CODE-SWITCHING IN AN "UTENDI"?
NOTES ON ARABIC GRAMMAR AS IT APPEARS IN CLASSICAL SWAHILI POETRY[1]

ELENA BERTONCINI

It could seem strange to speak about Arabic grammar in a Swahili Forum. But when I was teaching classical Swahili poetry I realized that it is not sufficient to look up the innumerable Arabic loanwords in a good Swahili dictionary (possibly Sacleux), and not even in an Arabic dictionary - provided that the student has mastered the Arabic alphabet and the transcription rules and hence is able to trace the Swahili form back to its Arabic origin

In old Swahili *tendi* and homiletic poems about 50% of vocabulary is of Arabic origin (Bertoncini 1973), and besides single words, they include noun phrases or even whole Arabic sentences. These are mostly religious (Koranic) formulae like **jalla wa ala** ("He is Glorious and Highest"), **wahadahu lā mithala (lahu)** ("He is unique, without equal"), petrified forms like **kadamnasi** ("in public"), but practically any word may occur written together with an Arabic preposition or with a possessive suffix, in a plural or feminine form and such like, rendering its identification difficult. E g.

> *Jalilu Jalla wa 'Ala - Wahadahu lāmithala (Katirifu 287)*
> Glorious and Exalted in His Majesty! - He is unique without equal
> *isimu yakwe Moliwa - jala wa ala Muyuzi (Anzarun 73)*
> The name of the Lord - Glorious and Highest is the Omniscient

In order to prove my point, I will discuss some verses taken from the *Utendi wa Shufaka* by one Hasan bin Ali from Lamu. The only extant manuscript of this epic poem in 295 stanzas was brought to Germany in 1854 by Ludwig Krapf and is kept in the Library of the Orientalistic Society in Halle. It was translated by Carl Büttner and published in his *Anthologie aus der Suaheli-Literatur* (Berlin 1894). The original title was *Chuo cha Utenzi*, but Büttner changed it into *Das Gedicht der Barmherzigkeit* ("The poem of Compassion"). In 1967 the poem was published again by Jan Knappert (*Swahili* 37/2) with an English translation as *Utenzi wa Shufaka. The Story of Compassion*. My analysis is based on this version

The story narrates how two pious parents willingly sacrifice their only remaining son in order to save the life of a complete stranger. It is a trial required by the archangels Gabriel and Michael who are arguing whether there is still compassion in the world. At the end not only the sacrificed boy comes to life again, but also all his brothers who had died before

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The poem is written in the Lamu dialect with many archaic features, like the incomplete palatalization of KI, the demonstratives in S- and others But what is striking is the great amount of Arabic phrases and whole sentences, to the extent that we may perhaps speak of a case of code-switching In fact, several verses of the poem cannot be understood properly without some knowledge of the main features of Arabic grammar, such as verb conjugation (both perfective and imperfective), verb forms (or classes), active and passive participles, noun inflection (masculine and feminine, broken plurals, construct state), personal, relative and possessive pronouns, prepositions and their combination with enclitic pronouns, numerals, conjunctions and particles, as well as word order

An elementary introduction to Arabic grammar will thus precede our analysis of the selected stanzas of *Utenzi wa Shufaka* Phonetics will not be mentioned, as the phonetic adaptation of Arabic loanwords and the rules of transcription of the Arabic alphabet into Roman characters have already been described by several scholars

The base form of Arabic words is a root of three consonants (including the glottal stop *hamza*, the voiced pharyngeal ʿ*ain* and the three long vowels A I U)[2] bearing a basic meaning, or the central nucleus of meaning, which is found in all words - verbs, nouns, adjectives etc - formed from that root Thus, for instance:

KaTaBa	write
KiTāB	book
KaTīBa	ordinance, constitution
KāTiB	writer, clerk, copyist
maKTaBa	library
maKTūB	(what is) written, destiny
etc	

To find out a word in an Arabic dictionary, it is necessary to look under its root (A similar procedure was adopted by Johnson for his *Swahili-English Dictionary*)

The base form of the **verb**, that of a lemma in a dictionary, is the 3rd pers sing masculine of the perfect: **kala** (*qāla*) "he said" Arabic verbs have been usually taken into Kiswahili in this base form, even if the vowels are most often those of the imperfect

Ar	**fahima** (pf)	- **yafhAmu** (impf 3rd p m)	> *Sw*	**-fahAmu**	understand
	qabila	- **yaqbAlu**	>	**-kubAli**	accept
	khas,,sa	- **yakhUssu**	>	**-hUsu**	be concerned[3]

Both vocalizations - perfective and imperfective - may be found in classical poetry as variants: **kuli = kala** "speak, say"

Muhamaḏi akakuli - kamwambia Jiburili

Muhamadi akakuli - kamwambia Jiburili.
Muhammed spoke - and said to Gabriel. (*Fatuma* 296)

Fa kala lahu sobii. Then spoke to him the youth. (*Shufaka* 177)

But there is an important difference: the perfective verb remains in its Arabic form, whereas the verb with the imperfective vocalization is conjugated in the Swahili manner

The **perfect** (which normally expresses the past tense) is conjugated by the means of suffixes

The whole **paradigm** for the verb "to write" is the following: 1sg. *katabtu*, 2sg.m *katabta*, 2sg.f *katabti*, 3sg.m *kataba*, 3.sg.f *katabat*; dual 2 com *katabtuna*, 3m *kataba*, 3f. *katabata*; 1pl *katabna*, 2pl.m *katabtum*, 2pl.f *katabtunna*, 3pl.m *katabu*, 3pl.f *katabna*

The masculine and the feminine genders are differentiated not only in the nouns and pronouns, but it is possible to distinguish them also in the verb - in the 2nd and 3rd person sing and pl (thus not in the dual and not in the 1st person)

Nisaa fa kaalati - kavuta yakwe sauti.
Then the woman spoke - and made her voice strong (*Shufaka* 131)

In Kiswahili, however, usually the feminine ending is used only for the sake of the metre or of the rhyme, as in the following line:

Fa kama fa kharajati and they stood up and went out (*Shufaka* 118)

when one of the two perfect verbs is in masculine form (**kama** "he stood") and the other one in feminine form (**kharajat** "she went out"), both preceded by the particle **fa** ("and, then"). Besides, both verbs are used in their singular form with a plural (logical) subject.

The Arabic **imperfect** (and thus present and future tense, subjunctive etc.) is conjugated by prefixes and in some persons also by suffixes

The complete **paradigm** for the verb"to write" is: 1sg *aktubu*, 2sg.m *taktubu*, 2sg.f *taktubina*, 3sg.m *yaktubu*, 3sg.f *taktubu*; dual 2 com *taktubani*, 3m *yaktubani*, 3f *taktubani*; 1pl *naktubu*, 2pl.m *taktubuna*, 2pl.f *taktubna*, 3pl.m *yaktubuna*, 3pl.f *yaktubna*.

There are several Arabic imperfective forms (of singular) in *Shufaka* and occasionally in other poems:

Tabibu yushurutwahu - anta tadhibahahu.
The physician has made it a condition - that you slay him (*Shufaka* 173)[4]

Negative imperfect is formed by the particle **la**:

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[4] For a more detailed analysis of this verse see later

Now man - does not come back from separation (*Shufaka* 137)

There have been found also some Arabic **imperatives** (having the imperfective vocalization, but without prefixes):

uskut(u)   be quiet   (imperative of **sakata** to keep quiet)
kumu   stand up   ("of **qāma** QWM to stand up)
qul   speak   ("of **qāla** QWL to speak)

Uskutu ya kidhabu   Silence, liar (*Ayubu* 57)

Kumu anta Kasimu   Rise thou Kasim (*Shufaka* 250)

An important grammatical feature is the **verb derivation** There are 10 main verb forms: one base form and nine derived forms [7]

Here all the derived forms are illustrated with the verb "to write":

kataba   I   write
kattaba   II   let write
kātaba   III   correspond with s o
aktaba   IV   dictate
(*__takattaba__   V   *missing with this verb*)
takātaba   VI   correspond with each other
inkataba   VII   subscribe
iktataba   VIII   copy
(*__iktabba__   IX   *missing*)
istaktaba   X   ask to write, dictateThe traces of these derived forms
(especially of form V) can be found also in Kiswahili E.g

-ajabu, -taajabu V, -staajabu X   wonder
-takallamu V   speak, say
-karibu, -takarrabu V   approach
-tabasamu V   smile
-fasiri, -tafsiri V   interpret
-butadi VIII   begin (<*ibtada'a*)
-staarabu X (< arab)   become an Arab = civilized

Thumma akatakallamu - takarrabuni rajuwa.
      Then she spoke: - Be welcome, ye men (*Shufaka* 120)

Ba'ada ya ina kulibutadi - bijahi Rasuli tutahamadi (Dura mandhuma 2)
      After starting with the Name -with honour let us praise the Prophet

At this point we may start to analyze our verses:

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[5] **alana** < *ill_ anna* "nevertheless, however"

[6] **La yarudu** stands for the Swahili **harudi** which is one syllable shorter

[7] Of course not all verbs have all forms

I   *Yuridi yudhibahahu - wa yaakhudhu damahu,*
  yamusahu jasadahu - ili kutaka afuwa.
    It is his purpose to slay him - and to take his blood,
    and to anoint his body with it - in order to acquire health (*Shufaka* 129)

There are four verbs in the imperfective form, all 3rd pers sing masculine: **yuridi** "he wants", **yudhibahahu** < *dhabaha* "to slay" (with the appropriate subjunctive ending -A and the enclitic object **-hu** "him"), **yaakhudhu** < *akhadha* "to take", **yamusahu** < *masaha* "anoint" The nouns **dam** "blood" and **jasad** "body" have the possessive enclitic **-hu** "his"; the latter presents the appropriate accusative ending (see later). The third noun **afuwa** = **afya** "health" is slightly changed for metrical purposes Besides, there are two Arabic conjunctions, **wa** "and" and **ili** "in order to", and the only Swahili word, **kutaka**

To understand this stanza properly, a few words about Arabic **pronouns** must be said They have two genders and three numbers (sing, dual, plur.) Personal pronouns have an independent form and an enclitic form Independent pronouns have a role of subject

The complete **paradigm** is the following: *anā* I, *anta* you sg m., *anti* you sg fem., *huwa* he, *hiya* she, *antumā* you two, *humā* they two, *nahnu* we, *antum* you pl m., *antunna* you pl f., *hum* they m., *hunna* they f.

Not all of them occur in Kiswahili, it is above all **anta** "you, thou" (2nd pers sing masc), and **ana(a)** "I" (1st pers sing.)

Anaa mwana wa enzi - mwana wa juwa na mwezi
ndiswi walinza walinzi - na waliotabaradi. (Huseni 981)[8]
    I am the heir, - the child of the sun and the moon
    We are the guardians of guardians - and of them who need refreshment

Pronominal suffixes are attached to the host word: if it is a verb or a preposition, they have the role of object. Added to a noun, their function is that of possessives. Here is the complete paradigm of the pronominal suffixes:

1 p sg	-ī[9]	1 p pl	-nā	*dual*		
2 p m	- ka	2 p m	-kum	2 p		-kumā
2 p f	-ki	2 p f	-kunna			
3 p m	-hu	3 p m	-hum	3 p		-humā
3 p f	-hā	3 p f	-hunna			

E g

akhī	my brother	akhana	our brother		
Rabbī	my Lord	**Rabuka**	your Lord	**Rabana**	our Lord
ummuhu	his mother	**kauluhu**	his speech		
ᶜalā	to:	**ᶜalaik(a)**	to you (sg m)	**ᶜalaihi**[10]	to him

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[8] The metric reasons would allow the poet to use both pronouns (I, we) either in Kiswahili (*ndimi-ndiswi*), or in Arabic (*anaa-nahnu*), instead of mixing both languages

[9] With the verbal inflection it becomes **-nī**

as-salām alaikum   peace be with you

Haidari kauluhu - akamwambia ummuhu
    Lit. Ali's word, - he spoke to his (classificatory) mother (*Katirifu* 275)

Na mwenyewe lakwe ina, - hoyo asi wa Rabana,
naye ni Anzaruna, - ndiyo etwao, wayuzi
    And the name of the owner, - of that rebel against our Lord,
    is Anzarun, - so is he called, O wise men (*Anzarun* 27)

Arabic possessive suffixes are often used in Kiswahili for no grammatical reason, only for the requirements of metrics.

Only two relative pronouns have been found in Kiswahili, both of the 3rd person sing : **alladhī** (masc) and **allatī** (fem)

    ma alladhi atulaba   what is it that you are seeking (*Shufaka* 74)

Now it is possible to continue our analysis

    II. Tabibu yushurutwahu - anta tadhibahahu
        ini kana yuridhwahu - rahama k'Allahu Taa
        The physician has made it a condition - that you slay him,
        if it be His will, - God the Lofty will have mercy upon you (*Shufaka* 173)

In this stanza, besides the independent pronoun **anta** ("you, thou" sing masc), there are some instances of the enclitic "him", suffixed to three imperfective verbs: **sharat^w a** "put as a condition" (*cf sharti, -shuruti*; this verb is used also in Kiswahili), **dhabaha** "to kill, slay" (the prefix is that of the 2nd pers sing IA-, the vowel I is epenthetic), **radh^w iya** "to be satisfied/content" (probably the 3rd pers sing masc of the imperfect in form IV "to satisfy") The fourth verb is a wish, **rahimaka (A)llāh** "God have pity on you": *rahima* "to have pity", *-ka* the enclitic pronoun of the 2nd pers sing masc ; obviously the transcription is wrong: the *-k(a)* should be attached to the verb, and the vowel (A instead of I in *rahama*) results, say, from poetic licence. **Ini** is probably the Arabic particle *in* "when, if", intensifying the Arabic-Swahili **kana = kama** with the same meaning Finally **Taa**, often occurring in this form in Swahili poetry, stands for **Taala** "He is the highest/ exalted" (form VI of ᶜ*alā* "be high")

Before going further we need to discuss the **noun.**

From every verb class may be obtained one or more nouns (besides adjectives and participles):

E g	ᶜabada	adore, serve	ᶜabd	servant, slave		
			ᶜibāda	adoration		
			maᶜbūd/a	adored	etc	
	rāsala III	correspond	risāla	letter		
	arsala IV	send	rasūl	messenger	**mursal**	sent

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[10] After an I the vowel of the suffixes in the 3rd persons also changes in I

ᶜalima	know	ᶜilm	knowledge	maᶜlūm	known
ᶜallama II	teach; sign	muᶜallim	teacher	(ᶜalāma	sign)

fakara	think	fikra	thought, idea
tafakkara V think over, ponder		tafakkur	meditation, consideration

bāraka III	bless	baraka	blessing
tabarraka V	gain happiness	tabarruk	something propitious

There is a fixed nominal form for each derived verb form. In Kiswahili we can trace, for instance, the following:

II   **taufiki** (< *taufīq*) guidance and grace of God
III **mushāhara** monthly wages, **muhādhara** lecture
IV   **ikrahi** (= *kirahi, karaha*) being offended, disgust
V   **tabaruku** (< *tabarruk*) something propitious, **tafakuri** (< *tafakkur*) meditation
VII **Inkishafi** (< *inkish_f*) revelation
VIII **itikadi** ideology (< *iᶜtiqād* ᶜAQD), **iktisadi** economy (QSD)
X   **istiimari** (< *istiᶜmār*) colonialism

  *Ni **matabaruku** kuifasiri - Buru_da ya She_he Ali Buswiri*
    It is propitious to translate - the Burda of Sheikh Al-Busiri (*Buruda* 2)

The noun distinguishes the masculine and the feminine **gender**; the latter takes the suffix -A(I). Besides proper names of women (**Fatuma, Hadija, Mayasa...**), other feminine nouns found in Kiswahili are, for instance,

    kanisa   church   **sala** prayer   **fedha**   silver

In Swahili poetry the suffix -T (sometimes with an extra vowel) shows up or not according to the needs of the metrics.

*Na upangawe wa kabu - wa **fedha**ti na dhahabu*
    He had a sword ornamented - with silver and gold (*Ayubu* 203)

*Na waliyopo **ummati** - wote wakamusikiya.*
    And the community that were there, - all listened to her (*Shufaka* 131)

Na kaburi yake Musitafa nusha d̠awama
*kwa 'arufu kʰali za **sala**t̠i na za salama*
    And let the grave of the chosen one eternally be fragrant
    with the intense fragrance of prayers and peace-wishes (*Kitabu Mauludi* 39)

The **definite article** is AL, occurring in Kiswahili usually as **li** or **'l**: **li hajati** the need, **li-insani** the man, **Rasi'lGhuli** (title of an *utenzi*).[11]

If the noun begins with a so-called *solar consonant* (e.g. S, SH, R, T, N), the L of the article is assimilated to the following consonant:

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[11] The **indefinite article** consists in the suffix -N attached to the case vowel. It is written as a diacritical mark above the last consonant, and is not important for Kiswahili.

(Ar) **an-nūr** the light   **as-sundūq** the box   **ar-Rahmān** the Compassionate

essalamu essalamu - aleika ya rajuwa
   Peace, peace - on you, O man *(Shufaka* 91)

Nanza kwa jinale bisimillahi lenye adhama
na ar-Rahamani muandazi na ar-Rahima.
   In the name of God, I begin with His glorious name,
   The Merciful, the Provider, the Compassionate *(Hamziya* 1)

However, in the transcription the assimilation is not always respected:

Ndiwe mwenye kurejewa, l-Rahimani, nirizi!
   It is Thou to whom [we] return, O Merciful, fulfil [my wish] *(Anzarun* 199)

Li salamu alaiki   peace be upon you (Shufaka 119)

There are three **cases**: the *nominative* -U, *genitive* -I, *accusative* -A In the feminine nouns the case suffix is attached to the ending -AT All the endings, however, are pronounced only in classical Arabic, especially in the Koran See, for instance, the Koranic formulae:

wahdahu lā sharīka lahu   (God) is unique, He has no companion (partner)[12]
wahdahu lā mithāla lahu   (God) is unique, He has no equal

The negative particle **la** negates the noun which then takes the accusative case

Wahadahu lā sharīka - alipendalo hujiri *(Katirifu* 271)
   The Unique One has no partner, - whatever pleases Him always happens

The so-called **construct state** is a union of two (or more) nouns; the first one is without article, but is considered definite, the second one with the definite article in genitive case

darajāt al-kanīsa(ti)   the steps of the church *(Ar)*
siri li-asirari   the secret of secrets

Occasionally the construct state occurs in Kiswahili instead of the Swahili connective -A:

shamusi li-Anuwari, - Mukhulukuwa kwa Nuri
   the sun of lights, -who was created out of the Lights *(Shufaka* 25)

Ai ahili li umma - ai watu majuhaa *(Shufaka* 269)
   O! family of the (Muslim) congregation - O! people of ignorance

Sometimes in Kiswahili the article of the second noun is missing:

' *ila ummi subiyati*   to the mother of the boy *(Shufaka* 118)

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[12] *Lit* "no companion to Him"

The genitive ending -I is appropriate in a construct state as well as after the preposition **ila** "to" (but the noun has the feminine suffix -AI - **subiyat** "girl"- required by the rhyme and the rhythm)

The **vocative** is marked by the particle **yā** It may be strengthened by the particle **ayyuhā** (masc) or **ayyatuhā** (fem)

Ikanadi ya rijala - kamwawini Muhutari
    And [the voice] called: "O man, - go and help the Chosen One *(Katirifu* 287)

Fa kala yaa kaumu- naliridhiye kalamu
    And he spoke: O people, - I agree with [these] words *(Shufaka* 109)

Ayatuha li-gharibu - twaa fedha na dhahabu
    O thou stranger, - accept silver and gold *(Shufaka* 67)

As has been already said, the Arabic language distinguishes the singular, plural and dual number The **dual** ends in -ĀNI:

    wālid   parent   **wālidāni**   two parents

Walidani wali wo wawili mu'uminina.
    The two parents were both true believers *(Kitabu Mauludi* 36)

Kaswalli **raka'ateni** - kasujudia Mannani
    He prayed a *salāt* of two raka'as, - and prostrated before the Giver *(Katirifu* 280)

The regular masculine **plural** ending is -ŪN (-ĪN for genitive and accusative[13]), the *feminine plural* is -ĀT which replaces the sing ending -A(T)

Typical for Arabic is the so-called **broken plural**, involving internal transposition of letters with the addition of other ones, instead of a 'regular' suffix A noun may have several broken plurals

sing			pl	
	kitāb	book		**kutub**
	sharr	the evil		**shurūr**
	ᶜain	eye		**ᶜuyūn**
	sāhib	friend		**ashāb, sahāba** etc
	nāsir	assistant		**ansār**
	rajul	man		**rijāl**
	sirr	secret		**asrār**
	kāfir	infidel		**kuffār**

Even a loanword may have a broken plural:

    film   **aflām**

*Na siku ya kwima - kondo zetu ndio **shururi***
Ndio wenye shima - waketele dhuli na ari *(Dua* 2)

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[13] But Kiswahili does not distinguish the case vowels, see *mu 'uminina* in the preceding example

In the day of challenge, - in our battles with evils,
[they] are the ones of quality, - refusing humiliation and disgrace

In the preceding examples we have seen some Arabic **prepositions**. In fact, sometimes in Kiswahili the preposition of the original noun phrase is borrowed together with a noun

fi	in: *fi sama* in heaven; *fi 'l-jana* in the paradise; *fi li bahari* in the sea, *filihali* immediately, at once
bi	in, with (means, manner), by: *bismill_h* (<*bi+ism(i)+Allah*) in the name of God *bijahi* (*bi+jaha*) with honour
li	(possession) - becomes **la** with enclitic pronouns: **lahu** to him
ma'a	with
ilā	to
min	from
ainda	by, with, to
mada	as long as, while: *madda 'lbasari* as far as the eye arrives

*Uwene zenye nuri - nyingi **madda 'lbasari***
    She saw light shining - as far as the eye could reach   (*Ayubu* 237)

*Fa kala **lahu** sobii - akamba ewe abii*
    Then spoke to him the youth, - and said: Thou my father   (*Shufaka* 177)

*Mwokoa watosi watotawo **fi li bahari**.* (*Ayi wangi wangi* 8)
    The Rescuer of the drowned, of those who are drowning in the ocean

*Nikaha yako Fatuma - imefungwa **fi sama***   (*Fatuma* 287)
    Your marriage convenant, Fatuma, - has been made in heaven

*Angiyapo Mukarramu - **fii jannati** naimu*
    When the favoured one enters - the garden of beatitude: (*Shufaka* 281)

*Akafuza **filhali** - hata chenda kwa Rasuli*
    He went straight on - until he came to the prophet   (*Ayubu* 109)

*Kwa idhini ya Mannana wa **bi haki** Murusaa*   (*Shufaka* 253)
    With the permission of the Giver - and through the right of the Prophet to
        intercede

*Swalla Allahu **aleika***   God may bless you (*Shufaka* 27)

*Fa salamu **alaihi** - **bi mantiki** rajihi*
    And greeted him - with impassioned speech (*Shufaka* 144)

*Duayo musutajabu - **ainda** Allahi Taa*
    your prayer will find response - with God the High (*Shufaka* 216)

The next example from *Shufaka* shows a particular use of the preposition *ᶜainda*:

*Laula kwamba **aindi** - alifati auladi*
    Even if I had - a thousand sons (*Shufaka* 132)

Arabic does not have the verb "to have" and replaces it with the expression "to me [there] is" - **aindi alifati auladi** "I have a thousand sons": **aindi** = prep "by, at, with" + enclitic object -ī

"me"; **auladi** broken plural of *walad* "child, son", **alifati** = *elfu*; (**laula** "if not" here means "even if")

III   *"Nisaa fa kaalati, - mashekhe takarrabati,*
ilekumu li hajati, - wasalitani ilaya.

> The Lady spoke, - welcome, gentlemen
> what can I do for you - that you have approached me for? (*Shufaka* 121)

Nisaa "woman" is responsible for the feminine ending of the perfective verb *qāla*: **fa kaalati** "and/ then she spoke"; however, seeing the same feminine ending with the verb **takarraba** "to approach" (form V of the verb *qaruba* "be near") which has the subject **mashekhe**, we realize that the suffix **-ti** in both cases is there only for the sake of rhyme. The same is true for the full feminine ending in **li hajati** "the need" (**ilekumu li hajati** *lit.* "to you the need > [what is] your need": **ilekumu** = **ilaikum**: *ila* "to" + *kum* enclitic pronoun of 2 pers pl "you"; the same preposition with the 1st pers. object gives **ilaya** "to me") The verbal form **wasalitani** comes from *wasala*, sw. -*wasili* "arrive, reach"; the ending is nearest to the 2 pers. fem pl. form (*wasaltunna*, whereas the masc. pl. is *wasaltum* and the 2 pers dual *wasaltunā*), but without doubt it is again just a poetic licence.

The next grammatical feature to be discussed is the participle The **active participle** is formed from the root of a simple verb with the vowels Ā I:

kataba	write	**kātib/a**	writer
khadama	serve	**khādim**	servant
shakara	be grateful, thank	**shākir/a**	grateful
sakana	live, stay	**sākin/a**	staying, inhabitant

Haramu hukuwa **shaakiru** *zake zitendo*
ushishie fumo hungurumza likitetema.

> You were never grateful for all that He has done,
> spear in you hand, brawling and trembling with anger. (*Wajiwaji* 6)

The **passive participle**, on the other hand, is formed with the prefix MA- and only the vowel U:

kataba	write	**maktūb/a**	written
ᶜabada	adore	**maᶜbūd/a**	adored
shahara	be famous	**mashhūr/a**	famous

Ewe **ma'abudu** *inusheto roho karima*
na kaburi yake Musitafa nusha dawama.

> O Thou adored One, burn incense for the noble soul,
> and let the grave of the chosen one eternally be fragrant (*Kitabu mauludi* 28)

Both active and passive participles of derived verbs are formed, instead, with the prefix MU- The two participles are distinguished by the second root vowel: I for the active, A for the passive (ones)

mu͑allim II	teacher	**mu͑allam** II	learned

Such participles, found in Kiswahili, are e g :

muhimu II   important, urgent (*cf* **hima**)
muhashamu II   honoured (*cf* **heshima**)
mur(u)saa IV   sent (<*mursal*)
mutakalamu V   president of the legislative council
mustarehe X   calm, comfortable (< *mustar īh*)

IV   *Tajiri katanabbahi - akamba inna lillahi*
     maa wa inna ilehi - rajiuna akakuwa
        The merchant realized (what happened) - and spoke: Lo! We appertain to God,
        and indeed toward Him - we are returning, he said   (*Shufaka* 200)

-tanabbahi is the form *V* "to realize" with the Swahili subject prefix The particle **inna** ("indeed") is here used twice referred to God (**lillahi** = **li+Allahi** "to God" and **ilehi** = *ilaihi* "toward Him") **Maa** "what" is somewhat strange in this position (**maa lillahi** "what is of God"); it also could be the "Swahili" word *mara* **Rajiuna** = *rāji͑ūn* "returning" is an active participle pl In **akakuwa** we might recognize the Arabic verb *-kuli* "to say" in the end rhyme position

V   *Ndiye muumbiwa janna, - wa huri fiha sakina*
        For him paradise was created - and the nymphs living therein (*Shufaka* 31)

Sakina is an active participle (**sākin** "inhabitant") with the feminine ending -A, whereas **fiha** is composed of the preposition **fi** "in" and the enclitic object **ha** "it" (3 pers sing fem referred to **janna** "paradise")

VI   *Ndiye Tumwa muddathiri, - shamusi li-Anuwari,*
      Mukhulukuwa kwa Nuri, - isiyo kuzizimia
        He is the Prophet who wrapped himself in his mantle, - the sun of lights,
        who was created out of the Lights, - that does not diminish (*Shufaka* 25)

Muddathiri is the active participle of the verb *daththara* (form II) "to wrap, envelop"; *makhlūq* (in its Swahili-ized form **mukhulukuwa**) is the passive participle of the Ist form verb *khalaqa* "to create" **Shamusi li-anuwari** is the construct state composed of **shamusi** = *shams* "sun" and **an(u)wari** (broken plural of *nur(u)* "light")

The **conjunctions, particles and adverbs** most frequently occurring also in Kiswahili are

wa and, with[14]   **fa**   and then, so, nevertheless   **au**   or
Akifurahi Nabia - wa kadha Shekhe Alia
        The Prophet rejoiced - as well as Sheikh Ali (*Ras 'lGhuli* 4095)

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[14] As preposition, **wa** is used also in the oath **Wallahi** "By God!"

Less frequent in Kiswahili are, for instance:

lianna	as, since	**in**	if, when	**thumma**	then
la'ala	maybe	**hal**	interrog particle	**mā**	what?
kaifa	how?	**qad**	particle put before perfect verbs[15]		

Lianna niliko nina niya fʰaka kutenda - kitenzi kya siyi Hamziya zake kalima.
    Because I am here with the intention wishing to make
    a versification of this Hamziya, (of) its words *(Hamziya* 6)

Muwilini ayisinge - fa laalla akapowa.
    That on his body he may rub it, - and maybe he will be cured *(Shufaka* 130)

VII   *Kaifa ana akuli, - wa kadu mata buniya.*
    How could I eat - while my dear son has just died? *(Shufaka* 239)

Compare the second hemistich with another wording:

    Ziawanye kulla kuti - waibuni kadu mati
    Do divide all the food, - for my son has just died *(Shufaka* 241)

Here the Arabic word for "son" *ibn* (**bun, ibun**) is used alternatively with Swahili or Arabic suffixed possesive - **ya(ngu)** or **i** Notice, moreover, the 1 pers sing imperfect (subjunctive) of *akala* "to eat": **akuli Mata** "he died" (3rd p sg masc of perfect) changes into **mati** in the rhyme position (**Kadu** is the Swahili-ized form of the particle *qad*; **kuti** *poet.* Sw. "food")

As for **word order**, in Arabic the verb usually precedes the subject, thus the word order is VSO Otherwise the subject is preceded by the pleonastic particle **inna** (certainly) In Swahili poetry there are many occurrences of the VSO order, in addition to word-order variations to meet metrical requirements

In the following (already quoted) example the poet restored the normal Swahili word order to obtain the final rhyme in *-ti*, but maintained before the verb the particle **fa** that should stay at the beginning of the sentence

Nisaa fa kaalati - kavuta yakwe sauti.
    The lady spoke - and made her voice strong *(Shufaka* 131)

Finally let us analyze the last stanza which contains several previously discussed features

VIII *Thumma kala marahaba, - bikudumika ahibba,*
    ma alladhi atulaba, - mimi ayuha rajuwa

    Then he said: Welcome - with your coming, friends,
    what is it that you are seeking - from me, ye men? *(Shufaka* 74)

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[15] With the meaning that the action is conclusively finished

We may recognize **thumma** ("then"), **kala** (3rd pers masc perf "he said"), **ahibba** (broken plural of *habīb* "darling, friend), **mā** (interrog pronoun "what?"), **alladhī** (relative pronoun 3rd pers sing masc.), **ayuha** (vocative particle) **Bikudumika** is composed of the preposition **bi** "with", **qudūm** (< *qadama* "to come") "coming, arrival" and the possessive suffix **-ka** (2nd pers sing masc) "your". The form **atulaba** is somewhat difficult to explain: The verb is **t(w)alaba** "to seek, look for"; the initial A- seems to be the IV derived form which, however, does not occur in Arabic dictionaries; nor can it be, in this context, the Swahili subject prefix of the 3rd pers (animate) sing and even less the Arabic 1st pers sing subject prefix. Perhaps **mimi** is an incorrect reading of **minnī** "from me". **Rajuwa** stands for *rajul* "man", here in plural meaning: "ye men".

We might continue presenting more examples from *Shufaka* or from other classical poems, and it might even be necessary to discuss other features of Arabic grammar (adjectives, numerals etc.). But this paper does not pretend to be exhaustive It only wishes to point out the importance of Arabic grammar (and not only of vocabulary) for classical Swahili poetry - even if it is used mostly to meet metrical requirements - as well as to suggest that the code-switching in Kiswahili might not only be a modern phenomenon exclusively concerning English.

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