

The *Swahili - Handbuch* presents qualitatively new teaching material. Although many of the subject-matters can be found in journals or textbooks, they are systematically classified and adequately worked out in this book for the purposes of modern Swahili teaching. In this lies the main achievement of this handbook which will surely become an important part of Swahilistics.

Marie Brzobohatá

GUDRUN MIEHE, DIE SPRACHE DER ÄLTEREN SWAHILI -DICHTUNG (PHONOLOGIE UND MORPHOLOGIE). 1979, BERLIN: DIETRICH REIMER, 260 pp., DM 35, -

For the students of Swahili poetry that predates the twentieth century (e.g. Muyaka, Al-inkishafi, Mwana Kupona, Hamziyya and others) there has always been a dire need for a book which could aid in the understanding of this poetry. This need is made acute by two main reasons. Firstly, classical Swahili poetry is written partly in what is known as Kingozi, an archaic form of language believed by many to be some kind of proto-Swahili. Secondly, the language of old Swahili poetry also incorporates a lot of features from the northern dialects of Swahili (e.g. Kiamu, Kipate, Kisiu etc). This combination of archaic Swahili and features from the northern dialects of the language renders both the understanding and the explication of the pre-twentieth Swahili poetry rather difficult for many readers.

It is with the above background in mind that many readers of classical Swahili poetry will welcome Gudrun Miehe's *Die Sprache der älteren Swahili-Dichtung*.

This book has three main sections. The first section is introductory. It provides a brief historical background of the East African coast, the centre stage for the composition of the pre-twentieth Swahili poetry. This section also introduces the northern Swahili dialects (Kitikuu, Kipate, Kisiu, Kiamu) and outlines the salient differences between these dialects and Standard Swahili. In addition, thematic concerns of classical Swahili poetry are outlined.

The second main section gives an overview of the phonology of old Swahili poetry. Here main phonological features of the pre-twentieth century Swahili poetry are compared with those of Standard Swahili. These features include known northern-dialect features such as the deletion of /l/ and /g/ between vowels in cases where Standard Swahili still maintains them, e.g. in 'mbee' for 'mbele' (forward); 'mbeu' for 'mbegu' (seed). It also includes other archaic forms in which the consonant /l/ is still present, e.g. in 'luma' for 'uma' (bite), 'mulume' for 'mume' (man) and others.

Section three is more detailed than the other two sections. Here the author discusses the main differences between the language of classical Swahili poetry and Standard Swahili at the morphological level. This includes many aspects of morphology among them the following:

(a) The noun-class system Here emphasis is placed on the differences between noun-class prefixes in old Swahili and those of Standard Swahili

(b) Nominal derivation. The suffixes that are used in nominal derivation process of old poetry are compared to the ones used in Standard Swahili.

(c) Pronouns, possessives and demonstratives are compared in the two language forms

(d) Verbal morphology in both old-poetry Swahili and Standard Swahili is discussed.

This book adds to the fast growing literature on Swahili language. It is particularly useful to the students of classical Swahili literature. Its strength lies in the fact that it brings together useful information which is scattered in various sources. This book has, however, one main limitation. It is written in German and this makes it inaccessible to the vast majority of Swahili students in East African universities. One can only hope that the author will one day think of translating it into English or Swahili so as to broaden its readership.

Paul M. Musau

RUGATIRI D.K. MEKACHA: *THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC IMPACT OF KISWAHILI ON ETHNIC COMMUNITY LANGUAGES IN TANZANIA: A CASE STUDY OF EGINATA*. 1993. BAYREUTH: BAYREUTH AFRICAN STUDIES, 260 pp., DM 29.-

In most African countries, and indeed other parts of the world, multilingualism is the rule rather than the exception. This phenomenon provides an interesting subject of study for sociolinguists. One could, for example, investigate in which domain (e.g. office, market, church etc.) each of the languages in a multilingual situation is used. It is also possible to study in linguistic terms the influence of one language on another. One may also wish to examine what is known as code-switching, i.e. the use of more than one language in speech.

The book under review by R.M. Mekacha is a recent contribution to the fascinating study of languages in contact. The book examines the co-existence of Kiswahili and community languages in Tanzania. It specifically makes reference to the patterns of language use and acquisition among the Nata of Tanzania.

This book is divided into ten chapters. Chapter one provides a general understanding of the Tanzanian sociolinguistic profile where Kiswahili is steadily becoming the dominant language for most of the people. This chapter shows that in some cases Kiswahili is taking over the functions that were assumed to be the preserve of English while in other cases it is becoming the first language of some young Tanzanians. This chapter argues that there is an emerging language shift in favour of Kiswahili in Tanzania.

Chapter two discusses indicators which are symptomatic of language shift. These are: language attitudes, patterns of language use, code-switching and diminishing communicative proficiency in the local language.