AFRICA

KISWAHILI

TOKA

AFRIKA

MASHIRIKI

METHALI

ZA

ERBS

KILI

AFRICA
KUHUSU MWANDISHI:


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Rev. Leonidas Kalugila studied theology at Makumira Theological College, Aarhus University and Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. He has already worked as a parish pastor in Tanzania and in Denmark and has worked as a secondary school teacher. Before coming to Uppsala, where he is doing research for his doctorate in theology, he was teaching theology at Makumira Theological College, Tanzania. He worked together with Rev. G. Jasper and Mr. Ph. Tibaijuka in translating Psalms into Hausa (published by BFBS, 1972). He has written 'An Introduction to the Old Testament Books' (332 pp.) which will be published this year by Vuga Press, Tanzania, 'Old Testament Theology' vol. I (153 pp.), which will be published this year by C.T.P. Dodoma, Tanzania, he has translated 'Coretta' - it will be published by Transafrica Publishers - Nairobi and he has written articles in periodicals. He is a committee member of the Association of East African Theological Institutions' Swahili Textbooks Committee and a member of the Popular Swahili Bible Translation Committee.
16. Wawili kwenye kupalilia magugu, kumi kwenye mfuko.
   Two are working but ten wait for the profit.

17. 'Wote watawala', huleta mafarakano.
   'All are rulers/leaders', causes riots.

Y
1. Yai haliatamii kuku.
   An egg never sits (as a hen does when she has eggs) on a
   hen (i.e. a child is not greater than its parents).

2. Yaotayo kwanza (meno) siyo yatumiwayo kula.
   Those which come first (teeth) are not those which are
   used for eating.

Z
1. Zimeanguka (senene au panzi) wasipozila.
   They have fallen (grasshoppers) where people never eat
   them.
1. Waarabu hujuana kwa vilemba.
   Arabs recognize one another by their turbans (i.e. people of the same interest or work have their own identity).

2. Wacheke wasiomboleze (Bukoba, Tanzania).
   Let them laugh, don't let them cry (Bukoba, Tanzania).

3. Waendao wawili hukumbushana.
   Two walking together make each other to remember.

4. Wakuu wawili hukaanga ini.
   Two elders fry a liver together.

5. Wakwako hukuua akiwa anaishi na hukuua akiwa amekufa.
   The one that is of your family kills you while he/she is living and even when he/she is dead.

6. Walezi wengi humfanya mtoto alie sana.
   Many baby sitters make a child cry a lot.

7. Walioko chini wanaambiwa walioko juu wanasisikia.
   Those in the room are being told and those on the ceiling are listening.

   A greedy person falls in calamity.

   Animals of the same type graze together.

10. Waomboleze wasicheke.
    Let them cry, don't let them laugh (Karagwe, Tanzania).

11. Wapendanao hutwikana makapi.
    Friends burden each other with husks.

12. Wapigao yowe ndio wezi.
    Those who shout are the thieves themselves.

13. Watoto wa baba mmoja husaidiana.
    Children of the same father help one another.

    They help the one who helps himself.

15. Wavu utakaonasa samaki wengi, huanza mapema.
    The net that will catch many fishes begin early.
13. Usichezee maji yaliyotulia.
Do not disregard still water.

14. Usifunge mbuzi yako karibu na mbuzi inayokula katika mashamba ya watu wengine.
Never put your goat where there is a goat that grazes itself in others' fields.

15. Usigonge nguzo ukasingizia giza.
Don't blame the darkness if you bump into a pole.

16. Usijivunie cha mwenzako.
Never boast of what your friend has.

17. Usiniue nikiwa naishi.
Never kill me while I am living (i.e. don't spoil my work or my reputation while I am living).

18. Usitangulie kukasirika.
Don't be the first to be angry (i.e. don't be a hot tempered person, be polite).

19. Usiwe kama upanga ukatao kuwili.
Never be like a sword that cuts with both sides.

20. Utupu hauna faida.
Emptiness never pleases anyone (i.e. it is good to go to your parents or to your friends with a present).

Laziness is a lion if you do not stand firm you will be torn by it.

V

1. Vimekuwa vitamu alifia kwa mamamkwe.
"They are nice" died at his mother-in-law's home.

2. Vingi hununua mbwa.
Those which are too much are used for buying a dog.

3. Visivyofungwa vizuri havikomi kumwagika.
Things which are not well tied never stop pouring out.

4. Vitanga vya mikono (au viganja) hunawishana.
The palms of hands wash one another.

5. Vizuri huachwa mbwa aliacha kucheka na huku anapenda kucheka.
Good things are left the dog stopped laughing whereas it likes laughing.
8. Tumbo moja humfanya kuku anyeshewe mvua.
One belly makes a hen go out in the rain.

The tastier the fruit the greater the appetite.

U
1. Ufanye kama mtumwa ule kama tajiri.
Do as a servant and eat as a rich person.

2. Ugonjwa uliouponyesha ndio husimulia.
The illness that you cure is the one you explain about.

3. Ukiitwa kwa mfalme/mtawala usikose kufika.
If you are called to go to the king/leader do not miss to attend.

4. Ukwambia wa kwenu 'vaa' akakataa ukutanapo wanaocheka nahe hucheka.
If you tell someone from your home 'put your clothes on' and he refuses, so when you meet people laughing at him you also laugh.

5. Ukimwogopa mkubwa wadhani atakuwa lini mdogo?
If you are afraid of the big person (or a very important person) when will he be small?

6. Ukimwokoa chui atageukia wewe.
If you save a leopard, it will turn to you.

7. Uliyonayo ndiyo hutumia kucheka.
What you have is what you use in laughing.

8. Umbali una upweke.
Long distance has loneliness.

Whom you eat with, is the one who will kill you.

10. Unachodharau ndicho hiharibu.
What you disregard is what spoils.

11. Usichafue unapokaa kama mtungi.
Do not dirty where you stay as a waterpot. cf. Do not foul the cave where you have slept.

12. Usichekee shida ya wengine jua haliwakii mmoja.
Don't laugh at others' difficulties the sun never shines at one person.
S
1. Sema nasikia hayumo mashughulini mwako.
   The one who says, "Say I am listening", is not listening.
2. Shukrani ya punda ni mashuzi.
   The gratitude shown by the donkey is the breaking of wind.
3. Shukrani ya punda ni mateke.
   The gratitude shown by the donkey is its kicks.
4. Sikia ujiokoe, ukitazama na macho watakushika hali umo katika mshangao.
   Hear and save yourself, if you wait to see with your eyes, they will catch you while you are in wonder.
5. Siri ni kwa mtu mmoja.
   A secret belongs to one person.
   "I cannot be ruled", dies while wondering.

T
1. Taabu mbaya duniani ni umaskini na utasa.
   The worst problems on earth are poverty and barrenness.
2. Taabu ya mume umaskini, ya mke utasa.
   The problem of a man is poverty, that of a woman is barrenness.
3. Taabu za kukusumbua hukuzalisha mapacha usioweza kunyon-yesha.
   Great troubles cause you to bear twins that your breasts cannot feed.
4. Tamaa nyingi, mbele giza.
   Greedness is blindness (i.e. a greedy person is blind or a greedy person does not know what will happen in the future).
5. Tembo hashindwi kubeba pembe yake.
   An elephant never fails to carry its tusk.
6. Tone tone hujaza ziwa.
   Drops and drops make up a lake.
7. Tumbo lililofura hukufanya useme uliyokula.
   Stomachache makes you say what you have eaten.
20. Nyama usiyokula hukata kubwa.
The piece of meat which you do not chew, you cut big.

A snake frightens even when it is dead.

22. Nyongeza, sio kidogo.
Extra is never little.

23. Nyumba ambayo huagua hutajirisha mpiga bao.
The family that believes in witchcraft makes the witchdoctor rich.

24. Nyumba ya jirani ikiungua, wewe huota moto.
When your neighbour's house burns, you warm yourself with fire.

P

1. Paangukapo jino kuna pengo.
Where a tooth falls down, there is an empty space.

2. Palipofia ndege hapakosi manyoya.
Where a bird died there are always feathers.

3. Pamekuwa shwari mkuki umemehoma mhunzi.
It is his own spear that has pierced the blacksmith.

4. Panapovuka moshi kuna moto.
Where there is smoke there is fire.

5. Pango ulimojisetiri usilidharau.
Do not disregard the cave where you took refuge.

6. Pesa zitumiwazo kuposa sizo zitumiwazo kuoa.
The money that is used for engagement is not that which is used for wedding.

7. Pole pole ni mwendo.
Slowly by slowly is progress.

R

1. Radi hupiga ilipoishopiga.
Lightning strikes where it had already struck.

2. Rafiki akiwa na rafiki si siri tena.
When a friend gets another friend the secret is no more a secret.
5. Neno la mtawala halilingani na mlio wa ngoma.
   The word of the leader is unlike the voice of a drum.

   "Let it grow", he carries it himself.

   "Wait, wait", delays you until her husband arrives.

8. "Ngoja niongoze na la kwangu", huchelewesha mazungumzo.
   "Let me add mine", delays the conversation.

9. Ng'ombe akivunjika mguu malishoni, hujikokota zizini.
   When a cow gets its leg broken, it surely returns to its yard for help.

    Ngono (a river in West Lake Region, Tanzania) went alone and missed the way.

11. Nifanyapo kazi huwa wanacheka nilapo huwa wanashukuru.
    While I work they are mocking and when I eat they appreciate effort.

    I am present but I am not present (i.e. you can see that I am well but I am suffering).

    Help me so that you may help yourself (or save yourself).

    Greet my mother-in-law", she hears herself.

    "I shall tell you", discourages.

    Hunger causes you to produce (by farming) what you cannot be able to finish eating.

17. Njaa hukufanya umwombe uliyemnyima.
    Hunger causes you to beg something from someone whom you refused to give something, when he/she asked for it from you.

18. Njaa isiyoisha humfanya mwangalifu aibe.
    Hunger that never ends makes an honest person to steal.

    The meat that will be nice has to be fried in your presence.
44. Mwanamke tasa hashukuru.
   A barren wife never gives thanks.

45. Mwenda pole haumii mguu.
   He who walks carefully never hurts (his leg) himself.

46. Mwenda pole hunywa kwa usalama.
   The one that goes slowly drinks in peace.

47. Mwenge baba hajifungii kuni.
   He who has a father never ties firewood himself.

48. Mwenge haraka hanywi ya ndama.
   The one in a hurry never drinks the milk of a calf.

49. Mwenge kuacha kweli huirudia.
   The one who leaves truth will return to it.

50. Mwenge kuni hula kilichoiva.
   The one who has firewood eats well cooked food.

51. Mwenge maneno mengi (m.y. mwenge matusi) haoi/haolewi.
   The one who is too talkative (i.e. who abuses others),
   never marries/is never married.

52. Mwenge moyo wa kuonywa huonywa.
   They warn the one who is prepared to listen.

53. Mwenge shida ndiye atanguliaye kutandika.
   The one who is in need is the one who makes the bed first.

54. Mwoga hufunga mapema.
   The one who fears closes early.

N

1. Nakula nacho kinakula.
   I am eating whereas I have stomachache (i.e. I am going
   on even if I am being disturbed by illness or by someone
   or by anything else).

2. Ndege asiyeruka hajui mbuga ioteshayo ulezi.
   The bird that never flies does not know the field that
   grows corn.

3. Ndege wa aina moja huruka pamoja.
   Birds of the same type fly together.

   When brothers fight the neighbour enjoys fire in the
   fire place.
29. Mtoto akililia wembe mpe na ala yake.
   If a child cries because it wants to get a razor blade, give it even its knife.

30. Mtoto anayekataa kula hujisaidia kidogo.
   The child who does not like to eat deficates (helps itself little).

31. Mtoto atumwaye ndiye mzuri.
   A child that agrees to be sent somewhere to get something, is the one who is a good child.

32. Mvua hainyeshei mmoja.
   It does not rain at one person.

33. Mtoto anayelialia hukufanya ule vichache.
   The child who cries makes you eat little.

34. Mtoto asiyetembelea pengine husema, "Mama ndiye apikaye vizuri".
   The child that does not visit other homes says, "My mother cooks best".

35. Mtu hajisifu bali husifiwa na wengine.
   A person does not praise himself but is praised by others.

36. Mtumbwi wa kafi moja huanza safari mapema.
   The boat that has one paddle leaves early.

37. Mume si babe kwa mkewe.
   No man is a hero to his woman.

38. Mungu amwekeacho maskini hakiozi.
   What God preserves for the poor does not rot.

   "God help me", helps himself too.

40. Mvivu hufurahia sikukuu.
   A lazy person likes feast days.

41. Mzuri hakosi baya.
   The one who is nice is never perfect.

42. Mwanamke mvivu hakosi kwao mara kwa mara.
   A lazy wife does not miss going to her parents frequently.

43. Mwanamke mzuri yuko kwa mumewe, alyebaki yuko kwao.
   The good wife is at her husband's home the other one is at her parents' home.
   Friends are many before you get problems.

15. Mazoea yana taabu tabia zikilingana.
   Familiarity brings contempt.

   If vegetables are pressed in a pot they will break it.

17. Mbwa ambaye hajaungua mkia haachi kukaa mekoni.
   A dog that has not been burnt never stops approaching the fire place.

18. Mdharau kazi hukaribisha umaskini.
   The one who despises work welcomes poverty.

19. Mdomo mbaya ndio uachamao kulia (piga yowe).
   The bad mouth is that which opens to cry.

20. Meno ni taa moyo wasitiri.
   Teeth shine the heart conceals.

   One who causes discord is blood-thirsty.

22. Milima haikutani, lakini watu hukutana.
   Mountains never meet but people meet.

23. Mkaidi alipokuwa karibu kufa alizika jiwe la kusagia.
   When the selfish woman was about to die she hid the grindstone.

24. Mkataa kushukuru alikula mtima wa shujaa.
   The one who does not give thanks ate the heart of the courageous person (i.e. The one who does not give thanks discourages).

25. Moja moja ni fungu kubwa.
   One repeatedly is a big bunch.

   He who says forgets but the one who is told never forgets.

27. Mtawala akupendaye hukutuma kwenu.
   The ruler that loves you sends you to your home.

   The ruler that will die rules badly.
1. Macho ya maiti ni yule aliyembeba.
   The eyes of the corpse are those of the person who is carrying it.

2. Macho ya mbwa hayamzuii mtu kula chake.
   The eyes of a dog do not prevent a person from eating his food.

3. Mahali pa karibu ni pabaya, tumboni hapakwanguliwi.
   A close spot is bad, your inside cannot be scratched when it is sore.

   Hoes that dig together never miss to knock at one another (i.e. people who stay or work together sometimes quarrel).

5. Maji yaliyotulia yana kina kirefu.
   The water that is still is deep.

   Remorse never comes first.

7. Mali ambayo haitakuzika ni kitoweo kisichotosha kwa chakula.
   Wealth that will not bury you is broth that is not sufficient for food.

8. Mali ya mbaini huliwa na panya.
   The wealth of the economizer is eaten by rats.

9. Mama wa kambo si mama.
   Step mother is not a real mother.

10. Mambo ya jirani usiyaige.
    Do not imitate your neighbour's deeds (i.e. do not imitate blindly your neighbour's deeds).

11. Maneno ni daraja ambalo halizuii maji kutelemka.
    Words are a bridge that does not prevent water from flowing.

12. Maneno ya jirani usiyasikie.
    Do not listen to the words of your neighbour (i.e. do not listen blindly to the words of your neighbour).

    Too much love kills. cf. Love is blind.
31. Kuku mkubwa hufundisha kuku mdogo kujisaidia mahali pa kulala.
The hen teaches the chick to put droppings on the sleeping place.

32. Kuku wa msafiri hukaa amefungwa miguu.
The traveller's hen's legs remain always tied.

33. Kulia mno hakumufufui mfu.
Too much crying does not revive the dead person.

34. Kundi lisilo na dume hujisambaza ovyo.
The herd that has no leader gets scattered.

35. Kutangulia sio kufika.
To be the first at the beginning is not to be the first to reach the spot.

36. Kutojipangusa kulimuua Mashanda (jina la mtu).
A person called Mashanda died because he did not wash his hands before eating (i.e. One has to be hygienic).

37. Kuwa watoto wa baba mmoja ni kusaidiana.
To be of the same father is to help one another.

38. Kwa ami hupaonyeshwa na babako.
Your (paternal) uncle's home is shown to you by your father.

39. Kwa mjomba hupaonyeshwa na mamako.
Your (maternal) uncle's home is shown to you by your mother.

40. Kwa mwoga hakupigwi yowe.
No crying at the house of the one who fears.

41. Kwa shujaa wanaomboleza kwa mwoga wanacheka.
They are crying at the brave's home, whereas they are laughing at the home of the one who fears.

L

1. Likiwepo baya ni afadhali kuliko nafasi tupu.
Something bad is better than an empty place.

2. Liwike lisiwike kutakucha au kutapambazuka.
Even if it does not crow it will dawn (or it will sunrise).
"Let me shave you", cuts you.

13. Huacha kusimulia ya kwao hupenda kusimulia ya wengine.
He does not explain about his home but likes explaining about others.

14. Huchemka (maji) lakini hayasahau kwao.
The water boils but never forgets its home i.e. can be cool again.

15. Huenda malishoni zikiwa ng'ombe hurudi zikiwa nyama.
They go to graze as cows but come back as meat.

J
1. Jamaa isiyo na mkuu huhama mchana.
The family that has no elder person emigrates during daytime.

2. Jamaa yenye mabishano hula ugali mbichi.
The home that is full of quarrels eats uncooked food.

3. Jando la mtoto wa mfalme humnufainisha mtoto wa maskini.
When a king makes a feast for his son or daughter at the time of nitiation ceremony, the child of the poor joins in (does not need to have his or her own feast) and enjoys himself or herself.

4. Jembe la kuku ni mguu.
The hoe of a hen is her leg.

5. Jembe la mbwa ni mguu.
The hoe of a dog is his/her leg.

He who tells you, "Build a big house", won't help you to roof it.

7. Jirani ni nyoka hukuua bila wewe kujua.
Your neighbour is a snake, he kills you without your knowledge.

K
1. Kibaya hakifi, mchawi wa karibu hahami.
That which is bad never dies, the witchdoctor who is near, never moves to another place.
2. Kibaya hakijileti, huletwa.
That which is bad never brings itself about, but it is brought.

That which is bad recognizes itself, the hen enters the house by itself.

A match and petrol must not meet.

5. Kiboko aliyepasha habari hapasui mtumbwi.
The hippo that lets you know it is there, does not smash up the boat into pieces.

6. Kidevu cha beberu hakimwokozi.
A he-goat is never saved from being slaughtered because it is beard.

That which spoils friendship is borrowing and lending.

8. Kikatacho shina hakishindwi matawi.
That which cuts the trunk never fails to cut the branches.

That which can drive you out from within (or in the house) can even chase you when you are outside.

Every king/leader has got his own way of ruling.

11. Kila mtu ana anasa yake.
Everyone has his/her own favourite passtime.

12. Kilicho kichukizo pale unapooa ni chukizo pia pale uozapo.
That which is bad to your in-law's home is also bad to your son-in-law's home.

That which is present never makes a child cry.

14. Kilichokufa kimekufa panya alikula ngozi ya ng'ombe.
That which is dead is dead, the rat ate a cow's hide.

15. Kilichoshinda watu wawili ni kifo.
What has failed two persons is death.
   A quiet person chews up a bone.

17. Kisichoiva ni mama wa kambo kilichoiva ni mama yako.
   That which is uncooked is your step mother and that which
   is cooked is your mother.

18. Kisichokuchekesha ni mama yako kuwa kichaa.
   That which does not make you laugh is when your mother
   becomes mad.

   That which does not kill a shepherd never kills the
   whole herd.

20. Kisichoweza kukushibisha hakikuhangaishi.
   That which never satisfies you, never makes you too
   anxious.

   That which will cool never burns you.

   That which goes alone belongs to the forest.

23. Kitu usichonacho usimwahidi mama mkwe.
   Don't promise to your mother in-law what you do not have.

24. Konokono, usidharau ganda la mgomba.
   Snail, never disregard the banana leaf. cf. A snail can-
   not destroy the grove.

25. Kiuacho samaki mkubwa (Kihaya:empala) hutoka mdomoni
    mwake.
   That which kills a big fish (Haya: empala) comes out of
   its mouth.

   To lend is to spoil friendship.

27. Kuheshimiana sio kutawalana.
   To respect one another is not to rule over one another.

   To borrow is to spoil friendship.

29. Kuku akivika amani hukosa nyumbani.
   When the hen crows there is no peace in the family.

   The hen eats what she can swallow.
3. Fimbo impigayo mke mwenzio uionapo huitupa nje.
The stick that beats your husband's other wife when you see it you throw it away.

4. Fimbo nzuri huiweki karibu na kitanda.
You never put a good stick near your bed.

5. Furaha ya mzazi ni mtoto kucheka.
The happiness of the parent is when the child laughs.

H
1. Hakuna mkubwa aliyejiza.
There is none that is famous who has borne himself.

2. Hakuna siri ya watu wawili.
It is not a secret if it is known by more than one person.

3. Hakuna ukuu wa kunguru panzi zikianguka.
Raven's age matters not when there are grasshoppers.

4. Haraka hukusukuma umpose mbaya na mzuri hukupaka mafuta.
Hurry moves you to get engaged to a bad one, whereas the nice one comes to wed you.

5. Harufu ya mtu ndio uzuri wake.
The smell of a person is one's beauty.

Anger never crosses the boundary (i.e. never be angry at someone the whole time otherwise you can hurt him/her severely).

7. Hata paka ana visharubu.
Even a cat has whiskers (i.e. Having whiskers is not a guarantee of masculinity).

"Such are done to children" he has not yet been reached.

"He who waits until the whole animal is visible spears its tail.

The one who says, "Let me be left without taking anything", takes a tent.

"Let me do as my elder brother", after getting in, it does not come out (i.e. do not imitate blindly your
C
1. Chakula milu-milu kazi goi goi.
   Food milu-milu work goi goi (i.e. Greedy but lazy).
2. Cha kwako huaribika ungali unaoka.
   Your own goes bad while you are still baking.
3. Cha kwako huficha cha kwangu isema, "fungua tule".
   You hide yours but concerning mine you say, "open that we may eat".
4. Chongo huwa mfalme wa vipofu.
   One eyed Jack becomes a king of the blind.
5. Chui alijambia jiwe akasema, "Umekataa kusema lakini umesikia".
   A leopard put out air at a stone and said, "You have refused to speak up but you have heard".
6. Chui akutembeleaye ndiye hukula.
   The leopard that visits you is the one which eats you.
7. Chui hakosi mkwewe.
   A leopard does not fail to get a mother in-law.
8. Chui wa kwenu hukula kama jamaa yako.
   Your home leopard eats you as a member of your family.
9. Chuma kukatika si kosa la mhunzi.
   When a piece of iron breaks it is not the fault of a blacksmith.
10. Chungu kikubwa hakili cha mpishi.
    A big pot never consumes the cooks food.

D
1. Dogo jichoni si mdomoni.
   It is small in the eye, but not in the mouth.

E
1. Fedha hazianikwi (juani).
   Money is never spread out (in sunshine).
2. Fedha ni hatari.
   Money is danger.
68. Asiyepoteza haokoti.
The one who does not loose never picks up.

69. Asiyesikia hujionea mwenyewe.
The one who refuses to hear (warnings) sees himself the consequence.

70. Asiyetamani hafungui shamba.
The one who does not envy never begins his own farm.

71. Asiyethamanisha uwindaji wako husema kuwa mbwa wako hajui kuwinda.
The one who does not value your hunting says that your dog does not know how to hunt.

72. Asiyeliza huoa dadake.
He who does not ask can be married to his sister.

73. Atakayekupa kunde kwanza hukupa majani yake.
The one who will give you beans first gives you their leaves.

74. Atakayekuua hukuanza urafiki.
The one who will kill you first makes friendship with you.

75. Atokaye uchangani hupongezwa.
The one who reaches adulthood is congratulated.

76. Atukanaye mkuu hatukani mmoja.
The one who abuses an elder person, never abuses only one elder.

77. Aulizaye humshinda asiyeuliza.
The one who asks is better than the one who does not ask (i.e. the one who asks understands and the one who does not ask never understands).

B
1. Baba mmoja mifuko miwili.
One father, two purses.

2. Bahati ni upepo.
Good luck is like the wind.

Eating without broth cannot let you move away from the table.
55. Asiyekula asivyozoea nyumbani hulala njaa.
The one who does not eat as he is not used to do at home goes to bed hungry.

56. Asiyekusaidia kubeba hajui ulivyolemewa.
He who does not help you with the load you are carrying, will not know how heavy it is.

57. Asiyekusaidia kubeba husema, "angusha".
The one who does not help you to carry says, "throw it down".

58. Asiyekuwepo haangukiwi mti.
He who is not present, a tree never falls at him (i.e. the one who is not present never gets what others get).

59. Asiyemheshimu kakaye hamheshimu mumewe.
She who does not respect her brother never respects her husband.

60. Asiyenube hupenda kuchinja.
The one who has no he-goat likes to slaughter.

61. Asiyenake hafungi safari mapema.
The one who has nothing of his own does not begin his journey early.

62. Asiyenja nanasi hajaonja kitu kitamu.
The one who has not tasted a pineapple has not tasted something sweet (i.e. the one who has not married a virgin, does not know the beginning of marriage).

63. Asiyonyeka alipanda mtumbui wa mfinyanzi.
He who did not listen to a warning rode in a boat made of clay.

64. Asiyonywa huona na macho yake.
The one who refuses to be warned sees with his own eyes.

65. Asiyependa ufanikiwe hukuua kabla ya lengo lako.
The one who does not like you to succeed or to prosper kills you before you reach your target or goal (i.e. the one who does not like you to get what you want blockades you).

66. Asiyependa uoe husema, "kwao ni wachawi".
The one who does not like you to be married says, "they practise witchcraft at his home".

67. Asiyependa watoto wako, huwaita, "wengi mno".
The one who does not like your children regards them as "too many".
42. Asemaye, "mimi sitendewi hayo", humenya mwenyewe.
   He who says, "no one can do that to me", peels his own bananas.

43. Asemaye, "mzuri siwezi kumwacha", hupata shida naye.
   The one who says, "someone is nice" gets problems with him/her.

44. Asemaye sana huacha mdomo wazi.
   The one who is too talkative leaves his mouth empty.

45. Asemaye sana hushukuriwa na wachache.
   The one who is too talkative is thanked by few people.

46. Asemaye, "siwezi kuacha pombe", haachi ngumi.
   The one who says, "I cannot stop drinking beer", never forgets a fist.

47. Asemaye, "siwezi kula cha mtoto", huoza mdomo.
   The one who says, "I cannot eat of children", rots the mouth.

48. Asiyehudhuria husema, "mtawala hatoi eho ehote".
   The one who does not attend the meeting says, "The leader never gives anything".

49. Asiyehudhuria ndiye huhukumiwa.
   The one who does not attend is the one who is judged.
   (i.e. it is better to attend than to miss).

50. Asiyehurumia ehura husema kula hasumbuliwi na maji.
   The one who does not know a frog says that the water does not hurt it.

51. Asiyeifahamu huikamua (ng'ombe) akiwa upande wa kushoto.
   The one who does not know it (a cow), milks it (a cow) by the left side (i.e. the one who has not learned to do something, never knows how to do it).

52. Asiyejua kunyoa hujifunzia kwa mwanaye.
   The one who does not know how to shave learns by shaving his/her child.

53. Asiyejua uwindaji hatambikii miungu.
   He who does not know how to hunt never sacrifices to the gods.

54. Asiyekubali kutumwa hupata vichache (vyakulal).
   A child who refuses to be sent somewhere, gets little (food), i.e. the one who refuses to be sent somewhere when asked by someone, does not get many presents or many thanks.
29. Ambaye mambo humwia vigumu hakuna limwialo rahisi.
The one who is always getting problems never finds anything easy.

30. Ambayo haitaharibika hutembelewa na mgeni.
That (house) which will not get misfortune receives a visitor (i.e. if you have a need of something and you have not anywhere to get it or you have no money to buy it, suddenly there comes a visitor bringing it to you as a present.)

31. Ampendaye kaka haolewi naye.
She who loves her brother never takes him with her to her husband's home.

32. Amri ya mtawala humsumbua asiyehudhuria.
The order of the ruler disturbs the absentee.

33. Anayechanja kuni akieleka, atachanjiwa.
She who fetches fire-wood with the child on her back will have someone fetch fire-wood for her.

34. Anayetaka kula ugali (obulo) hupatana na koo kwanza.
The one who wants to eat ugali (stiff porridge) first has to be in agreement with his/her throat.

35. Anayetaka kuua mtoto huanza mamaye.
The one who wants to kill a child begins with its mother.

"Prepare food so that we may eat" is the traders' quarrel."

37. Asaidiaye ndege humsaidia akingali anaruka.
The one who helps a bird helps it when it is still flying.

38. Asemaye, "changu hakiliwi" hatembelewi na watu.
The one who says "my food cannot be eaten by someone else", gets no visitors.

39. Asemaye kwanza hajui la kujibu.
The one who begins to say does not know what to answer.

40. Asemaye mengi hajui kuwa amemtukana mamamkwe.
He who is too talkative never knows whether he has abused his mother in-law.

41. Asemaye, "mimi ni mfanya kazi", ni yule amalizaye kazi yake.
The one who says, "I am a worker", is the one who completes his work.
   He who gives you little will give you a lot.

15. Akupendaye hakukanyagi ukaumia.
   It will not hurt if your lover steps on you.

16. Akusindikizaye usiku umshukuru asubuhi.
   He who escorts you at night, you thank him in the morning.

17. Akutanguliaye (kula) hukuzidi sehemu ya chakula.
   The one who begins to eat before you, eats more than you eat (i.e. the one who is ahead of you, is leading you).

18. Alalaye pazuri ndiye hulala chali.
   The one who sleeps in the best place sleeps on his back.

19. Aliyeachiwa mali hunawa mguu mmoja.
   The one who has been entrusted with one's wealth washes only one leg.

20. Aliye bado kufa haitwi mfu.
   The one who has not yet passed away is not called a dead person.

21. Aliyechomwa na maziwa ya moto hupuliza (maziwa ya) mtindi.
   The one who has been burnt by the hot milk, cools the sour milk before drinking.

22. Aliyechomwa na nyoka huogopa jina lake.
   The one who has been bitten by a snake, fears its name.

23. Aliyechomwa na nyoka huogopa mjusi.
   The one who has been bitten by a snake, fears the lizard.

   The one who has been bitten by a snake, fears its skin.

25. Aliyelala na shida watu humwona aamkavyo asubuhi.
   The one who goes to bed with problems gets up too early the next morning.

   That which has not been uprooted cannot be dry.

27. Ambaye hajafa hageuzwi na kijiti.
   The one who has not yet died cannot be moved by a stick.

28. Ambaye bado hajakuuma humwiti 'mwenye meno mabaya'.
   The one who has never bitten you, you never call him/her 'a person of bad teeth'.
1. Aachaye kweli huirudia (m.y. Afanyaye mema mahali fulani arudipo hupokelewa vizuri).  
He who leaves truth behind, returns to it (i.e. a person who does something good somewhere, when he comes back people receive him/her with gladness).

2. Aambiwaye akakataa hujionea mwenyewe.  
He who refuses to be warned, sees himself/herself the consequence.

3. Abakiaye mekoni ndiye huzima moto.  
He who remains near the fire-place is the one who puts out the fire.

4. Afadhali akutembeleaye kuliko akutumiaye salaam.  
The one who visits you is better than the one who sends you greetings.

5. Afadhali kuaibika kuliko kufa (Bukoba).  
Better ashamed than dead (Bukoba).

6. Afadhali kufa kuliko kuaibika (Karagwe).  
Better dead than ashamed (Karagwe).

7. Afadhali kujaribu.  
Trying is better.

8. Afadhali kuoa mzee kuliko kukaa bila mke.  
It is better to be married to an old lady than staying unmarried.

9. Afadhali kuwa jirani wa mbuga kuliko kuwa jirani wa mwengeye mdomo mrefu.  
It is better to be a neighbour of a field than to be a neighbour of one who speaks badly.

10. Afichaye alikolima hugunduliwa kwa moshi.  
The one who cultivates in secret is betrayed by the smoke.

11. Ajambaye kwa hasira hujipasua msamba.  
The one who passes out wind with anger breaks the anus.

The one who has built by himself is not a child.

She who refuses to eat adds her share to that of her 'fellow-wife'.

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METHALI - PROVERBS

"Proverbs sound authoritative. The truths they proclaim feel absolute. This impression is created by the proverb's traditionality and the weight of impersonal community consensus it invokes. The proverb's form reinforces this effect by sounding so 'right'. Neat symmetries and witty convergences of sound and meaning, tight formulations of logical relations, highly patterned repetitions, structural balance, and familiar metaphors encapsulate general principles and contribute to the feeling that anything that sounds so right must be true (see Malof 1966). This is an instrumental part of the proverb's strategy. But this does not mean that proverbs do state absolute truths. Proverbs are just supposed to sound like they do. When examined in terms of their actual use in specific situations, we see that a proverb can be made to express more than one meaning, that sometimes these meanings are contradictory, and that a proverb's meaning, rather than being autonomous of the proverb's use as we are led to believe by proverb collections, is indeed contextually specified."

SHUKRANI

Nawashukuru sana wazazi wangu, mke wangu na marafiki wengi walionisaidia katika kazi ya kukuhsanya methali hizi na kuzisahihisha. Nawashukuru sana Lecturer Abdulaziz Y. Lodhi, Mwalimu wa Kiswahili katika Chuo Kikuu cha Uppsala-Sweden, aliyea kuandika dibaji kwa kijitabu hiki, natumaini dibaji yake itatia moyo wanaosoma na kufanya uchunguzi wa Kiswahili.

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PREFACE

Proverbs are a very important feature in a language, and they cannot be compared with anything but poetry. Proverbs are a refined way of expressing the thoughts of a society, the philosophy of the people, customs and traditions of a culture.

Since W.E. Taylor's African Aphorisms Or Saws From Swahili-land (1891, 1924), only Sheikh Shaaban Saleh Farsi has contributed to Swahili proverbs (Swahili Sayings 1 & 2, 1958). Pastor L. Kalugila's present work needs to be highly appreciated and he deserves much credit for collecting more proverbs in Swahili and other East African languages. I hope this collection will encourage many others to develop further our languages by documenting such rich aspects before they are forgotten and lost forever.

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October, 1976.
DIBAJI

Methali ni sehemu muhimu sana ya lugha, na zinaweza kulinganishwa na ushairi tu. Methali ni upeo wa kueleza fikra za jamii, falsafa ya watu, itikadi na mapokeo ya mila.


Abdulaziz Y. Lodhi
Chuo Kikuu Cha Uppsala
Oktoba 1976.
SWAHILI PROVERBS FROM EAST AFRICA

by L. Kalugila

METHALI KISWAHILI TOKA AFRIKA MASHIRIKI

zimeandikwa na L. Kalugila

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