifuu ni bahari ya chungu. [F.21.9](#); [B.2.57](#); [H.61](#); [POL.230](#); [B.1.33](#).

The water in an empty coconut shell is like a sea to an ant.

What often seems very small to one may prove very big to another.

Bahari ya chungu ni maji kitobweni. [JKP](#).

The ocean of the ants is water in a small hole.

"Said when a small person fears a small thing". [JKP](#). Cf. #1913.

4498. Mali ya bahili huliwa na wadudu. [L](#), *bahili*; [T.234](#); [RECH.22](#); [V.139](#), *dudu*: [SACL.82](#), 173; [KB](#). p.453, 478; [KS](#), *bahili*.

The wealth of the miser is devoured by insects. [SACL](#).

For insects, read: "good-for-nothing people." [KB](#); [SACL](#).

4499. Mali ya bahili mwenyewe ni jini. [T.235](#); [B.4.47](#).

A miser's wealth: the owner is a demon.

A nursery tale says that the reason a miser does not use his/her wealth is that it is being enjoyed by demons. [T](#).

4500. Mali ya kumtia mwenyewe utumwani si mali. [MA](#). 272.

The wealth which enslaves the owner is not wealth.

4501. Masazo ya ndovu, majani makavu. [JK.136](#).

The left-overs of an elephant are withered leaves.

The remnants of power are [often] ruins.

4502. Maskini na mwanawe, tajiri na mali yake. [F.22.21](#); [B.1.75](#); [NS.6](#).

Poor people and their child [are like] rich people and their wealth.

Tajiri na maliye, maskini na mwanawe. [KS](#), *tajiri*.

Like a rich person and wealth, so are the poor and their child.

4503. Mbahili huwa mkarimu ugenini. [REK](#).

A miser becomes generous abroad.

4504. Mchoyo hana rafiki. [FSM.101](#).

A miser has no friends.

About not sharing. Cf. #1600.

4505. Mchunga haziki. [F.25.46](#).

A shepherd does not bury.

He does not keep a reserve, he eats it. He does not waste, he consumes it all. [MM](#).

4506. Mkono wa tundu. [T.640d](#).

A hand with a hole in it.

Said of those who cannot keep what they possess.

4507. Mla leo kesho hali. [MA.325](#).

One who eats today will not eat tomorrow.

Understood is one who finishes all today.

4508. Mlevi wa mvinyo hulevuka, mlevi wa mali halevuki. [JK.129](#); [KB.191](#); [SACL.571](#), 471; [V](#), *mlevi*.

One who is drunk after drinking wine will get sober, but one who is drunk with wealth will not [get sober].

4509. Mmaliza mali si mtafuta mali. [EM.m23](#).

The one who squanders property is not the one who worked to get it.

A squanderer often did not work for the property and does not know how hard it was to acquire it. [EM](#).

4510. Mwanamke [mke] wa sultani mtajiri, aliye na choyo, [siku moja] akaenda kuomba sindano. [KB.212](#); [AL](#) 103.

The wife of a rich and stingy sultan one day had to go and borrow a needle.

4511. Mziba sikio asimsikilize maskini, akija naye hulalamika, hatasikilizwa kamwe. [KB.228](#).

People who turn a deaf ear to the complaints of a poor person will be treated the same way when their time comes to complain.

4512. Nyumba kuu haina nafasi. [J.chumba](#).

A big house has little room.

4513. Simpake mafuta utosini tu. [EM](#) s17.

Do not anoint a person only on the crown of the head.

If you help somebody, help him fully.

4514. Stahimili ule mbivu, vumbika ule mbovu. [EM](#) s23.

If you wait you will eat what is ripe, if you accumulate you will eat what is rotten.

Waiting for the proper time brings satisfactory results, but piling up goods without using them results in losses. [EM](#).

4515. Tone la mungu, mto wa chungu. [RSP.103](#).

A raindrop from God is like a river to an ant. Cf. #1902.

4516. Tumia ulichumiacho kale. [ED.76](#).

Use what you have put together [earned] in earlier days.

4517. Tunza lako, tutatunza letu. [JK.121](#); [AL](#) 1173.

Look after your own [field], we shall look after ours. [JK](#).

Don't interfere with other people's affairs.

4518. Ufukara hauji mara. [RSP.69](#).

Poverty does not come at once.

It comes by wasting one's property. [RSP](#).

4519. Ukimpa paka utumbo, mwenyewe utakula nini? [T.541](#); [CM.51](#); [KA](#); [AL](#) 1229; [V](#).

If you give the tender meat of the belly to the cat, what are you going to eat yourself?

An ironical question asked a miser, who under pretext that the cat needs choice food, does not feed a poor person.

Utumbo: intestines, guts. The tender fatty intestines. [KA](#). Cf. #876.

4520. Unakula vya watu, vyako unasirima katika kiwambaza. [KB.313](#); [AL](#) 1099.

You eat the food of others, your own food you smear on the wall.

Don't be so stingy as not to invite anyone.

4521. Usichumie tumbo. [JK.146](#); [AL](#) 593.

Do not pick from the belly. [JK](#).

Do not only work for the tummy. [MM](#).

Said of people who work and live only for eating. [MM](#).

4522. Usikae kwa ghururi, tia akiba kwa kesho. [JKP](#).

Do not live with an illusion, lay in a store for tomorrow.

Don't think that a good time will last for ever. [JKP](#).

4523. Usitumie mapesa yako; yakisha utatabakwa. [ED. 82](#); [JK.144](#).

Don't spend all your money; when it is finished you'll be destitute.

4524. Vya chui vinaliwa na panya. [AL](#) 1234.

The goods of the leopard are eaten by rats.

Miserliness profits nobody.

4525. Vya kuficha vinaoza. [AL](#) 764; [AL, oza](#).

Things hidden will spoil.

4526. Wachoyo wengi kuliko wakarimu. [EM](#) w3.

There are more selfish people than generous ones.

4527. Wape maskini wale, usile pweke husonga. [JKP](#).

Give to the poor that they may eat; do not eat alone, you may choke.

4528. [e,] wewe kama mamba, huila mwenyewe. [ED.13](#).

You are like a mudfish, you consume yourself.

This is said of somebody who squanders his goods.

Mamba: mudfish, catfish. It buries itself in the mud when the water dries up and "hibernates" there until the rain brings back the water.

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SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

War - peace

4529. Amani haihitaji mlinzi. [NGU](#).

Peace does not need a guard.

Indeed peace cannot be kept by armed forces, because it is the opposite of quarreling and fighting.

4530. Amani haipatikani ila kwa ncha ya upanga. [A](#).173; [T](#).18; [MARA](#).5; [E](#).3.19; [KB](#) 22; [KS](#),amani.

Peace comes not save by the point of the sword.

Suluhu haiji ila kwa ncha ya upanga. [L](#).92; [B](#).3 20; [JK](#).145.

Appeasement does not come save by the point of the sword.

Amani haipatikani bila thamani. [MA](#).44.

Peace is not obtained without cost.

4531. Amani ni njia ya mapenzi na ufahamiano. [MA](#).46.

Peace is a way to love and understanding.

4532. Choma kwa choma hazichomani. [SACL](#).899; [ED](#).75.

Two points do not stab one another.

Two powerful people do not fight one another, because there is mutual fear. [ED](#).

Choma, toma, chomo: to stab, point. Cf. #330.

4533. Dhuli hwenda kwa kifua, simbo kapata vitani. [JKP](#).

A poor man goes into battle with exposed chest, but acquires weapons through fighting.

Dhuli: a poor, weak person.

Simbo for *fimbo*: a stick.

See # 4534.

4534. Dhuli kienda kwa kifua, simbo kapata vitani. [JKP](#).

If a poor man walks proudly, he will get beaten with a stick.

A poor person must not show off. [JKP](#).

4535. Fitina si mtu mwema, heri mchawi. [NGU](#).

A quarreler is not a good person, a sorcerer is better.

Wizards keep to themselves.

Mchawi: wizard, witch, sorcerer.

4536. Gombea heshima, gombea kisima, mgombee mama. [JKP](#).

Honor, water (a well) [and], mother are worth fighting for.

4537. Hanjamu nusu ya kitali. [KS](#).,*kitali*; [ZO](#) 254; [AL](#) 94.

Showing off is half a fight.

Eagerness is half the fight, a person who is passionate is ready to fight for what he craves for. [AL](#).

4538. Harubu harabu. [RSP](#).107.

War [causes] destruction.

Quarreling is always harmful. [RSP](#).

Harabu hugaribu. [MM](#)

A destructive person spoils. Cf. #1752.

4539. Kuregarega si kufa, kufa ni mashinda kondo. [T](#).194; [SACL](#). 775; [AL](#) 236.

To be in a battered condition is not dying, death is what decides the conflict. [T](#).
To be battered is not yet death, death is what ends the conflict. [SACL](#).
One who weakens is not yet dead, death is the victory over difficulties. [AL](#).
An enemy should be killed, no quarter should be given. [T](#).
Stone dead hath no fellow. [T](#).
Kondo: archaic: war or difficulty.

Kulegalega si kuanguka. [NGU](#).
Tottering is not necessarily falling.

Kuregarega si kufa, kufa ni kuoza utumbo. [KA](#).
Weakening is not dying, dying is when the guts are rotting [when the heart stops working]. It is not good to cut man's activity [speech] short. [KA](#).
Lega or rega: to waver, totter, shake.

4540. Maji hayakosi wimbi. [NGU](#).
Water always has waves.

4541. Mchezo wa mbwa kuanguka mkubwa na mdogo. [NGU](#).
It is a dog's play the fall of big and small.
In wrestling big and small are made to fall.
Dogs stand for bad people; two are fighting, one shall fall.

4542. Mgomvi haji kwa ndaru. [NGU](#).
A quarreler does not come for praise.

4543. Miti haipati maneno, mpaka binadamu. [AL](#) 1668; [AL](#), *mpaka*.
The trees have no problems, only men have them.
Or: Trees have no problems, if it were not for men.
Mpaka = ila: but, only. [AL](#).

4544. Mkuki unasema: ua! Mkoba unasema: turudie nyumbani!. [AL](#) 1138.
The spear says: kill!, but the hunting bag says: let's go home!
Those who excite others to violence don't pay for the broken pots. [AL](#).

4545. Muamuzi kati ya tonge na koo ni mlenda. [FSM](#).143.
The arbitrator between a big lump [of food] and the throat is the vegetable.
Every problem has its own solution. There is no quarrel that has no solution. [FSM](#).
Mlenda: a vegetable; young sweet potato leaves. Cf. #1927.

4546. Mwamuzi, chake ni kigongo. [JK](#).130; [AL](#) 1614.
A mediator in a fight, his reward is a beating.
The instrument of the judge is his stick.
Oppression replaces justice. [AL](#).
Don't get between two fighters.

4547. Mwenda pate harudi, kijacho ni kilio. [T](#).337; [SACL](#). 312.
One who goes to Pate returns not, what comes back is a mourning cry. [T](#).
"Going to Pate Island" means going on a war expedition.
Shela, Tela. Place of fierce fighting. Salim, p.18; and [SACL](#). p.834.
Cf. Reputation for more.

4548. Ndovu wawili wakisongana ziumiazo ni nyika. [A](#).114; [T](#).412; [SACL](#). 961.
When two elephants jostle, that which is hurt is the grass.

Ndovu mbili zkipambana, liumiao ni gugu. [ED](#).60.
Apiganapo tembo, nyasi humia. [E](#).51.5.
Wapiganapo ndovu wawili ziumazo nyasi. [L](#).105.
Tembo zikipigana humia nyasi. [NS](#).10.
Tembo mbili wakipigana humia nyasi. [KB](#).294.
All have the same translation. When elephants fight grass suffers.

Wapiganapo fahali wawili ziumiazo ni nyasi. [H](#).110; [B](#).2.8.
When two bulls fight, it is the grass that suffers.
When the mighty fight it is the little people who suffer.

4549. Neno halimpati nyama, ila mtu. [AL](#) 1669.

The problem is of humans, not of animals. Cf. #1926e.

4550. Nyungu ya mgambo imekwisha kuvunjika, kila mtu atakoya nafusiye. [T](#).445

The pot of the palaver is now broken: all people must solve their own problems.

On the crushing of a sedition. Seditions were common things in former times; in the reign of Saiyid Barghash there began an era of greater tranquility for Arab rulers, at least in this respect. [T](#).

The root of evil has been eliminated. [MM](#).

4551. Palipo na amani mungu yupo. [NGU](#).

Where there is peace God is present.

4552. Palipo wabaya na wema wa papo. [NGU](#).

Where there are evil people, there are also good ones.

4553. Pauliwapo nyoka hapaachi ndombezi. [MS](#).

Where a snake has been killed hatred is still present.

Even if one evil person has been eliminated in a fight or war, there remains much hatred.

Here, a snake represents an evil person.

Ndombezi or *hasama*: enmity, hatred.

4554. Penye shwari na pepo upo. [EM](#) p.15.

Where there is calm there is a storm.

Trouble comes to peaceful places, and peace to troubled places.

People living in a good relationship may become enemies.

4555. Raha haiji, ila baada ya taabu. [T](#).464; [V](#).46.

Rest comes only after hardship.

Baada ya vita faraja. [F](#); [K](#).

After war, relief.

Cf. #1455, #1922.

4556. Raha haina karaha. [KA](#); [SM](#).

Peace has no aversion.

Peace does not hate or dislike. Everybody likes peace. It is when misfortune arrives that people start lamenting.

4557. Silaha za siku hizi ni kalamu na karatasi. [E](#); [K](#).

Today's weapons are pen and paper.

The pen is mightier than the sword.

4558. Starehe ni kivuli cha miiba. [ZO](#) p,5.

Peace and quietness is in the shade of a thorn bush.

4559. Ukitaka amani, jitayarisha kwa vita. [REK](#).

If you want peace, prepare yourself for war.

Cf. #1922; #1031.

4560. Usichokoze shwari usipojua matata yake. [NGU](#).

Don't disturb a peaceful time, when you don't know its troubles.

4561. Utetezi ni utelezi. [EM](#) u36.

Defense is a slip.

It is in defending a matter that a person may make mistakes of speech or action and in that way spoil his own affairs. A defender should be aware of this. [EM](#).

4562. Vita havina macho. [CM](#).44; [F](#).50.2; [B](#).2.13; [L](#).103; [H](#).108; [V](#).14; [B](#).1.36; [KB](#).336; [SWA](#).39; [KS](#),vita.

War is blind.

It spares no one. "Bullets have no eyes. They don't know where they are going or who they are going to hit". Gloria Hays. *Champaign-Urbana News Gazette*, Oct. 29, 1995.

4563. Vita, vita vitapata. [RSP](#).112. .

War begets war.

Vita huzidi vita. [JK](#).120; [MM](#).

War increases war. Fighting, quarrels produce more of the same.

4564. Vita vya panga haviamuliwi kwa fimbo. [F](#).50.3; [B](#).1.36.

A fight with swords cannot be settled with sticks.

4565. Vita vya panzi [ni] furaha ya kunguru. [B.2.54](#); [B.2.13](#); [E.50.4](#); [H.109](#); [B.1.36](#); [L.104](#): [KS,vita](#).

War among grasshoppers delights the crow.

Used when people benefit from the misfortunes of others.

Vita vya panzi neema ya kunguru. [MARA.75](#).

War among grasshoppers is a blessing for the crow.

4566. Vitani, kurudi nyuma siyo kushindwa. [NGU](#).

Pulling back in the war is not the same as having lost the war.

4567. Washindwao ni waume na mata. [KS mata](#); [AL](#) 1586.

The losers are the armed men.

Those who take up arms are chastised.

4568. Yu heri mchawi kama fitina. [NGU](#).

So and So is happy as a wizard at a quarrel.

4569. Zana za vita ni silaha. [KA](#).

The tools of war are arms.

Without tools or know-how you are handicapped.

4570. Zunguo la mtukutu ni ufito. [MARA](#) 3; [KA](#).

A prayer over an urchin is a stick.

The urchin listens to a stick.

Zungua: reading the Koran over a sick person..

Mtukutu, or *mtundu*: ruffian; someone who breaks things.

Dawa ya mtundu ni ufito. [MARA](#) 3.

The remedy for a ruffian is a stick.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Women - men

4571. Afadhali utu kuliko kitu. [CAPD](#) P.15.

Being human is better than anything.

About values.

4572. Asiyejua utu si mtu. [SM](#).

One who does not know how to be humane (kind, civilized) is not human.

4573. Bibi mzuri hakosi kilema. *Swahili*, Sept.1966.

[Even] a beautiful woman is not without blemish.

No one is perfect.

Cf. #198e.

4574. Chanda [kidole] chema huvishwa pete. [T](#).50; [F](#).6.2. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

A handsome finger gets a ring put round it.

The person who deserves esteem will get it. A pretty maiden will have a ring slipped on her finger.

If you put a ring on a finger, you'll put it on the right finger, not on the thumb or toe (also finger in Swahili).

This proverb is used to show that honor and reward be given to the right, the good people.

Kidole kisicho pete huvikwa. [L](#).34.

The finger that has no ring will get one.

Vyanda vya miguu havivishwi pete. [MARA](#) 2.

On the fingers of the feet (toes) no ring is put.

4575. Gombe la mji halichungwi. [NGU](#).

The big cow of the town does not need to be herded.

The cow cannot be lost. An important man or woman in town can go nowhere, cannot be lost.

Gombe la mji halitaki mchungu. [NGU](#).

The big cow of the town does not need shepherding.

Cf. #1940.

4576. Hakuna anayemshinda mwanaume kama mwanamke. [NGU](#).

Nothing can overpower a man as a woman.

4577. Hutamkuta msichana anayejidharau. [KB](#).76.

You don't find a young girl who has contempt for herself.

Girls are vain. [JK](#).

4578. Kaburi la mke mwenza li kombo. [JKP](#).

The grave of your co-wife is crooked.

"Jealousy makes you find faults." [JKP](#).

Mwenza for *mwenzako*: your companion.

4579. Kila mtu na roho yake. [JKP](#); [AL](#) 1785.

All human beings have their own soul.

"All people have to learn their own nature and live with it." [JKP](#). Every person has his own personality or character.

Kila roho na visa vyake. [AL](#) 1786.

Every person has his own preoccupations.

Cf #147.

4580. Kina cha moyo wa mwanamke ni mfuko wa mumewe. [NGU](#).

The depth of a woman's heart [is as deep as] the [money] bag of her husband.

4581. Licha ya uchungu, wanawake hawaishi kutamani kuzaa. [REK](#).

Notwithstanding the pain, women do not stop longing to give birth.

4582. Mjane wa mji ni mkengwa. [NGU](#).

A widow in a village is a helper for every one.

Mkengwa (*mke* + *ngwa*) as in *mwana-ngwa*, *mwana wa watu* (a child of the people) in this case: a woman of the people, i.e., not a prostitute, but a helper for everybody.

4583. Mke atasahau kufua shati lake, lakini hasahau kupokea bahasha. [NGU](#).

A wife will forget to launder his shirt, but will not forget to receive his pay check.

4584. Mke kito chema. [NGU](#).

A wife is a beautiful jewel.

4585. Mke mbaya, mpe mwana na mbeleko. [NGU](#).

Give a bad wife a child and a papoose.

Mbeleko: cloth to carry a baby on the back.

4586. Mke mpya hana dawa, dawa yake upya wake. [AL](#) 935.

A new wife wears no love charms, her charm is being new.

Mke mpya hana dawa, dawa yake mapendo yake. [AL](#) 934.

A new wife wears no love charms, love is her charm.

4587. Mke mwenye adabu ni fahari kwa mumewe. [NGU](#).

A good mannered wife is a pride for her husband.

4588. Mke mzuri halindwi. [V](#). *linda*.

A beautiful woman is difficult to guard. [V](#).

Mlinzi hulinda ndege, mke mzuri halindwi. [T](#) 284; [SACL](#). 474; [KA](#).

The birdchaser keeps the birds away [from the millet]: [but] a pretty woman] can not be guarded. [T](#).

Ndege hulindwa, mke halindwi. [JK](#).132.

A bird can be guarded, a wife cannot be guarded.

4589. Mke mzuri humtii mumewe. [NGU](#).

A good wife obeys her husband.

4590. Mke ndiye ufunguo wa nyumba. [NGU](#).

A wife is the key of the house.

She opens the house making it accessible.

4591. Mke ni dada mdogo. [JK](#).130.

Your wife is [your] little sister.

Treat her gently. [JK](#).

4592. Mke ni nguo. [T](#).272a; [V](#)., *mke*; [AL](#) 943.

A wife is [means] clothes.

Mke ni nguo, mgomba kupalilia. [E](#).27.70; [FSM](#).116; [AL](#) 944.

Clothing is to the wife as is weeding to a banana plant.

People and things need to be cared for.

The spouse is expensive in price-wealth and clothing, but her work is profitable. [AL](#).

Mgomba ni kupaliliwa. [NGU](#).

A banana tree is to be weeded.

Uzuri wa mwanamke ni nguo. [Swahili](#), Sept.1968, p.166.

The beauty of a woman is clothing.

A woman is as beautiful as her clothes.

But it is used most in the meaning that a woman's beauty is considered by the way she dresses, i.e., modestly.

Uzuri wa mke ni nguo, wa ng'ombe ni kulimiwa. [JK](#).130.

The beauty of a women is in her clothing, that of an ox is in

plowing.

A woman's best quality is hard work. [JK](#).

Mke ni nguo, lakini nguo si mke. Carol Sicherman.

Clothing enhances women's beauty, but is not of itself more important than a woman.

4593. Mke wa kwanza ni kama mama. [E](#); [K](#).

The first wife is like a mother.

Refers also to the vital part first wives play in running homes. Cf. #1941.

4594. Mkeka mpya haulaliwi vema. [JK](#).131.

A new sleeping mat is not pleasant to sleep on.

A young wife has a lot to learn. JK. Cf. 1782.

4595. Mshale mzuri haukai ziakani. [KA](#); [AL](#) 947; [KS](#), *ziaka*.

A fine arrow does not remain in its quiver.

A nice thing is used more than a bad thing. A young woman cannot be kept in confinement. [AL](#).

Ziaka, ala, uo, riaka: scabbard, quiver.

4596. Mshale mzuri huua maisha alani. [REK](#).

The beautiful arrow kills life in the scabbard.

Is this to say that a beautiful woman upsets life in a village?

4597. Mtoto mwanamke methili yake kama vitu viwili, tango na kitunguu, na vitu hivi ni vitu vya kuweka akiba. C.G.Büttner 19;

[V](#), *kitunguu*.

A girl is similar to two things, the gherkin and the onion, and these two things are not put in storage. *Methili*: similar.

4598. Mtu halindi bahari ipitayo kila chombo. [JK](#).132; [AL](#) 949.

A person cannot guard the sea where all the ships pass.

A spouse may not always be faithful, but cannot be perfectly guarded all the time. Cf. #1940.

4599. Mtu mume ni kazi. [T](#).344.

A man is work.

Mwanamume ni kazi. [JK](#).132, 119.

Being a husband means hard work. A husband's love for his family is expressed in hard work. JK.

Mume ni kazi, mke ni nguo. [J](#), *mke*; [V](#), *mume*.

The husband works, the wife dresses.

Cf. #1942, #1947.

4600. Mtu mume ni kazi; ukikosa cha kuweka utapata cha leo leo. [B](#).2.64.

A man must work; if you have no savings you'll get today's food. [MM](#).

4601. Mtu ni akili. [NGU](#).

A human being is intelligent.

That separates a person from other creatures.

Mtu ni kidole. [NGU](#).

A person is like a finger.

Crafty and weak.

Mtu ni kitu. [NGU](#).

A person is a thing.

A creature.

Mtu ni kula. [NGU](#)

A person is eating.

Without food a person cannot survive.

Mtu siyo kitu, bora utu. [NGU](#).

A person is not a thing, the importance is being human.

Cf. chapter Excellence.

Mtu ni jina. [EM](#) m33.

A person becomes a name.

According to tradition and customs, the name given to a child has a meaning. There are many who believe that a person's character and condition resemble the name that is/was given.

Mtu ni tabia. [EM](#) m34.

A person is character.

A person's character reveals us a human being as good, bad, kind, fierce, generous, or selfish. [EM](#).

4602. Mtu nyumbani mwake hatiwi ni mkewe, haonwi kuwa mume, asipompiga, twa. [T](#).347; [SACL](#). 711.

A man who is not obeyed by his wife in his [own] house, is not considered as her husband, unless he beats her, thwack.

It is not traditional for Swahili women to be beaten by their husbands. [MM](#).

4603. Mume ni jaha, si raha. [JK](#). 140; [AL](#). 956.

Being a husband is an honor, it is not a relaxation. [JK](#).

The husband is responsible for the wellbeing of the household.

4604. Mume ni moto wa koko, usipowaka utafuka. [T](#).357.

Man is like a jungle fire, if it does not burn it will smolder.

Is not easy to satisfy, has many needs. [AL](#).

Cf. #1953.

4605. Mwanamke abeden harizi. [SACL](#). 37.

A woman is never satisfied.

Harizi or *haridhi*: be unsatisfied.

Abeden or *abadan*: an adverb with negatives; never. [J](#). Always. [S](#).

4606. Mwanamke akijitapa anajetea ujana wake. [AL](#), *jetea*.

If a woman shows off, she takes advantage of her youth.

4607. Mwanamke hana ugeni. [AL](#) 920.

A woman is nowhere a stranger.

In conforming herself to her neighborhood, the woman creates a place for herself in the sun. [AL](#).

4608. Mwanamke hawi jumbe. [NGU](#).

A woman will not become a major of the town.

4609. Mwanamke mrembo haolewi na bwana mmoja. [REK](#).

An adorned woman is not married to one man only.

She dresses in order to please; jewels are expensive.

4610. Mwanamke ni kama maji ya dafu, hayapendezi ila dafuni mwakwe. [T](#).372.

A woman is like the milk of a young coconut, it is not pleasant except in its young coconut.

Said of the shyness of women on a visit, away from their own home. [T](#).

Maji ya dafu hayapendezi ila dafuni mwake. [KA](#).

Milk of the young coconut is not pleasant except in its nut.

4611. Mwanamke ni muhogo, popote unapotupwa unaota. [AL](#) 921.

A woman is like a cassava plant, that grows where it is thrown.

A woman must adapt herself to the family she married.

Mwanamume ni mti wa muhogo; popote unapotupwa unaota. [AL](#) 960.

A man is like a cassava plant, which takes roots wherever it is thrown.

The husband must adapt himself to the in-laws.

4612. Mwanamume ni mbono, hualikia kule. [JK](#).132; [JKP](#).

A husband is a creeper, he stretches far away. [JK](#).

A man [husband] is like a castor-oil seed; it explodes far away. [MM](#).

"Men are restless, always trying other places and other women. It is better to stay in one place with one wife." [JKP](#).

Cf. #1950.

4613. Mwenye dada hakosi shemeji. [L](#). p.112; [MARA](#) 2; [AL](#) 928.

Who has a sister will not fail to get in-laws.

Every woman is destined to be married. [AL](#).

If you have something others like to have, someone will come forward: a rich person will attract workers and servants; a teacher will attract students; a craftsman will have people who need his wares. [MARA](#).

4614. Mzee ni mtetea. [EM](#) m37.

An old person works like a hen.

"A hen hatches her chicks, carefully brings them up and always gathers them together and teaches them to stay together. An old man or old woman also functions as a hen." [EM](#).

Mtetea: a chicken that has started laying eggs.

4615. Mzee ni mtungi, hupokea machicha. [EM](#) m38.

An old person is like a brewing pot.

"The local beer has a residue which cannot be drunk. This residue is left or returned to the brewing pot. Thus the brewing pot is used to preserve the unwanted residue. Likewise the youth dump what they do not want on an old person who must exercise forbearance in order to be able to accept this plight and deal with what he/she receives." [EM](#).

4616. Nusu mtu nusu nyama, tumo katika dunia. [NGU](#).

In the world we are half human and half animal.

4617. Nyama ya kuku mchanga sio sawa na kuku mzee. [EM](#) n20.

The meat of a young chicken is not the same as the meat of an old one.

"The meaning is that a youth and an adult are both nation builders, but each has a different contribution to make." [EM](#).

4618. Tunda bivu halitaki kwanguliwa, jani kavu hukakatuka kwa jua. [JKP](#).

A ripe fruit does not like being brought down, a dry leaf shrivels in the sun.

"*Fruit* and *leaf* are metaphors for girl and spinster respectively."

Kakatua: crush.

4619. Ushafu si heshima ya mwanamke. [SAM](#).25.13.

Showing off is not honorable for a woman.

4620. Uso mzuri hauhitaji urembo. [E](#).50.44; [MUM](#).171.

A lovely face does not need adornment.

Surfa nzuri haihitaji kupakwa rang. [MUM](#).171.

A nice face does not need paint.

4621. Uso wa mtu umeumbwa na haya. [E](#).50.45.

A human face is made to show modesty. [E](#).

Uso na haya. [SAM](#).25.19.

A face has modesty.

When somebody has done wrong that face should show shame.

4622. Ujana mali, uzee kutu. [AL](#).*mzee*; [AL](#) 1804.

Youth is a richness, old age is rust.

4623. Ujana moshi, uzee kutu. [AL](#) 1805.

Youth is like smoke, old age is like rust.

Young and old, both move towards decline. [AL](#).

4624. Ujana ni kuweka, uzeeni ni kula. [REK](#).

Youth is gathering, in old age it is consuming.

4625. Ukistahi mke ndugu huzai naye. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

If you revere your wife as a sister, you will not have a child with her.

If you venerate a person, even not seeing that person's misbehavior, you'll end up a loser.

If a person is not ashamed to treat you badly, you should not be ashamed to tell that person openly.

Quest: revere, venerate, honor.

Cf #1948.

4626. Uzeekao ni mwili siyo roho. [NGU](#).

What gets old is the body, not the soul.

4627. Vijana hukaa wakitumaini; wazee wakikumbuka. [NGU](#).

The youth are in expectation, the old are in reminiscence.

4628. Visima vya kale havifunikiwi. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

Old wells must not be filled in.

One day they may become useful again.

Respect the elderly and do not discard them. They have wisdom that should be used.

4629. Walimwengu si watu wema. [REK](#).

Earthlings are not good people.

Human beings are not good. Many are not trustworthy.

4630. Wanawake hufanya kazi zote; wanaume hufurahi. [NGU](#).

Women do all the work; men just enjoy life.

4631. Wanawake uchungu wao u nyongani [mwao]. [JK](#).130; [AL](#) 929.

The pain of women is on their hips.

I heard this proverb being muttered by a vexed husband against a nagging wife. Women (thus a husband told me) will use the children as an excuse for quarreling and complaining. [JK](#).

A frustrated spouse pleads a painful hip, of being tired of carrying a child on her hip. [AL](#).

Uchungu: pain, suffering, bitterness, but also of childbearing. Cf. #1563.

4632. Watu wawili wawili. [NGU](#).

Two people are two people.

They are different.

Wawili si mmoja. [NGU](#).

Two persons are not just one person. Cf. #430.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

Work - laziness

4633. Achae asende; akweae ale. [JKP](#).

One who is afraid should not go; the one who climbs in the tree let that one eat.
Said when going hunting or fishing.

4634. Achanikaye kwenye mpini hafi njaa. [EM](#).8.1.

The person who gets blisters from the hoe-handle will not die of hunger.
A diligent worker will reap the fruits of his industry.

4635. Ah! Haifai maishani. [KER](#).

Shouts of disgust are useless in life

4636. Aingiye mwituni, atarejea na kuni. [RSP](#).20.

The person who goes to the forest will come back with firewood.

4637. Alalamikaye kwa wingi hufanya machache. [SAM](#). 2.10.

One who complains much does little.
Not only does that person do little, but also prevents others from achieving.

4638. Ana [yuna] usingizi kama pono. [RECH](#).444; [SACL](#).757; [V](#). 129; [T](#).597; [KS](#), *lala*.

So and So sleeps like a *pono* [fish].

Is lazy. [V](#).

Students are afraid of eating the *pono*, because it would make them lazy or stupid. [V](#)., *pono*.

Umekula pono? Have you eaten the *pono*? Are you sleepy? Lazy?

Pono: a kind of sluggish fish that lives among the coral.

Ana usingizi kama pili. [ED](#).78.

So and So sleeps like a puff adder.

Yu mrefu kama shetani. [V](#).130.

A person as tall as the devil.

Mrefu kama mlingoti. [KS](#), *mlingoti*.

Someone tall like a (ship's) mast.

Mrefu kama unju. [KS](#), *unju*.

Tall like Unju.

Unju: an extremely tall person.

4639. Anayetegemea cha bure, huishi maskini. [REK](#).

One who expects to live for free will live in poverty.

4640. Avunjaye nazi ni lazima ale tui yake. [MEM](#).110.

The one who cracks the coconut should consume the cream.

The person who does the hard work should enjoy the fruits of that work. [MEM](#).

4641. Aweza kugeuza yalala kuwa utajiri. [KB](#).30; [TS](#) 40,12.

That person can change a garbage dump into wealth. [KB](#).

By continual effort the poor can become rich.

But TS puts it under vanity: someone is bragging.

4642. Biashara ya pembe hapana cha kuambulia. [KA](#).

At the ivory market there is no profit.
The ivory market is expensive.
Used when people waste time in looking and admiring.
Kuambulia or *faida*: profit.

4643. Bilashi, bilashi, katu haitoshi. [JKP](#).

For nothing, for nothing, never satisfies.
"A beggar is never satisfied. Once you give something away, the receiver will expect the same gift again." [JKP](#).
Doing work without remuneration does not satisfy.

4644. Binadamu lazima ajitahidi. [NGU](#).

A human being must make an effort.

4645. Bonde mwanzowe kilima. [SAM](#).5.5.

A valley's beginning is a hill.
Before obtaining a state of well-being, we must work for it: Climbing up before we can go down. [SAM](#).

4646. Bora kidogo kwa haki. [KB](#).33.

A little, but earned, is the best.

Bora kidogo kwa haki kuliko mali nyingi kwa wovu. [KB](#).33.

The little acquired honestly is better than much but ill acquired.

4647. Cha bure hakipatikani. [L](#). p.112.

A thing for nothing is not obtainable.

**4648. Chimbani, chimbani, kwa uthabiti
mwema na mwovu, hawajulikani.
mwenye nia mbovu, ingia kisimani.** [JKP](#) #603.

Dig, dig with perseverance
The good and the wicked cannot be distinguished
Anyone with a bad intention falls in this well.
"A well-diggers' song." [JKP](#).

4649. Fumbe na mli wake, haulali ndora. [SACL](#). 230; [JKP](#).

The widow bird with its long tail never sleeps.
This is used as an invitation to workers to work harder.
"Be active, for the black bird is a memento of dying, since it is associated with the grave". [JKP](#).
Fumbe or *fumbwe*: a wydah, a sparrow with a long tail.
Mli: feather, for tail.
Ndora: name of a field.

4650. Fundi hana njaa. [JKP](#).

A craftsman is not hungry.
"A skilled worker will always find work". [JKP](#).

4651. Fundi mbaya huteta na ala zake. [JK](#).144.

The bad craftsman quarrels with the tools. Cf. #1990.

4652. Gari haimwendeshi mwenyewe. [REK](#).

The car does not move the owner.
Because one has a car it does not absolve the owner from making efforts to be accepted in society.

4653. Hakuna cha bure. [NGU](#).

Nothing is free.

4654. Hakuna kitu kigumu kwa mtu mwenye bidii. [NGU](#).

Nothing is hard for an energetic person.

4655. Hatua ndefu hufupisha mwendo. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

Big steps shortens a walk.
Used to encourage effort.

4656. Heri kwenda bure kama kukaa bure. [JKP](#).

It is better to go in vain than to stay in vain.
"You regret more what you did not do than what you did." [JKP](#).
Cf.#1994; #1999; #2024.

4657. Hufanya kazi punda, matai humpenda. [RSP](#).70.

The donkey works all his life, [and only] the vultures like it [after its death]. [RSP](#).

4658. Hujikata kujiunga. [JK](#).118.

One cuts oneself, to put oneself together. [JK](#).

You almost destroy oneself working, then you have to restore your strength and start again. [JK](#).

4659. Ibilisi hunea wavivu. [EM](#) i8.

The devil oppresses the lazy.

The devil looks for people who have plenty of idle time. [EM](#).

4660. Imani hufa kwa sumu ya ujira mbaya. [EM](#) 14.

Trust dies because bad pay poisons it

Trust needs a good satisfying response. [EM](#).

4661. Inama upate. [NGU](#).

Bow down so that you may get it.

Refers to effort in order to obtain what you want and need.

But of course can also be used as "Courtesy opens all doors". Cf. #159.

4662. Jasho la mtu haliliki. [NGU](#).

A person's sweat is not eaten.

Do not exploit or depend on another's work.

Kula jasho la mwenzako: to depend on the work of another. (idiom).

4663. Jasho la mtu mungu halitupi. [EM](#) j4.

God does not ignore a person's sweat.

Work is rewarded.

4664. Jembe ardhini, afya mwilini. [REK](#).

The hoe in the soil [brings] health to the body.

Work brings food on the table.

4665. Jembe halimwongozi mlimaji. [AL](#),*ongoza*; [AL](#) 1563.

The hoe does not lead the farmer.

The inferior (hoe) must not give orders to the higher up.

4666. Jembe mkononi, chakula mdomoni. [AL](#) 164.

With the hoe in the hand, there will be food to eat. Cf.#1971f.

4667. Jikune unapofikia. [NGU](#).

Scratch yourself where you can reach.

Do your own scratching. Help yourself. Do what you can.

4668. Jogoo ndio saa la shamba. [V](#),*jogoo*.

The rooster is the village's clock.

4669. Kalia damani na kushika mkononi. [JKP](#).

Sit near [your own] rope [of the main sail] and hold it in your hand.

"Don't be a back-seat driver, stick to your job." [JKP](#).

Damani or *demani*: rope of mainsail.

4670. Kaukumbatie mnazi ukaupande, kazi uanze. [JKP](#).

Embrace the coconut tree and climb it, start work.

"Many Swahili workers used to be employed as coconut pickers. They were paid by the number of trees they had climbed." [JKP](#).

4671. Kazi bila mchezo hayendi. [NGU](#).

Work without play does not go well.

Mix work with leisure and you will never go mad (Russian proverb).

4672. Kazi hayendi, ila kwa kunga. [JKP](#).

The work will not progress if one does not know the rules [for the initiated].

The work cannot be satisfactory until you are accepted and know all the tricks. "A specialized knowledge for every job." [JKP](#).

Cf.#1258A.

4673. Kazi isiyo faida kutenda si ada. [A](#).206; [T](#).132.

Work without profit, it is not fit for reward.

Uselessness is damaging. [V](#).

Kazi, isiyokuwa na manufaa, kutenda si ada. [V.103](#).

Useless work is worthless.

4674. Kazi isiyo kipimo mwishowe watu hutetana. [A.206](#); [T.133](#); [L.110](#); [SAM.9.4](#); [KB.91](#).

Work that has no measure, at the end of it people quarrel.

Do not overburden a fellow human being. [SAM](#). Cf. #2019, #1984.

4675. Kazi lazima ifanywe. [NGU](#).

Work must be done.

4676. Kazi mbi si mchezo mwema. [A.202](#); [T.134](#); [J, wi](#); [MARA.24](#); [SACL.338](#); [V.,kazi](#); [E.14.7, kazi mbaya](#); [KB.92](#); [STEERE](#), p.192; [KS, kazi](#).

Bad work is better than good play.

A laborious work cannot be compared with the attraction of play: one has profit, the other leads to starvation. [Sacl](#).

Poor-at-work is better than good-at-games. *Hurry the crossing*, p.117.

A take-off: **Kazi mbili si mchezo mwema.** [NGU](#).

Working two jobs is not nice play.

4677. Kazi ngumu mpe mwenyezi. [REK](#).

Hard work give it to the Almighty.

Do not do the impossible.

4678. Kazi ni kanzi. [MA.158](#).

Work is a treasure.

Work is a source of prosperity and happiness.

4679. Kazi ni pato. [EM k4](#).

Work is income.

"In order to gain something you must work for it. To desire a thing without work is to fall into the Devil's trap." [EM](#).

4680. Kazi ya kijungu jiko mekoni. [SEML.12](#).

Work for the little pot on the stove.

To work for food or daily need only, not for a salary.

Kazi ya kijungu meko. [KS,meko](#).

To work just for food.

4681. Kazi ya msira huisirasira. [KS,msira](#).

Work for a miser does not pay.

Sira: dreg, leftover pulp.

4682. Kazi ya shikazi, niwachia kazi! Kazi ya msira huisira-sira. [T.135](#); [SACL. 597](#).

Work for money, leave that to me. The work for a miser I usually scamp.

Msira for *bahili*: miser.

Shikazi: old word for dollar.

4683. Kazi yoyote ina faida. [NGU](#).

All work is useful.

4684. Kibarua hulima juani, tajiri hulima kivulini. [EM k6](#).

A day-worker cultivates in the sun, the master eats in the shade.

One toils, the other munches.

4685. Kikupondacho ni tumbo. [JKP](#).

That which exposes you [to danger] is your stomach.

"The stomach commands the Swahili to go out on dangerous journeys to earn their living." [JKP](#).

Ponda: pound to pieces, crush.

4686. Kila kazi ina kunga zake. [AL,kunga](#).

Every craft has its own techniques.

4687. Kila kilicho kitamu kimeungwa. [NGU](#).

All sweet things [pleasant happenings] have been prepared.

4688. Kila kinachong'ara kimesuguliwa. [NGU](#).

Everything that shines has been brushed.

4689. Kila kitu kina chimbuko lake. [ZO](#) p.253.

Everything has its beginnings

Chimbuko, also, *mwanzo*, *asili*, *chanzo*: a beginning. Cf. # 523.

4690. Kila neno lina kipindi [kiasi] chake. [T](#).637.

Everything has its time [or measure].

4691. Kila ngoma kwa mchezo wake. [JKP](#).

Every drum has its own dance.

"Every work has its own way of being performed. No two works are similar" [JKP](#).

4692. Kilimia kikizama kwa jua huzuka kwa mvua; kikizama kwa mvua huzuka kwa jua. [V](#).,*kilimia*; [KA](#)., *zama*; [T](#).150; [KS](#), *zama*.

When the Pleiades set in sun [sunny weather] they rise in rain; when they set in rain they rise in sun.

Kilimia: the Pleiades or the seven sisters, probably from *kulima*, to cultivate: by which to start cultivating.

4693. Kilimo cha kufa na kupona. [KS](#),*kilimo*.

Cultivate till you drop.

The idiom *Kufa na kupona*: dying and getting better, means to try something by all means, to give everything you have. Cf #548.

4694. Kisilima kimelima kimeshinda jembe zima. [KA](#).

A worn out hoe did more hoeing than a whole one.

Don't despise a nobody. Sometimes they are or were more useful than 'important' people.

Kisilima or *kiserema* or *kisagalima*: an old worn out hoe, of which only a part is remaining and no good for farming anymore.

4695. Kitanda ni ndugu. [REK](#).

The bed is like a brother/sister.

4696. Kitu kilivyogemwa ndivyo kinyewewavyo. [ZO](#) 254.

As it is tapped so it will be drunk. Cf #2000.

4697. Kiuno kiteke kinang'aa; hakikai nyumba moja na njamaa. [FSM](#).77.

The soft waist that shines with perspiration does not dwell in the same house as hunger. [FSM](#).

Used in the teaching of girls' initiation.

Njamaa stands for *njaa*: hunger. Provides the explanation of FSM.

4698. Kizuri kinaundwa. [NGU](#).

A beautiful thing is made. Cf. #2020.

4699. Kofia ikikufaa ivae. [NGU](#).

If the hat fits wear it.

Accept a job you like and can fulfill; accept also the praise or blame earned.

4700. Kozi mwana mandanda, kulala na njaa kupenda. [E](#).16.37; [SACL](#). 443; [KS](#),*kozi*.

The goshawk is a skilled hunter; if it sleeps hungry, it is its own fault.

4701. Kuagiza [ni] kufyekeza. [E](#).17.38; [AL](#) 1452; [KA](#); [NGU](#).

One ordering farm work gets only clearing of undergrowth.

If you leave your work to others, it will not be done properly.

Kuagiza ni kuweza? [T](#). 166.

Does sending an order imply ability?

Kufyekeza from *kufyeka*: to make a clearing in the forest to sweep away, and therefore sometimes means: to destroy.

Thus a translation could be: To give orders is to destroy.

Kuagiza sio kutengeneza. [JKP](#).

To order is not the same as to get the job done.

To order a job does not mean that it will be done right.

4702. Kucheza ngoma goya. [KS](#), *ngoma*.

Play the drum for free.

Do something without profit.

4703. Kufadhiliwa ni kubaya, akufadhiliye ni bwana wako. [MARA](#) 2.

Receiving favors is bad, the one who gives them is your master. Cf. # 1967.

4704. Kuishi ni kupanda baisiskeli. [EM](#) k26.

Living is like riding a bicycle.

"If you ride a bicycle you must pedal if you want to move. If you don't pedal, you will fall off. To live is to work hard. The alternative is death." [EM](#).

4705. Kula kutamu, kulima mavune. [F](#).18.52; [MARA](#) 3; [KA](#).

Eating is sweet, hoeing is weariness.

Mavune or *machovu*: stiffness in the joints, fatigue, weariness. Cf. #293; #585.

4706. Kula ni mshahara wa kazi. [NS](#).2.

Eating is the earnings of work.

4707. Kula uhondo kwataka matendo, asiye na matendo hula uvundo. [KA](#).

In order to eat generously, deeds are needed; without working one eats bad smelling food.

In order to live in peace, a person must work hard, if he doesn't he'll live a life of trouble.

Uhondo: a big feast, generous entertainment.

Uvundo: a bad smell, stink. From *-vunda*: be high. Of meat which has been laid by, so that it is smelling somewhat but is still fit to be eaten.

4708. Kulima, kupima. [RSP](#).18.

Farm work needs measure.

You have to know your needs and if you have people working your land, you must arrange payment. Cf. #1974.

4709. Kulima kwataka jembe na mikono ya kunyoka. [JKP](#).

Field work requires a hoe and the stretching of the arms

4710. Kulima pekee ni kujihiliki; mawe na manyasi hayakusanyiki. [JKP](#).

Cultivating alone is suicide; stones and weeds cannot be raked together.

Jihiliki: self destruction.

4711. Kulima polepole, kulima na kidole, utalala nacho. [AL](#) 377.

If you are a lazy farmer, doing work with one finger, you will sleep with that finger [in your mouth].

You'll be sorry.

If you work without spirit, you invite penury. [AL](#).

4712. Kumpatia mlimaji chakula, mchezaji atapeleka vyote. [AL](#) 1238; [AL](#), *peleka*.

Giving food to the farmer, the dancer will take it all.

When a working person gets something, it is often taken away by a lazy person.

4713. Kuna ufundi pia katika kuburura rukwama. [SAM](#).10. 17; [MM](#).

There is craftsmanship even in dragging along the heavy center pole supporting the roof of a house. [MM](#).

4714. Kupitapita kwa panya kulimpatisha kitoweo. [AL](#) 172; [AL](#), *kitoweo*.

The coming and going of the mouse has provided it with food.

4715. Kutema kuni ku bora kuliko kunyosha mkono kwa kiumbe. [MA](#).191.

Cutting [firewood] is better than putting the hand out to someone [for alms].

Cf# 1986. **Kutenda kazi twatenda, lakini bamba ni gumu.** [T](#).197.

[As for] doing the work, we do [it], but the object is hard. Cf. #420.

4716. Kutwanga nisile unga, nazuia mchi wangu. [AL](#) 1264.

Grinding the grain and not being allowed to eat the flour, I deny my pestle.

No work without profit.

4717. Kuvua samaki mwungwana si tua kwa wenye akili. [MA](#).234.

For an intelligent person fishing is not a disgrace.

Fishing is a degrading job to some people. Here we understand that this should not be so for it is better to fish than to beg or steal.

4718. Kuvunjika kwa mwiko si mwisho wa kusonga ugali. [AL](#) 987, [AL](#), *mwiko*.

If the wooden spatula breaks it is not the end of stirring porridge.

If a spouse dies, she is replaced; procreation has to go on. Cf. #1987.

4719. Kuzima koleo si mwisho wa uhunzi. [J](#).; [F](#).19.63; [CM](#).51; [KB](#).135; [MARA](#) 3; [KA](#); [T](#).204; [SACL](#). 1011.

Cooling the tongs is not the end of forging.

To know how to cool the tongs is not all the work of forging. [KB](#); [SACL](#).

Giving up a bad habit is not a warranty for giving up that habit for ever. [MARA](#).

4720. Kwanza kazi, pili pato. [NS](#).1.

First work, then wages.

4721. Kwenda bure si kukaa bure. [KA](#).

Even just loitering is better than sitting doing nothing. Cf. #1994.

4722. Lisilo budi hutendwa. [MARA](#) 3; [SM](#).

Attend to what must be done.

There is no excuse.

4723. Mawingu ya pepo yakosa mvua. [KB](#).159.

Wind-swept clouds don't give rain.

Much ado about nothing.

4724. Mchagua jembe si mkulima. [CM](#).44; [E](#).23.28; [SWA](#).15; [B](#).2.57; [L](#).45; [MARA](#).39; [JKP](#); [KS](#).jembe.

One who "picks" his hoe is not a real farmer.

A bad workman blames his tools. [E](#).

A good fighter can use any type of weapon. [SWA](#).

JKP has a special insight: "Our fate is determined by others and by random events. E.g. the girl's father selects a bridegroom for her." Cf. #1997.

4725. Mchezea chuma huchuma, kama hakuchuma tumbo hunguruma. [TAA](#) 131.

The person who lets the hoe dance will harvest; if there is no harvest that person's stomach will grumble.

Chuma: (n.) iron, hoe, etc.

Chuma: (v.) to harvest, to earn.

4726 mchimba kaburi ana faida, kefu mrandu mbao. [KB](#).174; [AL](#) 170.

The grave-digger makes a living, so much the more the wood planer in making the coffin.

There is no low craft, only low people. [KB](#). Cf. #1985.

4727. Mchimba kisima hakatazwi maji. [CM](#).44; [T](#).330; [SACL](#). 334; [E](#).24.39; [A](#).73; [V](#).43; [KB](#).173.

A well-digger is not refused water.

Mwana mchimbaji hakatazwi maji. [RSP](#). 37.

One does not refuse water to the child of the well-digger.

4728. Mchuma juani hulia uvulini. [F](#).25.45; [KA](#).

A person who makes a living in the sun, eats in the shade.

Rest is sweet after overcoming hard work.

4729. Mchuuzi analala pabaya, anakula vizuri. [AL](#)166.

A hawker sleeps without comfort, but eats well.

Being away from home, one'll sleep where possible.

Cf. #1979A; #1982; #1983; #1988.

4730. Mgaagaa na upwa hali wali mtupu. [J](#).gaagaa; [T](#).59.259; [B](#).3.2; [MARA](#) 3; [KA](#); [AL](#) 1706.

One who haunts the shore does not eat plain rice.

Always picking up something.

The fishermen usually give him a fish.

It is useful to frequent people that can be or are useful to you.

Mgaagaa wa mpwa hali vyakula vikavu. [F](#).25.54; [AL](#) 1239.

A lazy person with a nephew does not eat dry food.

Sends his nephew to get what is needed. [E](#).

Upwa: low tide.

Mpwa: nephew.

Mgaagaa: an idler, restless person, beachcomber; rolling stone. [J](#).

Mtafutaji wa mpwa hali wali mtupu. [KA](#).

One who looks up a nephew does not eat dry rice.

Mwana mtukutu hali ugali mtupu. [KA](#).

A restless child does not eat plain polenta.

4731. Mjali tumbo hutumbuka. [NGU](#).

One who cares for the stomach must sweat for it.

4732. Mkalia jembe si mkulima. [NGU](#).

They who sit on their hoe are not farmers.

4733. Mkokoto wa jembe hauongopi. [FSM.117](#).

The track made by the hoe does not tell a lie.

The meaning is that work is rewarding.

4734. Mkokoto wa jembe si bure yao. [KA](#); [AL](#) 461.

The dragging of the hoe is not worthless.

If a farmer drags his hoe being tired after work, it is understood that there is nothing shameful about it.

Said to somebody who looks down on a dirty, sweating worker.

Si bure yao: is not useless, is not worthless, is valuable.

4735. Mkoba wa mwindaji umevimba; ukikosa nyama, haukosi uyoga. [KB.235](#); [AL](#) 1848.

A hunter's bag is full; even if it does not contain meat, it contains at least mushrooms. Cf. #1994, #1960.

4736. Mkulima hali pweke. [JK](#).128.

The farmer does not eat alone. Cf. #1998.

4737. Mkulima hafifu hulaumu jembe lake. [JK](#).144; [NGU](#).

The lazy farmer blames his tools. Cf. #1990.

4738. Mkulima ni mmoja, walaji ni wengi. [T.273](#); [F.27.77](#); [JK](#).129; [KB](#).189; [SACL](#).569; [MARA](#) 3.

The farmer is one, those who eat are many.

Many enjoy the fruits of his work. A farmer has many dependents. JK. Richness attracts many profiteers. [KB](#).

A good deed profits many others too. [MARA](#). Cf. #1996.

4739. Mlala mvulini, atakula nini? [RSP](#).115.

The sleeper in the shade, what will that person eat?

4740. Mmegee paka, wewe mkono huna. [NGU](#).

Break it up for the cat, don't you have a hand?

Telling people what to do, but doing nothing oneself.

4741. Mpanda ovyo hula ovyo. [F.29.93](#); [J](#); [B](#).1.71; [MEM](#).94; [V](#).2; [NS](#).4; [KB](#).195; [SACL](#). 717; [MARA](#) 3.

One who plants in a disorderly fashion will eat likewise.

As you sow, so shall you reap.

Ukilima pantosha, utavuna pankwisha. [MARA](#) 2; [KA](#).

If you farm "What's enough for me," you will harvest "What is finished."

If you farm a small piece of land only, you'll have a small harvest. To encourage people to work well.

Pantosha for *pananitosha*: what is enough for me.

Pankwisha for *pamekwisha*: what's finished. Cf. #2006.

4742. Mpenda cha bure, hufa kidole mdomoni. [REK](#).

One who loves free things dies with the finger in the mouth.

Kidole mdomoni: the finger in the mouth of frustration and regret.

4743. Mpenda kula ni mvivu. [NS](#).3.

One who loves to eat is lazy.

Said during the rainy season when often the whole day is spent in the field.

4744. Mpewa chakula na watu hana uso. [MA](#).12.

One who is given food by people has no face.

This is said of people who depend on others for their living. People who do not work to earn their daily bread are considered faceless, i.e., they cannot enjoy their rights and cannot express their opinion lest they lose the favor of their benefactors.

4745. Mpigwa chini na jembe huinuwa na lilo koongo. [T](#).308a.

One who is brought to the ground by the hoe is lifted up by that same delving.

One who is bent down working the land, will rise to a good life.

Koongo: a hole dibbled or dug with a hoe for planting seeds.

4746. Mpuzi hana kazi. [JK](#).119.

A fool has no work. [JK](#).

Mpuzi: a person who likes talking and most of the time the talk is useless.

Hence a person who has time for such talk implies that there is no work to be done. [MM](#).

4747. Msukosuko ndiyo mwendo wa ngalawa. [NGU](#).

Being tossed about is the way the dug-out canoe moves.

Msukosuko: rolling, pitching.

4748. Mtama ni muwi na wapishi nao. [T.318](#); [JK.144](#); [AL.1400](#).

If the millet dish is bad, the cooks are no good.

If something goes wrong others are blamed.

Mchele ni mui na wapishi nao. [KS,mchele](#).

Rice is bad and so are the cooks. Cf. #1969, #1997.

4749. Mtoto mtukutu hushinda bila kunya. [REK](#).

A restless child stays without going to the toilet,

Not taking time to go. Cf. # 1994.

4750. Mtu apandacho ndicho avunacho. [T.333a](#); [V.2](#); [SACL.728](#).

What a person sows will be reaped. Cf. #358, #2000.

4751. Mtu asiwe nawara, uvivu huleta hasara. [JKP](#).

A person should not be idle, laziness causes damage.

4752. Mtu hawezi kushiba na upepo. [KB.203](#).

One cannot feed on wind.

You cannot live on air. One does not live on love and fresh water. [KB](#).

4753. Mtu hula nguvuze. [SAM.17.30](#).

Human beings consume their strength.

You should make use of your talents to support yourself, and not be dependent on the work of others.

4754. Mtumaini cha ndugu hufa maskini. [E.32.126](#); [L.67](#); *Mulika*, p.10; [MARA.51](#); [H.81](#); [ED.44](#); [AL.maskini](#).

One who relies on relatives will die poor. Cf. #2002.

4755. Mvivu hashoni jeraha dogo. [JK.145](#)

A lazy person does not sow up a small wound.

That person neglects doing small repairs, does not take care of property or health. Cf. #1746.

4756. Mvivu hugaguna vifuvu. [ED.57](#); [JK.120](#), *hutafuna*, [AL.376](#).

A lazy person chews empty coconut-shells.

Gaguna or *tafuna*: to chew.

Fuvu: empty shell; husk

4757. Mvivu hutumaini kupata hapati; mwenye bidii hunenepa. [NGU](#).

The lazy person hopes to get it and does not; the hard worker grows fat.

4758. Mvuvi akikosa kuvua, hupiga ugwe. [ED.50](#).

A fisherman unable to fish makes a fishing line.

One can always do something useful. [ED](#). Cf. #394.

4759. Mwana mtukutu hali ugali mtupu. [KS.mtukutu](#).

An active child does not eat dry food.

Mtukutu: restless, active

4760. Mwanamume ni kazi, bila kazi hajaliwi, mpuzi hafanyi kazi. [JKP](#).

Being a man is hard work, without work he is not respected, a fool does not work.

4761. Mwanzo ni kuchuma, kisha ni kusona. [JKP](#).

First harvest, then rest.

Kusona: to rest in fresh air.

4762. Mwenda bure si mkaa bure; huenda akaokota. [AL.171](#).

A loafer is better than an idler; usually a loafer finds something useful.

Activity is better than doing nothing.

4763. Mwenye kijongo halali tani. [JK.126](#).

A hunchback cannot lie down on the back.

A poor person can never stop working and never rest. [JK](#). Cf. #1193.

4764. Mwenye kukutembeza usiku, utamsifu asubuhi. [AL.173](#).

The one who made you walk at night, you'll praise in the morning.

All effort, even irksome, is remunerated.

4765. Mzigo huwa mzito karibu ya nyumbani. [NGU](#).

A load gets heavy approaching home.

4766. Nafia mchele: una mwenyeji. [JK](#).233; [AL](#) 594.

I kill myself for rice: it has already an owner.

I work myself to the core cultivating rice, it is mine.

Don't attribute to yourself what another has earned.

To work for nothing. [AL](#). Cf, # 2015.

4767. Nafia pumba maganda. [KB](#).234; [AL](#), *kanda*.

I kill myself for a handful of rice.

Nafia pumba la maganda, mchele kwa belgika. Maniema dialect. [AL](#) 595.

I kill myself for a ball of husks, while the rice goes to Belgika.

Belgika: a Belgian agricultural company.

Maganda for *ng'anda*: a handful. Cf #2014.

4768. Ndimu mpaka uikamue, ndipo utaona maji yake. [AL](#) 143.

It's not until you squeeze the lemon, that you'll see its juice.

4769. Ndugu mtambie usimkalie. [TAA](#) 17.

Go away from your relative, do not live together.

Do not be dependent on your relative, you'll get on each others' nerves. Be self supporting. Cf #954. # 2009.

4770. Ni rahisi kubomoa kuliko kujenga. [NGU](#).

It is easier to destroy than to build up.

4771. Nitafanya, nitafanya, ni uzembe. [REK](#).

I'll do it, I'll do it, is negligence.

Uzembe: slackness, idleness, indifference.

4772. Nyuki anaunda asali, bungo anaunda udongo. [KS](#), *bungo*.

A bee works with honey, a mason wasp works with clay.

4773. Omba, omba huleta unyonge. [MARA](#) 2.

Begging and begging brings abjection.

4774. Punda haendi bila mchapo. *Swahili* II:88.

A donkey does not go unless you beat it.

Said of stubborn children, etc.

Punda haendi ila kwa kigongo. [JK](#).137.

A donkey does not move unless a stick is used.

4775. Rahisi kufahamu la kufanya kuliko kulifanya. [EM](#) r8.

It is easier to know what to do than to do it.

4776. Sifa hapewi goigoi. [NGU](#).

No honor comes to a useless person.

Goigoi: lazy, weak person.

4777. Siku nyeusi, fedha nyeupe. [JK](#).126.

Black day, white money.

Hard work, good pay. [JK](#).

4778. Sote tungekuwa wavivu kama tungeweza. [NGU](#).

We all would be lazy, if only we could.

4779. Tongo iliyokuwa mwungwana haikosi papai. [AL](#), *matongo*; [AL](#) 169.

A deserted village, where an active person was living, does not lack a pawpaw tree.

Good work produces fruit

Tongo or *mahame*: deserted village.

4780. Tu ndimani. [T](#).507.

We are a-cultivating.

A greeting during cultivation time. The rejoinder is: *ni kazini*, I too am busy.

Ndimani from *lima*: farming. $n + l = nd$.

4781. Ukimpa mtu kazi pataneni na ujira. [A](#).120, [T](#).523.

If you give a person work [first] agree upon the wages.

Ampaye mtu kazi wapataane ujira. [SAM.3.14](#).

One who gives work to a person should agree upon wages. Cf. #1974.

4782. Ukiona vinaelea, vimeundwa. [E.46.8](#); [JK.141](#); [H.104](#).

When you see them float, [remember] they have been built. JK. Much knowledge and effort went into making the boats. [JK](#). Everything has a cause. A complete article must have gone through various stages in its creation.

Vyaelewa, vyaundwa. [B.3.21](#).

They float, they have been made.

Ukiona [chombo] kikielea kimeundwa. [RECH.579](#).

If you see [a boat] that floats, it has been created.

Things have to be done well and must not be taken for granted.

Cf. #1979d.

4783. Ukitaka chakula wakati wa masika, ujikaze. [TS 137/28](#).

If you want food during the raining season, start working

Masika is the time to cultivate and it is when most from the last harvest has been consumed.

4784. Ukitaka kula samaki, sharti ulowe. [EM u11](#).

If you want to eat fish, you must become wet (or, you must fish).

When you are fishing you must enter the water.

About taking the proper means.

Loa: take something out of water. [KS](#).

Lowa: get wet. [J](#). Cf. #159.

4785. Ukitegemea cha jirani, utakufa maskini. [NGU](#).

If you count on your neighbor, you'll die a pauper.

Ukitumaini cha jirani, utakuwa maskini. [NGU](#).

If you put your hope in your neighbor, you'll become poor.

4786. Ukiwa mkazi jenga. [A.140](#); [J.,kaa](#); [T.528](#); [SAM..24.8: mkaazi](#); [KB.310](#).

If you are going to stay in a place, build a house.

Show your intentions clearly from the beginning.

Ukiwa mkazi jenga; ukosefu wa mwenenzi si wa kazi milele. [AL, enda](#).

If you are going to stay in one place, build; mistakes of someone who is passing by are not comparable to those who reside for ever.

4787. Ulichopanda ule, hata hokusugua mkono wake. [AL.162](#).

Eat what you planted, even if you have not scrubbed your hand.

Your good right to enjoy the fruit of your labor in any circumstances.

4788. Ulimi hauchumi. [RSP.98](#).

The tongue makes no profit.

Talking is of no use. [JK](#).

4789. Umekuwa jeta hubanduki. [E.28,23](#); [KS.jeta](#); [AL 367](#).

Have you become a *jeta*, that you are not able to move.

A lazy person who does not move to get things needed, but asks to be given them, though the things may be quite near.

"From the habit that the small Indian shopkeeper has of squatting in his shop at ease, and asking his customers to reach him things not immediately within his reach." [J](#).

Jeta: a snail of the sea that always sits on a rock.

4790. Unakumbuka kulala usingizi, usiku unakucha. [AL 365](#).

You think about sleeping while dawn is here.

The lazy person follows an abnormal life style. [AL](#).

4791. Upele ukikuna utasikia utamu wake. [NGU](#).

When you scratch your scabies, you enjoy it.

The joy of doing things.

4792. Upishi ni kuni. [CM.50](#); [J.,pika](#); [V.145](#); [KB.323](#); [SACL. 966](#); [AL, kuni](#).

Cooking means firewood.

If you want the end, you must take the means.

Much work is involved in collecting firewood. Often preparation takes more time than the thing itself. Without bait it's hard fishing. [V](#).

4793. Usingizi hauna mwana mwerevu. [EM](#) u31.

Even the most clever child cannot escape sleep.
Sleep cannot be avoided. Man's weakness.

4794. Usingizi mali ya maskini. [EM](#) u32

Sleep is the wealth of the poor.
The poor have no possessions. Sleep temporarily removes them from pressing needs of life. [EM](#).

4795. Usingizi si mali. [EM](#) u33.

Sleep is not wealth.
Sleep does not bring wealth.

4796. Usione mkono wa salamu ukazidisha hadi begani. [REK](#).

Don't expect a welcoming hand while you add even more on your shoulder.
Of people who are workaholics.

4797. Usiwe kupe, sitegemee. [KS](#),*kupe*.

Don't be a parasite, be self-supporting.
A strong, healthy person who does not work, but leans upon others for a living. [KS](#).
Kupe: a tick; a parasite.

4798. Usiwe maiti mpenda raha. [AL](#),*raha*.

Don't be like a corpse, a lover of comfort.

4799. Utanipita ninapolima, hutanipita ninapokula. [AL](#) 597.

When I work on the land you'll pass me by, but not when I eat.

4800. Utavuna unachopanda. [KS](#),*vuna*.

You'll harvest what you sow.

4801. Uvivu hurithisha umaskini. [L](#),*rithi*, [AL](#),*rithi*.

Laziness engenders poverty.

Ukulivu huvuta ufukara. [JK](#).118.

Laziness causes poverty. Cf. #1127.

4802. Vuli ni kifulifuli. [T](#).571.

September-rains, 'tis in crowds (the people go).
The people are eager to be about their cultivation.
Kifulifuli probably from *kufulia*: to hasten on with the work before the rain stops.

Ukisikia vuli yaja, kazi za shamba hakonde huzudi.

Upon hearing that the rains are near, the work of clearing the fields increases. [MM](#).

4803. Vunja kifuu upate mbata. [EM](#) v4.

Break the coconut to get the copra.
If you want a good thing you must work for it. It is not easy to get a valuable thing. [EM](#).

4804. Wacha kitanda, ili kupanda. [RSP](#).30.

If you want to improve your standards, you must leave your bed.
Kupanda: to rise or climb up, and also to plant crops.

4805. Watenda kazi hawakosi huja. [T](#).585.

Those who work do not fail to have a reason [or need].

4806. Waungwana huchumia juani na kulia kivulini. [REK](#).

Good men harvest in the heat of the sun and eat in the shade.
They work hard for a living.

SWAHILI PROVERBS: METHALI ZA KISWAHILI

World - universe

4807. Bahari haishi zingo. [KA](#); [MARA](#) 2, zinge.

The ocean does not stop moving.

The ocean is full of trouble. The trouble of the ocean never ends.

There is no stopping disorder, waste, confusion, changes. Be ready for misfortunes and hardship. [MARA](#).

Zinge from *zinga*: to keep moving.

Zingo for *masumbuko*: trouble. [KA](#).

Bahari has the meaning of the earth (*dunia*).

4808. Bahari itatufikisha popote. [JKP](#).

The ocean leads us anywhere.

Adventures at sea will teach us all about life. [JKP](#).

4809. Dunia hadaa ulimwengu shujaa. [FSM](#).38.

The world is deceitful, the world is for the brave.

There are many attractions in the world; to conquer the world one must deny oneself.

4810. Dunia haiishi. [NGU](#).

The world does not end.

The world will be here long after we leave.

Dunia haina mwisho. [F](#); [K](#).

The world has no end.

Used to remind an arrogant person that the world will outlast any one.

4811. Dunia haina njaa. [NGU](#).

The world is not hungry.

The world will not die of hunger, but will go on. We disappear. Cf. #1790.

4812. Dunia haina shukrani; kwale, tengemana nikumeze. [MP](#).302.1

In the world there is no gratitude; partridge, be assured, I'll swallow you.

Don't expect gratitude for your good deeds.

Refers to the story in which the partridge saved the life of a snake by transporting him from a brush fire to an open space, where upon arrival the snake swallowed the partridge.

4813. Dunia hulamba, kuna siku itakulamba. [REK](#).

Lick the world, there are days when she will lick you (for good or bad).

Lamba or *ramba*: to lick. As in English *lick* can mean good or bad. *Lamba* also can mean to favor or to despise, e.g., *lamba kisogo*: despise.

4814. Dunia huleta vyema na vimbi. [T](#).58; [SACL](#).1023.

The world brings good and bad things.

Dunia huleta jema na ovu. [Y](#).58.

The world brings what is good and what is bad.

Cf. the following proverbs beginning with *dunia*.

4815. Dunia ina hadaa kiumbe jitunze. [MA](#).107.

The world is deceitful, mortal be on your guard.

4816. Dunia kitu dhaifu, kiumbe sijietee. [T](#).59.

The world is a wretched thing; mortal depend not upon it.

Dunia kitu dhaifu, haifai kujitangaza. [Y.128.](#)

The world is a poor thing, it is useless to boast.

Cf,#2046-#2052.

4817. Dunia mti mkavu, kiumbe usiuelemee. [B.1.50;](#) [JK.119;](#) [T.161;](#) [SACL. 202;](#) [KB.](#)

The world is like a withered tree: mortal, rest not thy weight upon it.

Dunia mti mkavu, ukiulemea utakubwaga. [SM.](#)

The world is like a dead tree, if you rely on it, it will throw you down.

Utakubwaga or *utakutupa chini*: it will throw you down.

4818. Dunia mwendo wa ngisi, kamwe msililiwale. [SACL. 477;](#) [T.62;](#) [JKP.](#)

The world goes like an octopus, never forget that.

The octopus goes backwards.

"The ways of the world are completely unpredictable. But one day it may catch you in its grip." [JKP.](#)

Liwaa or *liwala*: old, poetical word for to forget. [T.](#)

4819. Dunia ni kama orofa. [REK.](#)

The world is like a high rise.

Orofa or *ghorofa*: a building with many levels.

4820. Dunia ni maabara. [EM.50.22.](#)

The world is a laboratory.

Where various experiments are going on.

4821. Dunia ni maji ya utumbwi. [AL 1676.](#)

The world is like water in the canoe.

Water that stays in the boat moves with the pulling of the oars.

Progress and recession alternate during our lives. [AL.](#)

4822. Dunia ni mapumbu ya mbuzi. [AL 1677.](#)

The world is like the [swinging] of the testicles of the he-goat.

Mbuzi: goat in general; *beberu*: a billy-goat.

4823. Dunia ni mduara, huzunguka kama pia. [T.60;](#) [CM 53.](#)

The earth is round, it goes like a top.

There are ups and downs. [MM.](#)

4824. Dunia ni nyumba ya mtu asiye na nyumba. [MA.104.](#)

The world is a dwelling place for the one who has no house.

4825. Dunia ni watu. [EM.50.21.](#)

The earth is people.

People make the earth either good or bad.

4826. Dunia si kitu, sijetee nayo. [T.63.](#)

The world is nothing, depend not on it.

4827. Dunia soko la vingi. [NGU.](#)

The world is a market of many things.

4828. Dunia tambara bovu. [EM.51.23.](#)

The earth is like an old rag.

The earth is full of dirty things and various kinds of struggle tear it to pieces. [EM.](#)

Tambara or *tambaa*: a piece of cloth.

4829. Dunia tusiifanye maisha ya tupa. [EM.51.24.](#)

Let's not make this a world of the file.

A file is used to grind another by friction. The life of the file is one in which the stronger oppresses the weaker. This means that we should not turn our life here on earth to be one of causing inconvenience to each other. [EM.](#)

4830. Dunia usishindane nayo. [NGU.](#)

Don't fight the world.

4831. Dunia ya mungu, watu wa serikale. [NGU.](#)

The world belongs to God, the people belong to the government.

4832. Duniani hakuna lisilo muudhi binadamu. [JKP](#).

There is nothing in the world that does not cause vexation to a person.

4833. Duniani, njema zaa. [NGU](#).

In the world, good acts kill.

Njema refers to the n-n class and the u-n class. Cf #54.

4834. Dunyani hupiga kura, peponi mna kudura. [RSP](#).8.

In this world people draw lots, [but our place] in Paradise [is assured, if we have been just,] by God's power and providence. [RSP](#).

4835. Ghururi za duniani huzijua jahimuni. [RSP](#).67.

The delusions of this world, one usually knows them in hell.

But then it is too late. [RSP](#).

4836. Historia haibadiliki. [NGU](#).

History does not change.

It repeats itself.

4837. Jua halichwi bila jambo kutokea. [NGU](#).

The sun never goes down without some happenings.

Jua halichwi bila tukio. [NGU](#)

The sun never goes down without a happening.

4838. Jua linakuchwa katika dola ya mngereza sasa. [NGU](#).

Now the sun goes under in the empire of the Englishman.

In contradiction to the saying during Elizabeth I: The sun does not set in the British Empire.

4839. Katika ulimwengu "he" ni nne tu, zimeondoka mbili, na mbili zimesalia: "haya" hakuna na "huruma" hakuna, zimesalia "hila na 'hadhaa'." [T](#).129.

In the world there are only four "aitches" [h's]: two are gone and two are left behind; modesty and mercy are not more, there remain cunning and deceit.

A lament of the nineteenth century.

4840. Kiendacho ardhini hakikosi shindo. [NGU](#).

What happens on earth does not lack being heard.

4841. Kiendacho ulimwengu hakifichi. [NGU](#).

What goes on on earth does not hide itself, it will be revealed.

4842. Kizungu kigegeu. [AL](#) 1682; [AL](#).*kigegeu*.

The European way of life [in the city] is deceitful.

Kigegeu: changeable, fickle, whimsical, uncertain.

4843. Kizungu kizungu kizunga, dunia kigegeu. [AL](#) 1681.

European lifestyle turns one's head; the world constantly changes.

The world is unstable. Urban life is deceitful.

4844. Kuibeba dunia usiifunge kwa kambe isije ikakuangusha na kukulemea. [REK](#).

If you must carry the world, don't tie it with a rope because it might fall upon you and oppress you.

Overly involvement. Worries.

4845. Lia kisha nyamaza, ndio dunia. [EM](#) 18.

Weep and then be silent, that's the world.

There is a time for sorrow, but once it is over, one should attend to other duties.

4846. Maumbile hayabadiliki. [NGU](#).

The natural condition does not change.

Nature does not change.

4847. Mema na mabaya ndio ulimwengu. [V](#).58; [SACL](#). 717: [J](#); [RECH](#). 310

The world is a mixture of good and evil.

4848. Ulimwengu hauna siri. [V](#)., *ulimwengu*.

The world has no secrets.

People do not keep secrets.

4849. Ulimwengu kigegeu leo ulale katikati, kesho kando. [REK](#).

The world is fickle, today you may sleep in the middle, and tomorrow on the edge.

4850. Ulimwengu ni dhaifu, siumboneni, ni cheche. [SACL](#).136; [T](#).533.

The world is a weak thing, don't take it into consideration, it is like a spark.

4851. Ulimwengu ni jivu. [T](#).534.

The world is ashes.

4852. Ulimwengu ni maneno, ukiyafuata utapotea. [REK](#).

The world is like empty words, if you pursue them you'll be lost.

One must have solid principles.

4853. Ulimwengu ni mema na mabaya pamoja. [NGU](#).

The world is full of good and bad things together.

4854. Ulimwengu ni muovu, mtu hajetei nao. [T](#).535.

The world is evil, one should not depend on it.

For more of the same, see proverbs in this section beginning with *dunia*.

4855. Ulimwengu ni ngwe mbovu, mtu hajetei nao. [T](#).536; [SACL](#).186.

The world is like rotten rope: no person trusts it.

4856. Ulimwengu ni shule ya wajinga. [NGU](#).

The world is a school for fools. Cf. #418

4857. Ulimwengu shujaa na dunia hadaa. [NGU](#).

The things of the world go to the brave, the earth deceives.

4858. Ulimwengu umemshinda kaa, endaye upande upande. [SAM](#).24.10.

The world is too much for the crab, it goes sideways.

There is no need to enter all kinds of dangers blindly, just for the sake of showing off. The world has even defeated the crab which moves sideways, i.e., moving with glamor and exultation of a proud creature. [MM](#).

4859. Ulimwenguni hakuna viwili vipendanao. [T](#).5373.

In the world there are not two things that [really] love each other. Cf. #653.

4860. Usihadaike na ulimwengu. [E](#); [K](#).

Don't be deceived by the world.