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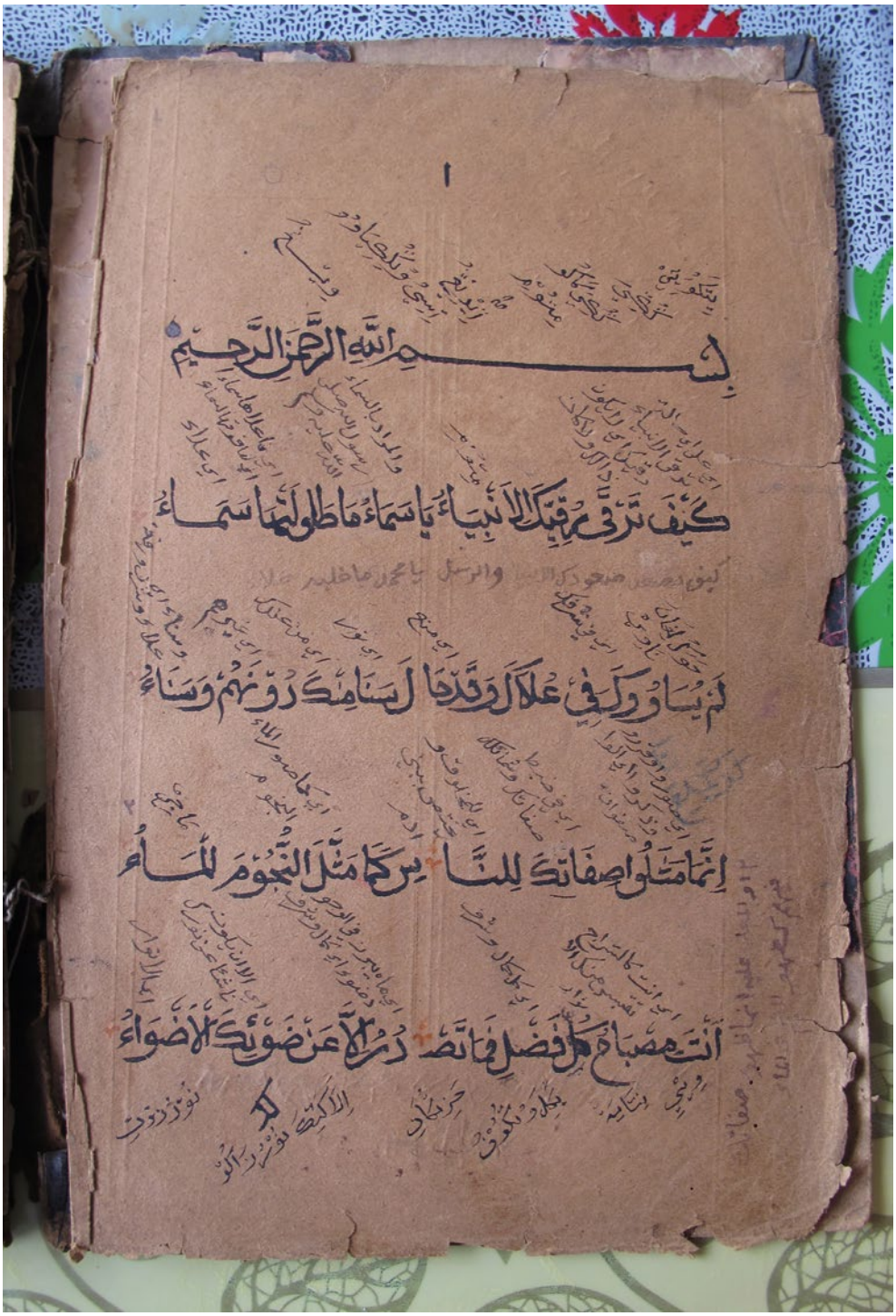

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One Text, Many Forms – A Comparative View of the Variability of Swahili Manuscripts

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First page of an Arabic *Qas īda Hamziyya* manuscript, copied by Abī Bakr bin Sulṭān Aḥmad in 1311 AH/1894 CE, with annotations in Swahili and Arabic. Private collection of Sayyid Ahmad Badawy al-Hussainy (1932-2012) and Bi Tume Shee, Mombasa.

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Arabic-Swahili *Hamziyya* Manuscripts: Observations on Two Testimonies of the Text

Ahmed Parkar | Kilifi, Kenya and Hamburg, Germany

1. Introduction

The general aim of this paper is to show how a single text, namely the *Qaṣīda Hamziyya* ('QH'), an ode to the Prophet Muḥammad originally produced in Arabic, had dynamic codicological 'lives' in Arabic and Swahili over a period of a century on the East African coast. The main focus of the science of codicology is on the handwritten book or a manuscript originally produced as a craft.[1] This field of study is quite recent and tries to answer such questions as how, when, where and for what purpose a given manuscript was made. Generally, the field explores all the techniques involved in the making of a manuscript.[2]

In this paper, I intend to focus on particular codicological elements, such as the *mise-en-page* (page layout) of two QH manuscripts. One, shelf-marked as Ms. 541, which I shall simply call 'manuscript D' here, is currently preserved in the East Africana Collection in Dr Wilbert Chagula Library at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM),[3] Tanzania, and the second one, which I shall call 'manuscript M', is part of a private collection in Mombasa, Kenya that I was kindly able to access.[4] In the context of codicology, the term *mise-en-page* means the arrangement of the various elements appearing on a page, not only with respect to the main text, but to the margins and decorations as well, along with the relationship between these different elements.[5] While looking at the textual elements of the two manuscripts (D and M), I shall also try to compare them with a third one, 'manuscript L', which is currently shelf-marked as Ms. 53823 in the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. This manuscript is the oldest known Swahili-Islamic manuscript that contains the *Hamziyya* ode.

There are various approaches to analysing the textual layout arrangements in manuscripts and their means of production in general.[6] Prior to embarking on a discussion of the layout of the QH manuscripts, however, I wish to outline my own approach, which is by gleaning information and terminology from several disciplines: Swahili, the field of manuscriptology, Arabic, and Islamic studies. This multidisciplinary view is necessary because it can be very difficult to find appropriate terms in a single field of study.

2. The state of the art

Scholars in Swahili studies have already examined many aspects of the Swahili *Hamziyya*. Their publications include critical analysis of the poem,[7] overviews of the text and its vocabulary,[8] commentaries[9] and works on

[1] Gacek 2009, 64

[2] Déroche 2006, Gacek 2009.

[3] Many thanks to the Director of Kiswahili Studies, UDSM, Dr E. S. Mosha, the deputy, Dr M. M. Hans, the librarian Ms Lavena, my host Sayyid Ahmad Mwinyibaba, ʿAydarūs Bahasani and all those whom I have not mentioned by name, but who assisted me in getting access to Ms. 541 (D) at the UDSM library during my fieldwork in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 2015.

[4] Refer to Samsom 2015, 263–265 for more background information on this manuscript. The same manuscript is also mentioned in Samsom 2016, 49–51. Drs Ridder Samsom took the pictures of the manuscript in 2011, which was made accessible to him by courtesy of Sayyid Aḥmad Badawy b. Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥussainy (d.2012) and his wife Bi Tuma Shee, Mombasa, Kenya. I am very grateful to the al-Hussainy family and Ridder Samsom for their assistance and for photographing the manuscript. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the DFG, SFB 950 and the C07 project for their generosity in funding my research work and staging the workshop that made this article possible. Many thanks to the University of Hamburg, CSMC, Hamburg, Germany, Director Prof. Michael Friedrich, the dean of the Graduate school, Prof. Oliver Huck, the organisers of the workshop, Prof. Roland Kießling (my supervisor), Prof. Alessandro Gori (my co-supervisor/co-presenter), Prof. Clarissa Vierke and drs Ridder Samsom for their continuous support of my work in Swahili manuscript studies. I am also very grateful to Pwani University (PU), Kilifi for its support and granting me leave for my PhD research; many thanks to Prof. Mohamed Rajab, the Vice Chancellor of PU, Kilifi, and the head of the Philosophy and Religious Studies Department, Dr Ali Hemed and all the Pwani University fraternity members who assisted me in so many ways.

[5] Déroche 2006,167–184.

[6] Déroche 2006, 159–184.

[7] Knappert 1968 (partially), Mutiso 2005.

[8] Mkelle 1976.

[9] Hichens 1936 (partially), Mutiso 2005.

oral performances.[10] Other scholars, such as Hichens and Knappert, have attempted to produce an English translation of the text.[11] Codicological studies on the QH manuscripts such as articles examining their divergent textual forms and layout are still lacking, however.

So far, the textual layout of the *Burda, Dalāʾil Ḫayrat* and *Šifāʾ* manuscripts from North Africa has been examined. Frederike Daub's work[12] covers the *mise-en-page* elements of more than 200 manuscripts and shows how these features reflect the relationship between textual forms and functions of the manuscripts. In her view, poetic canonical manuscripts in the Islamic world such as those containing the *Burda* may be designed in many different forms, depending on the reason for creating them.[13] Small manuscripts of approximately 10 cm by 7 cm are used as talismanic items, for example, since they can easily be put into one's pocket and carried around wherever one wishes. Larger manuscripts approximately 20 cm by 16 cm in size are designed for ordinary reading, both private and public.[14] There are a number of elements that need to be considered when analysing the layout of poetic texts in a manuscript. For instance, the poetic stanzas may be narrowly spaced between each line, arranged in two columns and decorated with symbols such as the *intahā* (ه), a figure which marks the caesura points at the end of each hemistich. Graphical elements of this kind are not only meant to beautify the text, but to facilitate its reading and memorisation. Similar textual layout arrangements in Swahili manuscripts are yet to be examined, especially those in bilingual (Arabic and Swahili) texts that are written in a variety of Arabic scripts.

2.1. Qaṣīda Hamziyya: *origin, contents and forms*

This section examines the origin, contents and forms of the *Qaṣīda Hamziyya*. According to Abdulaziz, the term *qaṣīda* (Ar. pl. *qaṣāʾid*; Sw. *kasida*, meaning 'hymn') specifically came to mean 'panegyrics eulogising the Prophet', and also strictly religious poetry which is sung or chanted [on] religious occasions.[15] In Swahili, the word adopted for poetry in general and secular poetry in particular is *mashairi* (derived from Arabic *Shiʿr*)'. In this paper, the word *qaṣīda* will be used to mean a panegyric poem (or ode) in praise of the Prophet.

Al-Qaṣīda al-Hamziyya fī al-Madāʾīḥī al-Nabawiyya, ('The Hamza-rhymed Panegyric Poem in Praise of the Prophet'), also known as *Umm al-Qurā*, or 'Mother of Villages', is a panegyric poem in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad. It was originally composed in Arabic by the Egyptian *Ṣūfī* cleric Šaraf al-Dīn Abu ʿAbdallah Muḥammad bin Saʿīd bin Ḥammād bin Muḥsin bin ʿAbdallah bin al-Ṣanhajī al-Būṣīrī (1212–1294 CE). It has been rendered into Swahili by various scholars, including *Šayḫ* ʿAydarūs bin ʿUthmān bin ʿAlī bin *Šayḫ* Abūbakar bin Sālim of Lamu in 1749 CE.[16]

It is said that at a certain stage of his life, al-Būṣīrī became seriously ill and his doctor was of the opinion that he might not get cured. Thus, al-Būṣīrī composed the *Qaṣīda al-Burda*,[17] which has been mentioned before (Daub 2016) and contains 163 verses in all, which are concerned with *madḥ*, i.e. 'the praising of the Prophet', and seeking God's pardon.[18] It is believed that he was mysteriously healed after reciting the *Burda* and saying prayers to God.[19] Due to its *madīḥ* contents, many *Ṣūfī* followers associate the *Burda* with *Baraka*, 'blessings' and healing powers. Hence, the *Burda* is the most recited and copied ode in the Muslim world.[20] Later on, al-Būṣīrī composed the *Hamziyya*, which seems to be his second most important (and popular) ode among *Ṣūfī* followers.

Al-Būṣīrī's *Hamziyya*, which I shall call *matn*, consists of 456 verses. The term *matn* in this paper is used to mean the main text, which may appear together with other subsidiary texts such as a translation, commentary, poetic rendition, and/or glosses and colophons. Swahili has a very similar word, *matini*, which only means 'text'.[21] However, in this article, I prefer to use the term *matn* to refer specifically to al-Būṣīrī's *Hamziyya* (which is an Arabic text).

The themes of Al-Būṣīrī's *Hamziyya* are the Prophet's praises, his biography from birth to his migration to Medina

[10] Olali 2012.

[11] Hichens 1936 (partially) and Knappert 1968 (partially).

[12] Daub 2016.

[13] Daub 2016, 42.

[14] Daub 2016, 73.

[15] Abdulaziz 1995, 152.

[16] Hichens 1936, 2.

[17] A poem by Kaʾb is generally believed to be the original *Burda* poem, while the one by al-Būṣīrī is regarded as the second. See Stetkevych 2010 for more information on the two *Burda* poems.

[18] Aslan 2008, 77.

[19] Aslan 2008, Schimmel 1985, Stetkevych 2010, Daub 2016.

[20] Sperl and Shackle 1996, 85. Also see Daub 2016.

[21] Mohamed 2011, 438.

(verses 1–100), his habits, miracles and virtues of the Qurʾān (101–198), resistance of the Jews and Christians and their hostility towards Islam (199–252), criticism about the hypocrites of Medina and the unbelievers of Mecca, the poet's desire to visit Medina (253–280), his desert journey, praise for the Prophet and his family household (281–325), and, finally, the poet's lamentations and seeking of the Prophet's intercession for his (the poet's) shortcomings (326–456).

The Swahili *Hamziyya*, which I shall refer to as *tarjama*, is the poetic rendition of the Arabic *Hamziyya*. *Tarjama* is used to mean a translation.[22] The Swahili also have the words *tarjumi* or *tarjuma*[23] and *tafsiri*, which may be used interchangeably to mean either a translation or an explanation of a given text.[24] In Arabic, the word *tafsīr* means 'explanation', 'interpretation', 'commentary, especially of the Qurʾān'.[25] To avoid any confusion of the two Swahili words *tarjumi* and *tafsiri*, I prefer to employ the Arabic term *tarjama* here, which is simply a Swahili poetic rendition of ʿAydarūs on al-Būṣīrī's *Hamziyya* in this paper.

In Swahililand, the QH manuscripts are written in divergent forms. This is evident from the data identified in the fieldwork in East Africa conducted as part of SFB 950's C07 project. The identified corpus, which consists of 16 *Qaṣīda Hamziyya* manuscripts, shows that the manuscripts vary in many ways in terms of their language representations and textual units; they may contain texts that are written in monolingual (Swahili) or bilingual (Arabic and Swahili) form, for example. The narration style of the texts can be found in prose as well as in poetry and is a mixture of poetic and prose elucidation. A detailed explanation of the forms of each of the 16 QH manuscripts discussed here is beyond the scope of this paper. However, I shall mention a few cases in order to give the reader a rough idea about these divergent features.[26] Two models may be observed among the monolingual ones, for instance: i) the manuscript QA, QAYYIM, NABAHANY: MSA, 001[27] only contains a *tarjama* (a Swahili translated text), and its poetic lines are narrowly spaced and arranged in two columns; and ii) the manuscript NC, NABAHANY: MSA 002[28] contains two texts: a *tarjama* plus a commentary about it (which is in prose). Both texts are arranged in a single column, and their lines are narrowly spaced.[29]

Bilingual manuscripts may contain complex combinations of Arabic and Swahili texts. To give the reader a rough idea about them here, the manuscripts and their contents may be summarised as follows:

i) Manuscript L[30] contains the *matn* in Arabic, which is interlinearised with the *tarjama* in Swahili. Both texts are arranged in two columns, and their poetic lines are narrowly spaced.

ii) Manuscript D is a five-stanza (*taḫmīs*)[31] poem in Arabic which is interlinearised with the *tarjama* in Swahili. In this case, the additional texts are centralised and placed before the *matn's*, which are in double columns. The poetic lines are also narrowly spaced.

iii) Manuscript M only contains the *matn* in Arabic, the poetic lines of which are arranged in double columns, but are widely spaced to allow annotations to be made (those added are in Arabic and Swahili).

iv) Manuscript BE, BEYDH: MAMBRUI 001[32] contains a list of words in Arabic and Swahili[33] based on the *Hamziyya* vocabulary.

[22] Cowan 1976, 93.

[23] Sheikh Ali Muhsin al-Barwani (1995) uses the word *tarjuma* in Swahili to mean 'a translation', i.e. the translation of a *tafsīr* (commentary) of the *Qurʾān* in Swahili.

[24] Mohamed 2011, 721 and 735.

[25] Cowan 1976, 713.

[26] The images of the 16 QH manuscripts are preserved at CSMC's digital repository in Hamburg, Germany.

[27] I have coded the manuscript QA, QAYYIM, NABAHANY: MSA, 001, based on the name of the copyist, who was Qayyim bin Amfar Bani Shahardin. The manuscript contains the Swahili *Hamziyya*, written in Arabic script. Ridder Samsom photographed it in Ahmed Sheikh Nabahany's private collection in Mombasa in 2013.

[28] I have also coded the manuscript NC, NABAHANY: MSA 002, where 'NC' stands for 'Nabahany's commentary'. The manuscript was in Nabahany's private collection and so I added the number 002. Ridder Samsom photographed it in Mombasa in 2013.

[29] The two monolingual texts in (ii) are only in Swahili and, unlike the aforementioned ones, are written in Latin script. The rest of the texts are written in Arabic script.

[30] Approximately half of the 16 QH manuscripts accessed in Swahililand are designed like manuscript L. The older manuscripts such as manuscript KA, KAME: NDAU, 001 are among them. This manuscript's colophon date is 1863 CE. I coded the manuscript 'KA' based on the name of the custodian, Ustadh ʿAli Lali Kame, a madrassa teacher from Ndau Island, Lamu, Kenya. The manuscript contains the *matn* interlinearised with ʿAydarūs' *tarjama*. I photographed it on Lamu Island in 2017.

[31] See section 3.1 for further elaboration of the term *taḫmīs*.

[32] I coded the manuscript BE, BEYDH: MAMBRUI 001 based on its author's name, Sayyid Muhammad bin al-Sharif Salim Al-Beydh (also spelt al-Baydh). Ahmad Badawy, who was working on phase I of the SFB 950 C07 project at the time, photographed the manuscript in Mambrui, Kenya in 2011.

[33] The folios of the manuscripts containing the word-list are divided into two columns. One column contains Arabic words obtained from the *Hamziyya* vocabulary and the other one contains their Swahili equivalents. The *matn* and *tarjama* verses do not appear in the manuscript.

All of the above-mentioned bilingual manuscripts (i–iv) are written in Arabic script.

In order to provide a broader picture and examples of such textual and language variations, I have chosen three manuscripts – L, D and M – which I shall elaborate on in this paper. Meanwhile, to understand how and why the Swahili wrote their texts in Arabic and Swahili, we need to briefly examine the emergence of *Ṣūfī* traditions on the East African coast and try to show why such texts were highly regarded in Swahililand.

2.2. The emergence of Ṣūfī traditions on the East African coast

The mutual contact between Arabs, Persians, Asians and Swahili via the Indian Ocean trade routes from Somalia to Madagascar lasted over a millennium and has influenced the lives of the Swahili people in many ways, especially in terms of their religious culture.[34] *Ṣūfī* scholars from Hadhramawt established a cultural and religious network between the Arabian Peninsula, Asia and the East African coast as early as the fifteenth century. A number of Arab traders, and specifically the Banī ʿAlawy who adhere to the Al-Alawiyya order, came to settle in East Africa. They were largely involved in the spread of Islam, establishing mosques and Islamic schools wherever they settled in the region.[35] Reading, writing and learning the basics of the Arabic language took place for centuries in these institutions.[36]

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the religious elites led by *sāda* (sing. *sayyid*), the descendants of the Prophet, and *šuyūḫ*, 'elders', had a great impact on the development of religious *qaṣīda* texts. They highly revered some canonical Islamic poetical texts in Swahili, including the *Burda, Hamziyya, Banāt Suʿād and Tabāraka,* among others.[37] The poetic texts are concerned with seeking *baraka* ('blessings'), *shufaa* ('healing powers') and *msamaha* ('God's pardon') by eulogising the Prophet of Islam.[38]

Chanting *kasida* plays a central role in the lives of certain Swahili Sufi *tarīqa* ('order') adherents in East Africa, such as the Banī ʿAlawiyya. The *Hamziyya*, for instance, is chanted in its Arabic form as well as in its Swahili version by the *Mabingwa wa Pate* ('the masters of Pate')[39] on a number of occasions, such as on visiting the grave of Ḥabīb Ṣāleḥ (1844–1935 CE),[40] the *mawlid* celebration in the Lamu archipelago marking the birth of the Prophet, and sometimes during the delivery of a baby[41] and marriage ceremonies.[42] The *Burda* and *Hamziyya* odes are also recited (in Arabic) prior to the *darsa* (pl. *durūs*, 'lecture') on Qurʾān *tafsīr* 'exegesis' during the month of Ramadan, in the Riyadha Mosque in Lamu and in the Masjid Anisa in Mombasa, Kenya.

Apart from its chanting in a ceremonial context, the *Hamziyya* is also used in academic circles: it is recited and taught at the *Halqa* ('educational forums') in mosques and during lessons at Islamic higher institutions of learning, where the subject of Arabic literature is offered in the curriculum.[43] The teachers present the *Hamziyya* text in Arabic and briefly explain its Arabic words in modern Swahili.

Ṣūfī scholars from Hadhramawt contributed to the development of Islamic scholarship, oral tradition and the production of manuscripts in East Africa. Some of them wrote Swahili in Arabic script and translated a number of Islamic poetic canonical texts into Swahili. These scholars wanted the texts to be understood by those who were unfamiliar with the Arabic language, but could read the Arabic script. *Kasida* are still sung and chanted at many Swahili gatherings today.

3. The manuscripts

3.1. The description of the Hamziyya *manuscripts*

This section briefly outlines the physical descriptions and the texts of the three QH manuscripts in their respective categories: type A: manuscript L; type B: manuscript D; and type C: manuscript M.

Type A: manuscript L

Manuscript L contains 82 folios, is 230 mm by 170 mm in size and is bound in a red cardboard jacket. Its colophon date is 14 *Ḏū-al-ḥijja* 1207 AH / 23 July 1793 CE[44] and the copyist was ʿUthmān bin *al-Qāḍī* bin Mbwarahaji bin

[34] Knappert 1979, Abdulaziz 1995 and 1996, Bang 2013.

[35] Trimingham 1964.

[36] Bakari and Yahya 1995.

[37] Knappert 1968 and 1971.

[38] Trimingham 1964.

[39] Olali 2012.

[40] Ḥabīb Ṣāleḥ Jamal al-Layl was the founder of the Riyadha Mosque College, Lamu, Kenya.

[41] Personal communication with Mwalimu Dini, Pate, 2015.

[42] Trimingham 1964, Olali 2012.

[43] Personal communication with Sheikh Bahsan (Mombasa, 2014) and Sheikh Hadi (Lamu, 2015).

[44] 1793 CE, the date of manuscript L, is disputed by some scholars of Swahili; Hichens (1936, 5) confirmed the date, but Knappert (1968, 55) is of the opinion that the manuscript is fifty years younger.

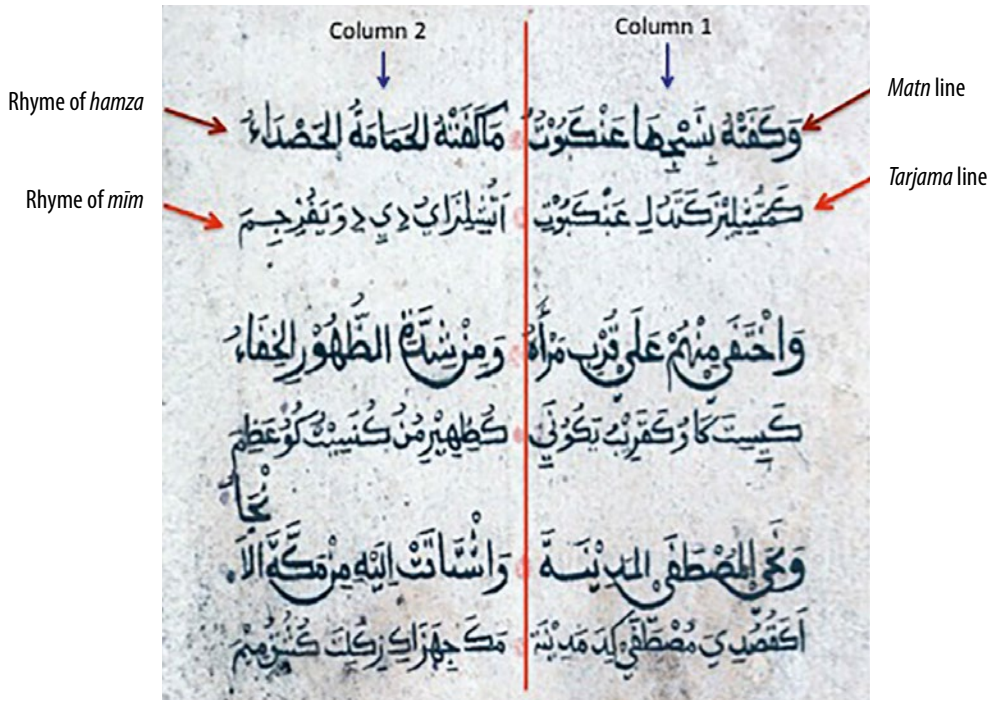

Fig. 1: London, SOAS Library, shelf mark 53823 (manuscript L), fol. 25.

al-Marḥūm al-Fazī.[45] The manuscript contains Hichens' and Hinawy's notes (in English), which introduce the ode (fols 1–14), the *matn* (in Arabic, fols 15–80) and ʿAydarūs's *tarjama* (in Swahili, fols 15–80) plus paratexts; the colophon (in Arabic) (fol. 80) and an endowment statement (in Arabic, fol. 81). The term 'paratext' refers to the threshold or liminal devices and conventions employed in a written work, such as the titles, forewords, notes and epilogues that are used to mediate a book to its readers.[46] Recently, several researchers have redefined the term and widened its scope to include a variety of components, such as orality, films, digital media, glosses, glossaries and even subscriptions.[47] In this paper, the term 'paratexts' will be used for titles, opening statements, *waqfiyya* ('endowment') and *tamalluk* ('ownership') statements, glosses and colophons.

The arrangement of the poetic lines is in a specific form. As shown in figure 1, the *matn* text is interlinearised with the *tarjama*, whereby both texts run throughout the poem in an alternating stanza-wise fashion. The poetic lines are narrowly spaced and each *matn* stanza is strategically placed before the Swahili one. Moreover, the characters of the *matn* are larger and bolder compared to the *tarjama's* counterparts. The *matn* contains two hemistichs per stanza and so does the *tarjama*. Each hemistich has been put in its 'own' column in the two poems. These columns are regarded as 'pseudo-columns', however (Daub 2016), because the reader is not required to read each column independently, unlike modern books or newspapers that contain texts in double columns. In other words, one should read the first hemistich in the right-hand column and then read the second hemistich in the next one (i.e. the left-hand column) (Fig. 1). This procedure should then be repeated for each subsequent stanza.

The QH's bilingual interlinear layout seems to be the original form as scribed by ʿAydarūs himself. The evidence we have so far to back up this argument is based on the layout arrangement of manuscript L, which, as mentioned earlier, is the earliest known preserved bilingual *Hamziyya* manuscript in Swahili manuscript culture. The Swahili poetic rendition itself was probably done considerably earlier, however, namely in 1749 CE.[48]

Apart from the layout system of the QH's poetic lines, there are a number of components that ought to be considered if we want to get a clear picture of how a QH bilingual manuscript is organised. The order of these components is as follows:

[45] The words in italics are titles and are given here as they are scribed in the manuscript's colophon itself. *Al-Qāḍī* means 'the Muslim judge' and *al-Marḥūm* means 'the deceased one (and may he be blessed)'

[46] Genette 1987, xviii.

[47] Watson 2010, Ciotti and Lin 2016, vii.

[48] Hichens 1939, 19. Knappert, 1968, 55 has even argued that the date of translation was 1652.

1) the title, *Hamziyya*,
2) *basmallah*, the Islamic opening formula,[49]
3) eight prologue verses composed by ʿAydarūs,
5) a bilingual interlinear section, namely the *matn* interlinearised with the *tarjama* in a stanza-wise fashion,
6) an epilogue of seventeen verses composed by ʿAydarūs' and a copyist's colophon.

Looking at the organisation of the components of the old QH manuscripts, such as L, it is very likely that, at its initial stage, the layout of *matn* and *tarjama* verses was sandwiched between the prologue and epilogue verses. Otherwise, what could have been the reason for ʿAydarūs to invent his own new prologue and epilogue verses?

The rhyming schemes of the two poems in manuscript L are *ab* for the *matn* and *xy* for the *tarjama*, whereas *b* and *y* are constant throughout the poems (Fig. 1). As the figure shows, *b* ends with *hamza*, *a* 'glottal stop' symbol, and *y* ends with the rhyming syllable *ma*.

In Arabic prosodic terms, the *matn* is usually known by its rhyme scheme. In this case, it has been given the title of *Hamziyya* due to the fact that it is the character for *hamza*. We may also wish to call the Swahili version 'mimmiya' [50]after the final rhyming character *mīm*. However, in Swahili prosodic terms, the usage of a mid-rhyme or a master rhyme (*kina cha bahari*) throughout the poem may not determine the name of a poem; a *utenzi* ('epic poem') may have a master rhyme of *ma*, for instance, but it will always be called a *utenzi* and not a *mimmiya*.

In the two testimonies in question (i.e. manuscripts D and M; see section 3.2. and 3.3), new forms of texts emerge. Various new textual layout arrangements exist, such as creating more space between the poetic lines to allow annotations to be seen when compared to the layout form of manuscript L.

Type B: manuscript D

Manuscript D is made of 148 folios and measures 220 mm by 170 mm. The folios are unbound and the manuscript does not have a cover. Currently, its loose leaves are kept in a brown paper envelope at the University of Dar es Salaam. As the colophon page is missing, we have no information on the copyist or scribe or on the date of its production. As a result, I can only guess that it is a twentieth-century work (probably from the 1930s) as the manuscript's leaves do not seem to be very old. The manuscript was originally obtained from ʿAfuā binti Ḥassanī, Siyu, in 1966 CE.[51] The contents of the codex include the *Taẖmīs al-Hamziyya* by al-Būṣīrī and the *tarjama* verses by ʿAydarūs in Swahili. The term *taẖmīs* in Arabic prosody means 'to make five', i.e. expand a well-known *qaṣīda* by adding three *taẖmīs* lines/hemistichs prior to the original two hemistichs (of a *matn*) to make a five-line poem.[52] In Arabic prosody, a different author usually composes the *taẖmīs* lines.[53] In this article, the new additional stanzas shall be referred to as the three *taẖmīs* lines and the term *'taẖmīs* poem' will generally be used to refer to the *Taẖmīs al-Hamziyya* that al-Būṣīrī authored. Section 3.2 contains further details of the *taẖmīs* layout system and illustrates it. I have not used the Swahili term *takhmisa* or *Utano* here because, firstly, the *taẖmīs al-Hamziyya* poem I am referring to (in manuscript D) is in Arabic and it is technically known by this name in Arabic prosody. Secondly, the Swahili word *takhmisa* means any poem that contains five lines, which can sometimes adopt middle and end rhymes. Thirdly, a Swahili *takhmisa* poem is usually composed by one person, unlike an Arabic one.[54]

Manuscript D contains three types of texts, which were composed by different authors at different times:

i) the three *taẖmīs* (Arabic) lines, which were composed by ʿAbd al-Bāqī bin Sulaymān al-Fārūqī (d. 1861),
ii) the *matn* (Arabic) lines by al-Būṣīrī (d. 1294), and
iii) the *tarjama* (Swahili) lines added by ʿAydarūs (in 1749 CE).

In the codex, the *taẖmīs* text appears up to verse 49. From verse 50 up to the end of it (verse 456), only the *matn* and its *tarjama* have been copied. The copyist did not complete the *taẖmīs* lines for some reason.

Type C: manuscript M

Manuscript M contains 79 folios and is 270 mm by 175 mm in size. It is bound in a cardboard material, which is wrapped in a brown leather jacket. The colophon on fol. 79 dates the

[49] The Islamic opening formula states: 'In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate'.

[50] Hichens 1936, Olali 2012.

[51] Allen 1970, 32.

[52] Abdulaziz 1979, 56–57.

[53] Time of composition and place of the two combined poems may differ. The composer of *taẖmīs* lines may be a person of a current generation or may be located in another geographical region or nation.

[54] King'ei and Kemoli 2001, 20.

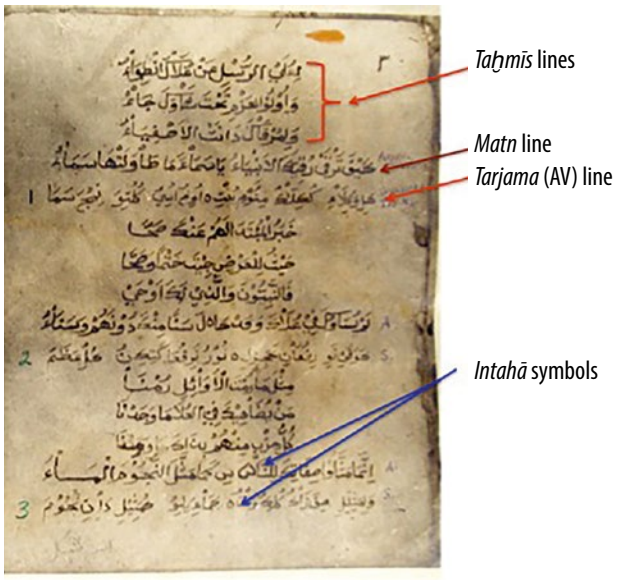

Fig. 2: University of Dar es Salaam, Dr. Chagula Library (manuscript D), fol. 3.

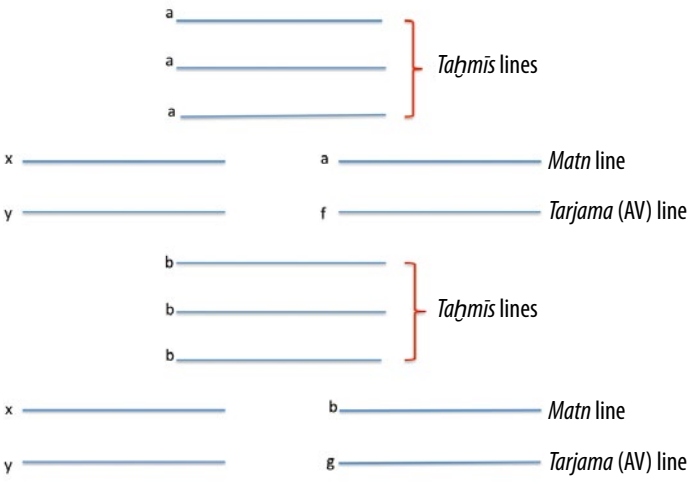

Fig. 3: An illustration of a *taḫmīs* model showing the combination of texts and rhyme schemes in manuscript D.

manuscript to 7 *Šaḥr al-Qaʿad*, 1311 AH / 14 May 1894 CE and the name of the copyist is Abī Bakr bin *Marhūm Sulṭān* Aḥmad. The custodian was Sayyid Ahmad Badawy al-Hussainy, Mombasa. After Sayyid Ahmad's death, the manuscript was removed from his residence. I tried to locate it during my fieldwork in 2015, but I was unable to trace it. The contents are the *matn* (in Arabic) plus ample annotations (roughly 30% in Arabic and 70% in Swahili). Manuscript M contains one folio that is not annotated (fol. 7), of which an annotated one also exists, and one folio (fol. 6) that has only been lightly annotated, which also exists as a more heavily annotated version. These doublets show that there were at least two separate manuscripts, some folios from one of them being inserted into the codex.

3.2. Analysis of manuscript D: the taḫmīs *and* tarjama *lines*

In Arabic prosody, the addition of extra lines in a given poem is known as *tasmīt* or *musammat*, literally defined as 'the missing link'. Technically speaking, the term *tasmīt* implies an insertion of new hemistichs: two or more into the already well-known qaṣīda, which rhyme with it.[55] Manuscript D contains the taḫmīs poem (with a five-hemistich structure), the last line of which is interlinearised with ʿAydarūs's *tarjama* (Fig. 2).

A close examination of manuscript D reveals a complex combination of the textual layout system, i.e. (i) the *taḫmīs* lines are positioned prior to the *matn* lines, (ii) the *matn* line is positioned prior to the *tarjama* line[56] and (iii) the *tarjama* line follows (Fig. 2). The total number of lines for the three combined texts is therefore seven (three for the *taḫmīs*, two for the *matn* and two for the *tarjama*).

When the *taḫmīs* lines are united with the *matn* lines, a new rhyming scheme is created: the final syllables of the three lines (a or b) rhyme with the final syllable of the *matn's* first hemistich (a or b).

As Fig. 3 shows, the rhyming scheme of the five lines is *aaaaxfy, bbbbxgy, ccccxhy* and so on, whereas the rhyming scheme of the three additional *taḫmīs* lines is *aaa*, the *matn's* is *ax* and that of the *tarjama* is *fy*. Fig. 3 also shows that the alternating rhymes (*x* and *y*) remain constant throughout the poem, while the rhyme of the *taḫmīs* lines keeps on changing due to the last syllables of the first hemistich of the *matn*. Apart from the new rhyming scheme, the layout of the poetic lines has also been redesigned. The first stanza of the *taḫmīs* poem can be illustrated as follows:

Li-ʿulā al-rusuli ʿan ʿulāka anṭiwāu (i)
Wa-ūlū al-ʿazmi taḥta šāʾwika jāʾu (ii)
Wa-li-murqāka dānati al-aṣfiyāʾu (iii)
Kaifa tarqā ruqiyyaka al-anbiyāu (iv) *yasamāʾ mā ṭāwalatʾhā samāu* (v)
Hali wakwelaye kukwelako mitume yonte (vi) *Uwingu usiyo kulotewa ni moja sama* (vii)

[55] Vierke 2009, 52.

[56] The term 'double columns' can also be used instead of bi-colons, see Daub 2016, 46.

i) The high-ranked angels have congregated for you in the high heavens [, O Muḥammad!]
ii) And the arch-prophets came along [too and are] just beneath them
iii) And your utmost position [above them all] has been reserved
iv) How can [the other] prophets reach your highness, [O Muḥammad!],
v) [by your ascension] to heaven, with which no one vies?[57]

Moreover, the *taḫmīs* lines are positioned in a single column in the middle of the folio, while the *matn* and *tarjama* lines maintain their two-columnar system (see Fig. 3). All the poetic lines are narrowly spaced. An *intahā* symbol (۝) is positioned in the middle of the *matn* and *tarjama* lines (Figs 2 and 5).

It can be argued here that the layout arrangement of a manuscript may reflect its functions. Manuscript D was probably used as a chanting and reading aid on account of its unique textual organisation. The layout of its single and bi-colon system helps the reader or memoriser of the text to follow every line's starting and end points due to the well-organised rhyme schemes and arrangements of the columns. In other words, the trained reader can easily identify the *taḫmīs*, *matn* and *tarjama* line at a glance.

3.3. Analysis of manuscript M: the matn *and its paratexts*

Manuscript M is a good example of a bilingual *Hamziyya* manuscript in Arabic and Swahili produced in a different form in Swahililand. The manuscript contains the *matn* as well as paratexts, but does not have a *tarjama* and thus differs from manuscript L's layout in some other bilingual interlinear manuscripts.

Looking closely at manuscript M, it becomes apparent that several different types of paratexts exist: the title, *Al-Hamziyya* (in Arabic), the *tamalluk* ('ownership' statement, in Arabic), the *waqfiyya* ('endowment' statement, in Arabic), annotations (in Arabic and Swahili) and the colophon (in Arabic). The *tamalluk* statement simply mentions the name of the owner of the manuscript along with the date and place of its acquisition, as in *Hāḏā al-kitāb milk li-faqīr Allāhi taʿālā*, 'This book is owned by a poor servant of God, 'The Most High', Muḥammad bin *sayyid* Abdallāh bin *sayyid*

Caesura marks

Fig. 4: Mombasa, private collection of Sayyid Ahmad Badawy b. Muhammad al-Hussainy's family and Bi Tuma Shee (manuscript M), fol. 22.

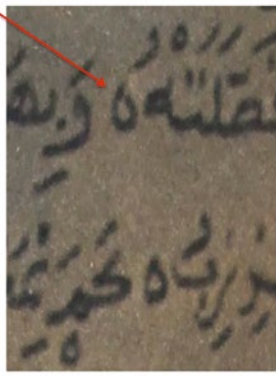

Fig. 5: University of Dar es Salaam, Dr. Chagula Library (manuscript D), fol. 14.

Ḥasan al-Bāʿlawī al-Masalī.[58] I will not provide any more details of the paratexts in manuscript M here, but shall restrict myself mainly to explaining the forms of the textual layout features of the *matn* and its glosses.

Manuscript M contains *matn* stanzas, which are widely spaced (approximately 3.5 cm apart) and contain ample annotations in Arabic and Swahili. The *matn* is written in *nasḫ* 'vocalised' style and in bold black ink. Its characters are bigger, while the characters of the annotations are smaller and thinner. A small, flowerlike figure with an inverted comma in red ink on top of it has been inserted after each hemistich to mark the caesura of each stanza (Fig. 4).

Manuscript M's Swahili annotations are more numerous than the Arabic ones (especially from fols 8 to 65) and their proportion is roughly 25 to 75 per cent of the Arabic notes. The layout of the annotations is a haphazard one: they are scribed horizontally, marginally and diagonally and in the blank spaces beside the *matn* lines in particular folios. This type of glossing is found in Arabic-Islamic and other manuscript cultures, such as the Hausa and the Malay ones.[59] I cannot tell whether the same person who wrote the *matn* also wrote the annotations; this is subject to further scientific verification and may require ink analysis and computer software to study the types of handwriting involved, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

[57] Unless otherwise stated, the translation is provided by the researcher.

[58] Wādī Masīla is probably a village in Yemen. The *tamalluk* is in Arabic; the date is not provided, but it may have been written around 1894 as the handwriting of the *tamalluk* resembles the one used for the annotations.

[59] Gacek 2009.

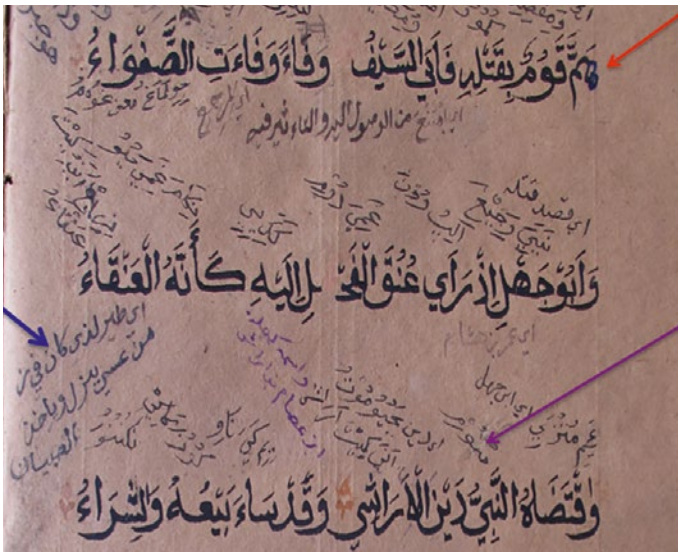

Fig. 6: Mombasa, private collection of Sayyid Ahmad Badawy b. Muhammad al-Hussainy's family and Bi Tuma Shee (manuscript M), fol. 19.

The annotations in Arabic and Swahili give the meaning of selected words from the *matn* verbatim. For instance, the Arabic words of the *matn* that are annotated in Swahili are Ar. *lam yusāūka* = Sw. *Hawalingani nawe* 'they are not equal to you' (fol. 1), *ḥamamah* = *njiwa* 'dove' (fol. 12), and *wa dumuʿī* = *matozi* 'tears'; standard Sw. = *machozi* (fol. 42). The Swahili words are usually in *nasḫ* vocalised script. The Arabic words of the *matn* that are annotated in Arabic can be exemplified as follows: *lam yusāūka* = *ay fī sharafuk* 'that means in your noble status' (fol. 1), *fa atat-hu* = *ay jāt ilayhi* 'that means she came to him' (fol. 6) and *warqāu* = *ay abyaḍ launūhu wa aswad* 'that means it [the dove] had black and white spots' (fol. 12). The Arabic annotations are in *riqaʿ* script. The main text is usually written first. The scribe purposely leaves wide spaces between the lines for the annotations to be filled at a later stage by either a student or a teacher. The *riqaʿ* script gives us a clue that the scribe is either an advanced student in Islamic studies or a teacher. In East Africa, even today, this type of handwriting is usually taught to advanced learners.

Manuscript M was probably used for teaching and learning as it contains widely spaced stanzas and a large number of annotations that explain the difficult Arabic words in simple Swahili (see Fig. 4). It is hard to say whether the manuscript was used by a scholar to decipher the Arabic text as preparation for giving a lecture (*darsa*) in a mosque or whether a student used it to insert his lecturer's remarks during lessons. All in all, the manuscript indicates that it was used for academic activity in Swahililand.

4. Conclusion

This article provides some background information about the emergence of Islamic scholarship and Swahili manuscript tradition with specific reference to *Qaṣīda Hamziyya* manuscripts. One important feature of these manuscripts is their divergent visual organisation. My paper also shows that a single text in Swahili society can be written in various ways at a given time and place. For example, manuscript M (from Mombasa) and manuscript D (from Siyu, now preserved at UDSM, Dar es Salaam), which were written in the nineteenth and twentieth century respectively, have divergent textual features. Manuscript L (from Pate, now preserved at SOAS, London) was written in the eighteenth century and contains the *matn* (in Arabic) and *tarjama* (in Swahili), while manuscript D contains the *taḫmīs* (in Arabic) and the *tarjama* (in Swahili). Both texts are narrowly spaced. Manuscript M contains the *matn* (in Arabic) and annotations (in Arabic and Swahili). Manuscript L (which is the oldest one of them all) has its own kind of textual layout: it contains a prologue (in Swahili), the *matn* (in Arabic), the *tarjama* (in Swahili) and an epilogue (in Swahili). Manuscripts L and D indicate that they were probably used as an aid for chanting and private reading. This is because their textual layout employs the double-column system and is narrowly spaced, features that show the manuscripts were mainly used for the preparation of oral performances. Manuscript M was probably used for teaching and learning purposes because it contains the *matn*, which is widely spaced to allow plenty of annotations to be made, which are arranged haphazardly between the poetical stanzas and along the margins of the main text.

5. APPENDIX: ARABIC-LATIN TRANSLITERATION TABLE

Arabic symbol	Transliteration	Arabic symbol	Transliteration
ا	a	ض	ḍ (dhw)
ب	b	ط	ṭ
ت	t	ظ	ẓ (dh)
ث	th	ع	ʿ
ج	j	غ	gh
ح	ḥ	ف	f
خ	ḫ (kh)	ك	k
د	d	ق	q
ذ	dh	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
س	s	و	w
ش	š (sh)	ه	h
ص	ṣ (sw)	ي	y

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