NARRATION IN SWAHILI NARRATIVE POETRY:

AN ANALYSIS OF *UTENZI WA RASI 'LGHULI*

BY

TIMOTHY I. M. AREGE

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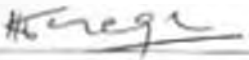
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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not yet been presented for a degree in any other university.

_____   1 . 11 . 2012
TIMOTHY I. M. AREGE   **DATE**

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors.

_____   12 . 11 . 2012
DR. KINEENE WA MUTISO   **DATE**

_____   12 . 11 . 2012
DR. RAYYA TIMAMMY   **DATE**

DEDICATION

For my late father who introduced me to the world of books, more so literature; my mother who followed my studies from the onset; and Ema who taught me the art of patience.

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I thank my family in a very special way for their support throughout the period of my studies.

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ABSTRACT

This research discusses, using narrative theory, narrative aspects in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, a Swahili classical poem composed by Mgeni bin Faqihi. The study focuses on three narrative aspects; narrative levels and voices, narrative time, and characterization.

Chapter one of this study is the background. In this chapter, information on the dating and composition of this poem is stated. It has been stated that the concern of this study is to analyse the basic narrative constituents of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*. The three objectives – identifying the various narrative strategies, the role played by the narrative strategies in structuring this poem as well as the impact of the poetic nature of this text on the narrative strategies employed – are stated. The three hypotheses that guide this research – that *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* employs key narrative strategies associated with prose, that the narrative strategies employed in the poem are an important structural component, and that the poetic nature of the text impacts on the narrative strategies used – are outlined. In this section we have also shown that research on this poem has not been carried out nor have literary studies been preoccupied with research in the field of narration at both the level of topic and methodology. The chapter also places the scope – an analysis of narrative aspects in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* – and specifies that narrative time, narrative levels and voices, and characterization are the only narrative aspects to be analysed using narrative theory. Narrative theory or narratology is concerned with how narratives are structured. The tenets of narrative theory relevant to this study have been discussed. This study uses purposive sampling in selecting the text of analysis. Although it is mainly a

library based research, key respondents have been interviewed. In this chapter, the relevant literature has also been reviewed.

Chapter two deals with the thematic and formal aspects in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. The themes of religion, revenge, deceit, brutality, betrayal, oppression and intolerance, as well as war have been discussed. These themes are interlinked. Regarding the formal aspects, this study addresses the textual structure of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, the prosodic conventions employed and why they are used, language use, narrative voice, characters, setting, and oral tendencies. This analysis serves to provide an overview of what the poem is by discussing its themes and form.

Chapter three discusses narrative time in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. The three aspects of time, that is: order, duration and frequency, are discussed. Under order, types of anachronies as well as their reach and extent are analyzed. Under duration, ellipsis, summary and scene are discussed. With regard to frequency, the use of singulative narration, repetitive narration and iterative narration in the text have been discussed.

The fourth chapter is concerned with narrative levels and voices. Here, the temporal relations between story and text are analyzed. Ulterior narration, anterior narration, simultaneous narration and intercalated narration are the subject of analysis. Narrative levels such as first, second and third degree narratives as well as their functions are discussed. This chapter also tackles metalepsis or narrative transitions under narrative levels. On narrative voices, the narrating voices *in Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* are discussed.

The level of narrator perceptibility and the functions of the narrator are also addressed. Finally, the chapter deals with types of narratees in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

In chapter five, characterization in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is the subject of analysis. Modes of character presentation and types of character action are discussed. Indicators of character traits are also a part of this chapter.

Finally, chapter six is the conclusion of the study. The research concludes that the ordering of events in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is not linear, that there is variance in narrative rhythm, and that the poem widely employs narrative repetition. It also posits that there are several narrative levels and voices in the poem with several narrating agents. On characterization, the conclusion is that the poem exhibits several textual indicators and that ideological stand points influence a character trait ascribed to a figure.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Anachrony	-	A discordance between the order of occurrence of events and the order of their recounting.
Analepsis	-	An aspect of plot where an event is described after it has taken place. Also commonly referred to as flashback.
Characterization	-	A set of techniques whose result is the creation of character.
Diegesis	-	A narrative mode where events in a story are described by the narrator.
Direct definition	-	A mode of openly making characters' traits known through directly describing them by use of adjectives.
Duration	-	The relationship between the amount of time dedicated to a narrative verses that dedicated to a story

Embedded narrative — A narrative that is grafted into another narrative.

Extent — The story time covered by an anachrony.

Extradiegetic — That which is not part of any diegesis.

Hypodiegetic — Part of or concerning a diegesis that is embedded in another one, especially in that of a primary narrative — also referred to as metadiegetic.

Frequency — The relationship between the repetition of events in the story and their happening.

Focalization — The perspective or prism through which a narrative is presented; point of view.

Homodiegetic narrative — A narrative where its narrator is a character in the events told.

Hypodiegetic narrative — A narrative that is embedded within another narrative and in particular within the primary narrative.

Indirect presentation	-	A mode of character trait presentation where a character's trait/quality is not directly mentioned.
Metalepsis	-	The transition from one narrative level to another.
Mimesis	-	A narrative mode where events and conversations in a story are presented directly making the narrator seem to disappear.
Narration	-	The way in which a story is told.
Narrative	-	An account of a sequence of events in a story usually in chronological order.
Narrative duration	-	The amount of time it takes to recount a story.
Narrative level	-	The level at which the narrator is in relation to the story that is being recounted. Also referred to as diegetic level.
Narrative mode	-	The perspective from which a narrative is told.

These are techniques the author uses to convey the plot.

Narrative poetry	-	A poem whose main feature in narrating a story
Narrative voice	-	The agent who recounts the story; the narrating voice.
Narratee	-	The one who the story is recounted to.
Narrator	-	The person/voice in a narrative that conveys the story.
Order	-	The relationship between story chronology and narrative chronology.
Plot	-	The arrangement of events in a narrative.
Point of view	-	Point of perception from where events or situations are presented; focalization.
Parallelism	-	Repetition of similar syntactic patterns in adjacent sentences, clauses or phrases.

Primary narrative	-	A narrative that within it is an embedment of one or several narratives.
Prolepsis	-	An aspect of plot where an event is described as taking place before it actually takes place — commonly known as flash forward.
Reach	-	The distance in time between the story time covered by an anachrony and the 'present' moment that gives way for an anachrony.
Story	-	Narrated events and characters in abstraction from the text.
Story order	-	Manner in which events in the story are arranged.
Story time	-	The period of time within which narration takes place.
Temporal ordering	-	The arrangement of events in time sequence.

CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Swahili poetry has a long history compared to other Swahili literary genres. Many Swahili poets have emerged over the years and different types of Swahili poetry have been realized over time. Although over the years Swahili free verse has gained ground, prosodic poetry is still predominant.

At the early stages of Swahili written poetry, poets tended to compose long poems, the *tenzi*[1], rather than the short ones. This can be attributed to the nature of the themes dealt with in these forms as well as the oral narrative mode that pervaded into these compositions. There are also a number of long translated texts from Arabic literature. Many of them were based on religious conquests and/or historical events. In contrast, modern poets prefer writing short poems as opposed to long ones.

Long poems can be classified into various types depending on their subject matter and their structure. In the category of long poems, the most well known and probably most studied are the *utenzi*, a long poem of one hemistich that deals with issues such as historical happenings, legends, as well as carrying didactic and homiletic messages and *kasida* or *kaswida*, usually a long poem dealing with religious themes.

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[1] This is the plural for *utenzi*, a long quatrain verse with a rhyme pattern and constant metric measure.

It is important to note that not all long poems tell stories and that not all stories are presented in verse form. Narrative poetry is just one type of long poems. A narrative poem, such as *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, is a poem whose dominant characteristic is narration.

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli is an epic poem whose composition is said to have started in 1850 and ending in 1855. It is written within the prosodic style of classical Swahili poetry. The poem, like many similar ones, has a formulaic structure of giving praise to God and His Prophets at the beginning before starting the narrative, and ending the poem by again giving thanks to God and seeking His blessings.

This poem by Mgeni bin Faqihi has 4,584 stanzas of one hemistich each with a repeated *bahari* rhyme, *-ri*, at the end of the fourth line of each stanza. The narrative is based on an Arabian story called *Futuhu 'lYamani* about the defeat and capture of Yemen by the Muslim army under Prophet Mohammed in the sixth century. This is an eponymous poem. The main character is nicknamed Rasi 'lGhuli *(Head of Snake)*. He is the leader of the 'infidels'. Rasi 'lGhuli's real name is Mukhariki bin Shahabu. Rasi 'lGhuli is a derogatory name given to him.

The Arabian story, *Futuhu 'lYamani*, was known and popular in the East African coast. However, most Swahilis could not understand it as it was in Arabic. Aware of this limitation, Mgeni bin Faqihi sought to retell it in the Swahili language so that most

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A repeated sound at the end of the last line of every stanza in the *utenzi* composition

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people could access it. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* is actually not a translation of *Futuhu 'l'amani* but a retelling of the same story.

According to Leo Van Kessel (1979:vii), up to the 1970s, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* was being recited or read out during functions such as weddings and burials most likely because of its rich religious sub-text. He observes:

> Huko Bagamoyo wako hado wazee wengi wanaojua utenzi huu, hata wengine wao wanaweza kusema sehemu sehemu kimoyomoyo. Iko desturi ya kukusanyika siku ya tatu ya matanga ili kusikiliza uimbaji wa *Utenzi wa Rasi IGhuli*. Mwalimu aliye pia malenga hualikwa kuwaimbia jamaa. Pengine anaacha akiwataka watu wamtupie senti ndogo ndogo ili aendelee. Hawezi kumaliza muda wa jioni moja kwa sababu ya urefu wa utenzi. Huhitajiwa walau jioni tatu, nne.
>
> [In Bagamoyo there are still many old men who know this poem. Some of them can recite it off head. They have a habit of meeting on the third day after burial to listen to the recitation of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*. A teacher, who is also a poet of repute, is invited to recite it before an audience. He stops occasionally asking the audience to throw out to him some coins before continuing. He can not finish reciting it in a single evening because of its length. It takes three to four evenings.]

This, however, does not just show the importance of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* among the Swahili but rather the place and role that *tenzi* in general occupy in their lives.

Mohammed H. Abdulaziz (1968:81) in his brief commentary note in *Swifa ya Nguvumali*, an epic on the ability of the magician called Nguvumali, says that *utenzi* is one of the most popular traditional verse forms. He further says that "the *utenzi* is commonly used for historical and legendary epics, homiletic and didactic poems, as well as for poems of topical interest."

The above observation underlines the importance of the *utenzi* in the Swahili culture and therefore Swahili studies. The present study, however, is not concerned with *tenzi* in general nor all *tenzi* narratives. Its focus is *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* (1855).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although Swahili poetry is one of the most studied forms of Swahili literature, many scholars have mainly concerned themselves with either thematic or language aspects of Swahili poetry. They include William Hichens (1962), Lyndon Harries (1962), Mohamed Abdulaziz (1979), Jan Knappert (1983, 1971, 1979, 1992), Mugyabuso Mulokozi (1975, 1982, 1999), L.E.M.K. Senkoro (1988), Mugyabuso Mulokozi & Tigiti Sengo (1995) and Kyallo W. Wamitila (2001). Despite there being a good number of Swahili narrative poetry texts, the aspect of narration has largely been missing in literary analyses. This is probably so because narration is mainly associated with prose fiction.

Although most scholars have mainly tied narration analyses to prose fiction, this does not give a complete picture of narrative corpus. Narration is one of the dominant modes of presentation of ideas in poetry such that it has become one of the criteria for classifying poems. Poems falling under this category need to be investigated in this light.

This study, therefore, seeks to analyze basic constituents of narration namely; narrative time, characterization as well as narrative levels and voices in narrative poetry and how the poetic nature of the text impacts on them.

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By using *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, this study seeks to show how the understanding of narrative strategies and narrative functions is fundamentally crucial in explication of narrative poetry.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of this study:

i)   To identify the various narrative strategies employed in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*.

ii)   To explicate the role various narrative strategies employed in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* play in the structuring of this narrative.

Iii)   To discuss how the poetic nature of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* impacts on the various narrative strategies used in the poem.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION

Although Swahili poetry has received more attention from scholars than any other literary genre, narration remains an unexplored area. Most critics have concerned themselves with either thematic or language aspects. These include Mugyabuso M. Mulokozi (1975, 1982), Kineene wa Mutiso (1996) and Kyallo W. Wamitila (2001).

However, narration in Swahili poetry has largely remained a *terra incognita*. On one hand, in most cases critics tend to classify their research in poetry into poems written before the 19th century or dealing with issues of the said period and those written after this period. On the other hand, the narration aspect has been mainly associated with prose fiction and not poetry. Even then there is not much that has been done in this area with

regard to narration in other narrative genres. This study will, therefore, fill an apparent lacuna that has to date not been filled and will, as such, make a contribution in the study of Swahili poetry.

Finally, the selected text, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, has not been studied. This is ostensibly because it falls within classical Swahili literature. Most classical Swahili literary texts are characterized by excessive use of archaic linguistic forms as well as excessive Arabization[3] of the language. These act as a barrier to its unlocking and subsequent study. Selection of this text for study will help bring into fore a text that has not received attention from literary critics.

The study proposes to apply narrative theory or narratology which is more often than not used in narrative fictional analysis.

By pursuing this line, the study provides a new impetus to the field of poetic theory as well as methodology. The analysis maps the specifics of narrative structures manifest in poetic narrative.

1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This research analyzes *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* (1855). The nature and function of narrative aspects in the poem has been discussed. Not all narrative aspects are studied as this would make the study too broad. The narrative aspects studied are: narrative levels

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[3] Arabization here refers to the use of Arabic forms (words and expressions) in the text as well as the use of Arabic words with a Kiswahili morphology.

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and voices, narrative time and characterization. Narrative aspects that are not the subject of analysis in this research are: verbal mediation or speech presentation and point of view also referred to as localization. Although our point of focus is *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, we have refered to other literary texts when it is necessary to buttress a view that is seen as crucial in narrative poetry in general.

This study also provides a thematic and formal overview of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. The major themes and formal aspects of the text will be briefly discussed. This will provide a general understanding of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a lot of critical work on Swahili poetry as epitomized by the works of William Hichens (1962), Lyndon Harries (1962), J. W. T. Allen (1971), Mohamed Abdulaziz (1979), Jan Knappert (1983, 1971, 1979, 1992), Mugyabuso Mulokozi (1975, 1982, 1999), F.E.M.K. Senkoro (1988), Mugyabuso Mulokozi & Tigiti Sengo (1995), Kineene wa Mutiso (1996) and Kyallo W. Wamitila (2001). However, there is not much on narration. To the best of our knowledge, there is no scholarly research done on *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. There is actually scanty information with regard to this poem. As already mentioned above, this is most likely due to linguistic barriers associated with excessive use of archaic language as well as excessive Arabization of the language. There is also an apparent lack of interest by scholars in Swahili Islamic literature as well as the length of this poem that would most likely further explain why it has not been studied.

J W T. Allen (1971) has collected six Swahili classical poems which he has translated into English and made some short notes on. These are: *Utenzi wa Mwanakupona, Utenzi wa Ngamia na Paa, Utenzi wa Masahibu, Utenzi wa Mikidadi na Mayasa, Utendi wa Ayubu* and *Utendi wa Kiyama*. Although these translations and notes may not be of relevance to this research, there is a part on Swahili verse tradition which will be of value. In this section, Allen observes that there are very few manuscripts, that now exist, that can be confidently dated before 1800, arguing that many of the Swahili poems available are variants of earlier compositions. One of the explanations he gives is the likelihood of the scribe making changes to the script or even adding material on to it. He points out that *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is one such example.

J.W.T. Allen (1971:7) advices people from outside the Swahili culture who intend to study Swahili poetry thus:

> Even if first-class manuscripts exist, the spoken word should not be disregarded. No doubt the existence of expert amateur and professional reciters has done much to preserve the accuracy of the text.

Allen's observation shows that there is indeed a strong presence of the oral mode of presentation among the Swahili and, in our view, this would influence the various renditions of a poem, in this case *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. This is an important factor in explaining the reason for there being different renderings of the Swahili classical poems. Our study does not pursue this further while investigating *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* This is because oral traces, although aspects of narration, are features of orality which is not part of the scope of our study.

The introduction in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* (1979) gives the dating of this poem as 1855. It further explains the basis of this story to be an Arabian story *Futuhu 'lYamani* and that the poet, Sheikh Mgeni bin Faqihi, wrote the Kiswahili version so that most people who did not understand Arabic could access it.

The editor of the above mentioned book, Leo Van Kessel, in his introduction, highlights some issues regarding the poem under reference. Apart from giving the date of its composition, Kessel says that this poem is orally transmitted at functions. He also provides a summary of the story and points out that the poet is a great narrator. This observation is important for this study in two ways. One is the recognition that narration takes place in this poem. Secondly, the assertion that the poet is a great narrator gives this study the impetus to find out how narrative techniques have been used in the poem.

The book also has a section dedicated to the summary of the story and another on the characters in the story as well as dialectical variants of standard Swahili sounds. These are important issues for readers as they lessen the burden while reading the text. Although they do not directly deal with narration, these are important aspects that provide important clues into understanding the story more easily.

Jan Knappert (1983) discusses aspects of epic in African literatures, explores the question of the existence of the Swahili epic, and explains the hero and heroic in Swahili poetry and the *utenzi* tradition of Liyongo. These parts are not of much importance to this study.

The chapter on formula in the Swahili epic is certainly of value to us since it is linked to the structure of narrative.

F. E. M. K. Senkoro (1988) devotes the last chapter of his work to *Utenzi wa Ukombozi wa Zanzibar*, a poem narrating the struggle and ultimate liberation of Zanzibar. Senkoro points out that this poem employs the classical structure in its construction. However, the analysis of the poem falls short of expectation as it lacks a serious literary approach. The chapter mainly retells the story in prose form, although the poetic language used in the poem is comprehensible with ease. This, like most Swahili poetry analyses, is a content oriented approach, while our analysis of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* will be form oriented.

Kineene wa Mutiso (1996) analyses *Kasida ya Burudai* using Carl Gustav Jung's archetypal theory. Mutiso discusses the various archetypes in *Kasida ya Burudai*, the origin of the title as well as a translation and commentary of this ode. Although *Kasida ya Burudai* is a classical poem as is *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, the theoretical orientations of the studies are different. Archetypal theory, an offshoot of psychoanalysis, is essentially a thematic theory that focuses on the content level of a text. The theory we propose to use, narrative theory, has a bias towards form. These two texts, however, share a rich Islamic sub-text as well as an oral narrative background. Mutiso's work is, therefore, an important reference for our background chapter on the nature of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

Mugyabuso M. Mulokozi (1999) analyses *Utendi wa Liyongo (The Liyongo Epic)*. This analysis discusses its dating, gives a summary of the story, discusses its themes and

analyses it as 'an African epic'. There is also an explanation of words in the poem that are either from the Kiamu dialect or are not commonly used. In the introduction he observes that this poem by Muhamadi Kijumwa is one of the variants of the story of Liyongo and that Kijumwa got most information regarding this story from the oral literature of the Swahili. This then suggests that there are oral traces in this poem and, by extension, Swahili classical poetry. This gives a clue on orality, an aspect we shall discuss in our background chapter under form in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*

Kyallo W. Wamitila (2001) analyses archetypes in *Utenzi wa Liyongo*. This study explores archetypes from both Jungian and Fryean theoretical models. In this analysis there is a section on the interface of oral and written literature. This small section is relevant to this research since it acknowledges the importance of the oral-written aspects of Swahili poetry texts. Although our main focus is not orality, this part will provide us with insights on the oral mode of narrative transmission, a part of our subject of concern in chapter two.

Mugyabuso M. Mulokozi (2002) discusses the African epic controversy and, like other African oral literature scholars before him, makes a strong case for the existence of an African epic otherwise described as non-existent by early European scholars. This work also explores, among other aspects, the performance context of the Enanga epic, the heroic conception, narrative features and formularity. Whereas most of this work will be important for our study, the section on narrative features and formularity will be particularly key when we shall be analyzing form in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study uses narratology or narrative theory in analyzing narration in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. Narratology is essentially an offshoot of structuralism. Peter Barry (2002:222-223) describes narratology as a branch of structuralism that concerns itself with the study of narrative structures. Barry describes it as:

> ...the study of how narratives make meaning, and what the basic mechanisms and procedures are which are common to all acts of story-telling. Narratology, then, is not the reading and interpretation of individual stories, but the attempt to study the nature of 'story' itself, as a concept and as a cultural practice.

This definition underscores that narratology is concerned with the manner in which stories are told and not the interpretation of stories.

It is important to note that although narratology is a branch of structuralism, it is now actually a theory that stands on its own and is widely used in the study of all forms of narratives; as Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2003:1) puts it, be it the short story, the novel or a narrative poem.

The history of narratology can be traced back to Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, and Vladimir Propp, the Russian structuralist who studied the structure of Russian folk tales. This study will, however, be guided by the views of later narratologists such as Gerrard Genette who in *Narrative Discourse* (1980) focuses, *inter alia*, on the process of narration. His ideas have formed the basis for later theoretical developments. We are using Genette's ideas to a large extent to discuss the aspect of narration in Swahili

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narrative poetry. We are, however, discussing only those tenets that are relevant to this work.

1.7.1 Narrative Time

One narratological aspect that has been widely discussed by narratologists is time in a narrative. The temporal aspect deals with how time is handled in a story. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2003) says that time in narrative fiction can be defined as the relations of chronology between story and text. Genette rightly notes that rarely do narratives keep the order of telling in line with the order of happening. Subsequently some events in a story can be presented in either analeptic or proleptic mode. He refers to them as anachronies. Peter Barry (2000: 235) makes an observation about these two modes of time presentation in a story.

> ...analepsis and prolepsis are often important in establishing and
> foregrounding themes in a story. Typically, writers make strategic use of
> both analepsis and prolepsis in telling a story, for the beginning is seldom
> the best place to begin...

Under time is the reach and extent of the story. With regard to reach, narratology looks at the distance between story time that the anachrony covers and the moment when the story being narrated is interrupted to pave way for the anachrony. On extent, the concern is on the duration of the story time covered by an anachrony.

Another temporal aspect is frequency. Under frequency, the relationship between the number of times an event occurs and the number of times that event is narrated or recounted is analyzed. Narrated events are either singulative, repetitive or iterative.

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One other concern of narratology with regard to time is duration. Here, story time is analyzed in relation to text time. A story can accelerate or decelerate at given points of its narration. These help create the rhythm of the story.

Therefore, with regard to the aspect of time in narration, the focus is on story time vs. text time, story order vs. text order, types of anachronies, reach and extent of anachronies as well as frequency of events and their duration in a narrative.

1.7.2 Narrative Levels and Voices

Another crucial aspect of narrative is narrative levels. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2003) observes that since narration is an event like any other, it can entertain various temporal relations with the events of the story. Gerard Genette (1980) has classified them into four headings namely: ulterior narration, anterior narration, simultaneous narration, and intercalated narration.

Also under narrative levels is the examination of narratives within narratives. This is what has been referred to as narrative embedment. Genette classifies them as extradiegetic and hypodiegetic levels. These narrative levels perform various functions in a narrative. This study, therefore, analyzes the narrative levels manifest in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* and discusses the various functions they perform in this narrative.

Every story has a voice narrating it. A narrative can entertain several narrative agents or voices commonly referred to as narrators. Narrators can be either extradiegetic or

intradiegetic. Further, extradiegetic and intradiegetic narrators can either be homodiegetic or heterodiegetic. Narrators can also be classified as first, second, or third "person" narrators. There is, however, a serious debate on whether it is the narrator doing the narrating that assumes any one of the three 'persons' of narration or the narrated that is presented in a narrative in any one of the three 'persons' mentioned above. It is actually the narrated that is referred to by the various persons in use.

Under narrators, narratology also delves into the degree of perceptibility of the narrators. The degrees range from maximum covertness to minimum overtness. These shall be discussed with reference to their use in *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli*.

Finally, to complete the narrative communication channel, narratology seeks to show the narrative level of the narratee which can either be extradiegetic or intradiegetic. Just like narrators, narratees can also be either covert or overt.

The various concerns of this tenet will guide our analysis of narrative voices in *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli*.

1.7.3 Characterization

Characterization, how character traits are conveyed, is one other concern of narratology. There are two main ways through which a text can indicate character. These are direct definition and indirect presentation. In direct definition, a trait is named by an adjective

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while indirect presentation does not mention the trait but leaves the reader to infer a trait. Susan Keen (2003:64) says:

> Characterization can be achieved directly, through the statements of the narrator (or another character) about the character, or indirectly, as when the reader deduces from actions, speech, or context key traits of the character.

Character traits may, therefore, appear or not appear in a text. The character therefore is a construct that is arrived at by the reader by putting together the various character indicators scattered within the text continuum.

In direct definition, the definition is done by the narrator or a character in the narrative. Judgment is made regarding a character, by either the narrator or character, and explicitly stated using an adjective. In indirect presentation, a character trait is not overtly mentioned but is inferred by the reader of a text analyzing a character's action, speech, external appearance and by deduction through analogy.

1.8 HYPOTHESES

This research is guided by the following hypotheses:

i)   *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* employs key narrative strategies that are mainly associated with prose narratives.

ii) The various narrative strategies used in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* are an important structural component of the poem.

iii) The poetic nature of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* impacts on various narrative strategies employed in this poem.

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1.9 METHODOLOGY

This research is mainly library based. Library research involved reading published materials on narrative theory which has provided the guiding principles of this study. We have also studied *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, the narrative text selected for this study. Relevant stanzas have been quoted for validation purposes in line with the subjects, topics or issues under discussion. Texts dealing with the history, development and classification of Swahili narrative poetry have also been studied and have enabled us discuss the nature of the Swahili narrative poetry sub-genre. Oral interviews have also been used to collect information from respondents.

Purposive sampling was used to select *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* for analysis. This text has been selected because it has not been studied and because of its rich narrative techniques. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* helps us discuss a variety of narrative techniques, as espoused by narrative theory, which are otherwise mainly associated with prose.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 A THEMATIC AND FORMAL OVERVIEW OF
UTENZI WA RASI 'LGHULI

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to highlight thematic and formal aspects of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. This will help bring out characteristics of this epic whose analysis remains scanty. As already mentioned in chapter one, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* remains a *terra incognita* in so far as literary studies are concerned largely because of its excessive Arabization of the language as well as archaic language use.

In this chapter, some of the thematic aspects that will be discussed include oppression, poverty and religious conflicts. The formal aspects that will be focused on in this chapter include structure, style, characterization and setting.

2.2 THEMATIC ASPECTS IN *UTENZI WA RASI 'LGHULI*

The term theme has been used in different ways by various critics/commentators. We shall not undertake to analyze or discuss the various definitions and view points about theme. For purposes of this study, our operational definition will be that by Alex Preminger and T.V.F. Brogan (1993: 1281) who make the following important observation:

In common usage theme refers simply to the subject or topic treated in a discourse or part of it. Thus to speak of the theme of a poem may be only to give a brief answer to the question, "What is the poem about?"

As stated above, our focus is on the subject matter of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. However, it is equally important to consider other views on theme, as we find them complementing the concerns of this section. Alex Preminger and T.V.F. Brogan (ibid:1281) further state:

... in literary studies, theme is also used in a number of more specialized senses, especially as a current element or particular type of recurrent element in literally works and as the doctrinal content of a literary work.

The various viewpoints with regard to theme, that is, the subject treated in a discourse, a recurrent element in a literary work, and the doctrinal context of a literary work gives us a more encompassing approach that will enable us discuss key thematic aspects of this epic.

Some of the themes in this poem are oppression, war, deceit and religion. These themes are diverse but keep interlocking in the text and it is therefore not possible to discuss any one of them in isolation. This is why the observation on theme made in the above quotation is worth considering in the analysis of theme in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, a poem with a rich religious sub-text.

2.2.1 Religion

Religion is an integral part of this epic, just as is the case with many other long Swahili classical poems. The place of religion to the poet/narrator and the narrative can not be over-emphasized in long Swahili classical poetry.

In this poem, the poet/narrator observes the conventional opening formula of all Swahili epics by evoking the name of God. This anchors the business of composing in divine guidance without which the poet may not be able to compose. It opens thus:

1. Awali bisumi 'Ilahi   First praise be to God
   Jina la Mola 'Ilahi   In His name
   Pweke asiye shabihi   He who has no comparison
   Ndiye wahidi Qahari   The only most powerful

This opening stanza shows the poet's commitment to religion by starting with the mention of God's name and some of his characteristics. This is a traditional opening formula of giving praise to God and His prophet, Muhamadi, as well as advising humanity to heed him and pray for the prophet so as to avoid hell fire (stanza 1-13).

Similarly, the end of the poem has a closing formula which takes a religious angle (stanza 4578 4584). The poet concludes by asking God to keep him safe from danger, pain and Satan during his life time. He further asks God to enable him get food and clothing and to keep his enemies at bay. Finally, he asks God to bless his parents.

The abstract and closing coda before and after what we here refer to as the narrative proper[1] show the poet's placing of religion, a theme that dominates in this narrative text.

The theme of religion is the foundation upon which other themes in the narrative proper are built. First, is the religious order led by Muhamadi and his close followers. We first

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[1] Narrative proper is a term here coined to refer to the story which is the subject of the author, also referred to as the initial narrative, as opposed to the pre- initial and post-initial parts which are, strictly speaking, paratexts

come across them in the story praying when a woman (Wafari binti Sadamu) approaches them for help from her oppressor, an infidel who kills her children and tries to force her to abandon Islam. Elsewhere in the poem, this theme is manifest through prayers and intercession by Jibril, the angel, who from time to time comes down to earth from heaven to deliver a message or assistance that enables Muhamadi and his followers to either overcome or take on the enemy.

Most notably, the religious antagonism between the opposing forces (Muslims and the infidels) sets the stage for a protracted war aimed at securing Rasi 1Ghuli's territory and bring it under Islam. Although the trigger of the war between the above mentioned groups is the oppression meted on Wafari, the war of revenge on Rasi 1Ghuli acquires a different image; that of the Islamic conquest in the region occupied by Rasi 1Ghuli.

As the war shapes up, it becomes clear that superstition plays a key role in it. Rasi 1Ghuli relies on idols' prediction of events and guidance. At some point, the idols provide him with key information regarding his enemies informing him that he has been cheated into giving out his son to the enemy who has killed him. The idol, Mola Rabu narrates the following to Rasi 1Ghuli:

1366	Wakishuka farasini	They disembarked their horses
	wakitafuta makani	Looking for a place to rest
	na Jendile kaamini	and Jendile believed
	asijue ya Umari.	not knowing Umari's intentions.

1367	Baada ya kwisha kula	After their meal
	na Jendile akilala	and Jendile having slept
	ali katika ghafula	was in a state of forgetfulness
	kwa naumu kukithiri.	overwhelmed by sleep.

1368	Awenepo ile hali	When he saw his state
	Umari akiajili	Umari hastened
	akima kumqutuli	quickly killing him
	na rasi kaitairi.	cutting off his head.

1369	Amemtupa ndiani	He has dumped him on the way
	napo mahali fulani	at some spot
	akasikia laini	the infidel heard
	kilio akakithiri.	and cried uncontrollably.

Another religious aspect clearly manifest in the epic is religious conversion. After conquering or subduing their opponents, the followers of Muhamadi invite them to join Islam Those who do not heed the call are killed while those who do are assimilated into the prophet's group and they play a key role in subsequent battles against the "non-believers". Muqaliqali and Janadili are among those that convert to Islam and form part of the Prophet's army. Among those who refuse to join Islam and are killed is Mughwari.

2.2.2 Revenge

Whereas religion is the backbone of this poem, the theme of revenge is the driving force of the plot and episodes that form this text. The request for revenge is made by Wafari binti Sadamu to Muhamadi following the oppression and killing of her children by Mukhariqi, otherwise widely referred to as Rasi 'IGhuli in the poem. Wafari actually asks the prophet to avenge the atrocities meted on her family by Rasi 'IGhuli. This request sets in motion the first of a series of revenge missions that play a critical role in sustaining the conflict and motivation of opposing characters, who strive to attack and avenge for the perceived injustices done to them. In her plea for help, Wafari has these words for the prophet:

122	Nimekuja nikwambie	I have come to tell you
	nyayoni nikwangukie	on your feet I fall
	kisasi kunitwalie	avenge on my behalf
	na hilave habusuri	so he may realize his bad deeds

This request for revenge by Wafari is the trigger of the encounter between Muhamadi's followers and those of Rasi 'IGhuli. As Muhamadi and his followers strive to get Rasi 'IGhuli, Rasi 'IGhuli and his followers on the other hand fight back to keep them at bay.

Rasi 'IGhuli, who prefers having his children lead in the war, suffers their loss in the hands of the enemy. Several of his children, as well as a big number of soldiers fighting on his side, are killed by the opponents. In fact, Rasi 'IGhuli loses several battles making his brigade retreat for reinforcement. One of the events that make Rasi 'IGhuli seek to revenge is the death of his son Jendile, who is killed by Umari in his sleep. This is after Ali sends Umari to spy on Rasi 'IGhuli. Umari decides to pose as a poet and goes on to compose in praise of Rasi 'IGhuli. Umari then cheats Rasi 'IGhuli that he will fight to capture or kill Ali. The poem and this promise make Rasi 'IGhuli to easily trust Umari and offer his son Jendile to accompany him on this mission. It is during this mission that Umari seizes the first opportunity that comes his way, when Jendile sleeps, to kill him. On learning of his son's death from his idol, Mola Rabu, Rasi 'IGhuli prepares an army of one thousand brave fighters to go look for Umari and avenge the death of Jendile.

2.2.3 Deceit

Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli has deceit as one of its key elements. Both opposing forces use deceit, although Rasi 'IGhuli's camp does not use it as much as Muhamadi's camp. Those

fighting on the side of Muhamadi are portrayed as masters of trickery and deceit. This is probably meant to show that those against the prophet, and therefore Islam, lack the intelligence of their opponents.

On the prophet's side, Umari tricks a young man, Waqasi, by posing as a poet. His poetic exploits endear him to Waqasi who then proceeds to do a letter introducing him to the king, Rasi 'lGhuli. Umari further tricks Rasi 'lGhuli by pausing as a humble faithful guest. Umari narrates his encounter with the king:

1238	Ndani nilipotokea	When I got in
	sultani hamwendea	I proceeded to the king
	miguuni hangukia	I fell on his feet
	hamnyenyekea kathiri	greatly humbling myself

The point of view adopted here by Umari regarding Rasi 1Ghuli fits well within the context of his encounter with the king. He avoids using Rasi 1Ghuli, a derogatory title and instead uses 'sultan', king, a reference that puts Rasi 1Ghuli in high standing, thus capturing the mood of the time; a situation that made it possible for Umari to deceive the king. Umari gets a befitting treatment from his unsuspecting host. Umari lies to Rasi 1Ghuli that while on his way to seek financial assistance from the King, he met Ali who asked him to go and release Zuberi, who has been detained by Rasi 1Ghuli. He then proposes that the king chooses one brave resilient warrior who can ambush Ali after Umari tricks him into isolation. They then will kill or capture Ali and the war against Rasi 'lGhuli will end (stanza 1295). It is through this lie that Rasi 'lGhuli gets to believe Umari who he gives his son, Jendile, a good brave fighter, to accompany him. Instead, Umari kills him in his sleep. The narrator says:

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1341	Usiku ulipofika	When it became dark
	akilala mushirika	the idolator slept
	asiwe kutukutika	he lay still
	na umari abusuri.	and Umari was watching.

1342	Alipoona dalili	When he saw the sign
	naumu kumthaqili	of sleep troubling him
	Umari akiajili	Umari hastened
	akamtinda kufari.	slaughtering the infidel.

This is one of a series of events where trickery is employed. As already mentioned above, deceit is a common aspect in this poem widely used by Muhamadi's followers. Rasi 'lGhuli's team employs it only once in its quest to overcome the enemy.

2.2.4 Brutality

Differences between antagonists in this poem are settled by shear brute. Peaceful means to attaining goals by various parties are not employed. This would most likely be because of the nature of setting in terms of both the historical period and geographical underpinnings of the text.

The first of these brutal encounters is manifest to us through an analeptic narration by Wafari Binti Sadamu in her submission to Muhamadi on how Mukhariqi bin Shahabu, widely referred to as Rasi 'lGhuli, killed her children on her refusal to abandon Islam and join Mukhariqi's religion. She says:

109	Kwa papo akitamka	He immediately said
	kama yangu hukushika	If you heed not my word
	nitakukusa mashaka	I will cause you pain
	adhabu nyingi kathiri.	A lot of unparalled punishment

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110	Akcma kunijalidi	He stopped addressing me
	akitwaa auladi	snatched my children
	kiwatinda kwa hadidi	slitting their throats with rage
	kama kutinga baqari.	as though slaughtering a cow.

The above excerpt depicts a brutal encounter with Rasi 'lGhuli who is here portrayed as beastly. It is this encounter that prompts Muhamadi to seek more information on Rasi 'lGhuli. Umari who had earlier in his life visited Rasi 'lGhuli's land ascertains his brutality by narrating how he brutally killed his father to ascend to the throne.

261	Akaingia kwa haraka	He quickly entered
	babaye akamfika	closed in on his father
	kalala kajifunika	covered in his sleep
	kwa libasi ya hariri.	with his silk cloth.

262	Akampiga ajili	He quickly hit him
	kwa upanga wa siqali	with a sharp sword
	kumuwanya pande mbili	dividing him into two
	na rasi kaitairi.	cutting off his head.

263	Yule mwana wa haramu	That bastard
	babaye kamdhulumu	defrauded his father
	kwa papo kataqadamu	immediately ascending
	kitini kamsaqiri.	dethroning him.

The extracted narrative event above is a strong pointer to the character of Rasi 'lGhuli a man who has the audacity to brutally take the life of his father for warning and punishing him for his aggressive acts against his neighbours. A group of Arabs had gone to complain to Rasi 'lGhuli's father about his son's aggression against them, precipitating the father's incarceration of him. It is the incarceration that irks him, making him plot to kill him. He executes the murder not only in a brutal manner but also with precision.

In general, anybody that seeks to pursue a different goal from the group's, is confronted with brute force. Force is not only used to suppress enemies, but also close friends and family members who do not tow the expected line.

Perhaps the most surprising brutal killing is that of Dalgha's fiancé, Mora bin Kaabu, by Dalgha herself. Dalgha, on differing with her father, Rasi 1Ghuli, invites him and asks him to elope with her. In the wilderness they take time to rest, and Dalgha informs him of her intention to convert to Islam. Mora is annoyed and opposes this view. Dalgha then soothes him to calmness. Mora proceeds to make merry. He gets drunk and later falls asleep. Dalgha takes it upon herself to slay him with a sword and quickly bury him. The narrator says:

3717	Akilala mpotofu	The wayward one fell asleep
	Dalgha aliposhufu	and when Dalgha saw that
	akashika hima sefu	she quickly took the sword
	kimdhiisha umuri.	terminating his life.
3718	Baada ya kumuua	After killing him
	asiwe na kupumua	leaving him breathless
	Qaburi akifukua	she dug the grave
	kuzika asiusiri.	and quickly buried him.

This shows how even the slightest of provocations can lead to unimagined brutal consequences.

Apart from the above episodes that border on person to person conflict, the same trend can also be observed in situations involving big groups of people. Opposing groups plan on how to take on their enemy with brute force. And indeed the scenes of attack in this

poem are designed with graphic detail of brutal exchanges. One such encounter is captured thus:

2111	Akimwandika kitwani	He hit him on the head
	ikitokea kwapani	piercing through the armpit
	kimwangusha farasini	throwing him off the horse
	ajali kadhihiri.	precipitating death.

2112	Akitoka na wa pili	A second came forth
	Umari akiajili	Umari hastened
	kimuwanya pande mbili	cutting him into two
	na roho kaidamiri.	destroying his soul.

Some scenes are more bloody and brutal. The deaths narrated at times rise to the thousands, all executed in the above fashion.

2.2.5 Betrayal

Although deceit plays a substantial part in the defeat of Rasi 'lGhuli, it is betrayal that makes him and his camp vulnerable before the enemy. It becomes hard to implement his attack plans, as well as carry out his defence as envisaged. These two important strategies are rendered ineffective through betrayal.

One of the key figures on Rasi lGhuli's side, Waziri (Minister), provides crucial information to Muhamadi through his servant Mbaruku. Mbaruku is sent to forewarn Muhamadi on the impending attack by Rasi 1Ghuli's men. Waziri instructs his servant as follows:

3570	Mweleze sana Bashiri	Give the prophet all detail
	kana laini kufari	that the terrible infidel
	kakusanya askari	has paraded the army
	hata vijana saghiri.	as well as small boys.

3571	Wasione wingi wao	Let not their numbers
	wakihofu roho zao	make them fear for their lives
	juhuli kuwana nao	fighting with the simpletons
	wasiwe kutaakhari.	should not scare them.

The above extract gives Muhamadi and his soldiers advance information, important for their preparation to counter their opponents by stating what the preparations are, and who are to take part in the battle. Such advance knowledge is a big morale booster to the team. Secondly, there is encouragement put forth by Waziri, who is an insider in Rasi 'lGhuli's troops, as simpletons, who should not scare them, despite their numbers being superior to those of Muhamadi. Therefore, Muhamadi's troops have an advantage over their opponents courtesy of betrayal by Waziri.

Betrayal is also manifest through the defection of several of Rasi 'lGhuli's children, who opt to convert to Islam against the wish of their father. Their conversion becomes a key element in the war. By joining the enemy forces, the children betray their father, as well as their people, who are up in arms against Muhamadi's invasion. The children of Rasi 'lGhuli, who desert him for the enemy, include Muqaliqali, Arijifu and Dalgha.

2.2.6 Oppression and Intolerance

Oppression in this poem can broadly be categorized as religious and non-religious. Religious oppression is not only distinct, but also widely dealt with in the narrative

As the narrative proper begins, Wafari binti Sadamu shows up before Muhamadi to complain about her oppressor, Rasi 'lGhuli. Rasi 'lGhuli is accused of forcing Wafari to abandon her religion, Islam, for Rasi 'lGhuli's religion. Rasi 'lGhuli dissuades her as follows:

101	Leo nini kufuata	What is this you now follow
	dini yetu ukinta	leaving our religion
	hapa nilipokupata	here that I found you
	takutoa ujauri.	remove your insolence.

102	Moyo wako ukirudi	When your heart is no more
	kwa dini ya Muhamadi	in Muhammed's religion
	takufungua kuyudi	then will I unchain you
	nikutoe na madhari.	and relief you of pain.

The act of Wafari getting chained for religious beliefs is not only oppressive but also evident of religious intolerance from Rasi 'lGhuli. This intolerance leads Rasi 'lGhuli to torture and even kill Wafari's children (stanza 99 & 109). It is Wafari's narration of the religious oppression she suffers that sets the stage for a protracted war between the prophet and his followers on the one hand and Rasi 'lGhuli on the other.

Despite this oppressive act by Rasi 'lGhuli, it is also important to note that Wafari's reference to Rasi 'lGhuli's religion shows no regard for it. In fact, she refers to Rasi 'lGhuli and those who share in his religion as infidels (stanza 78). The same point of view is shared by Muhamadi and his followers throughout the poem. It is this intolerance that is the catalyst for the numerous battles that ensue pitting the two groups with opposed religious stand points.

It is in this regard that all those captured by Muhamadi's men are forced to convert to Islam, if not, get felled by the sword. In one of the battles, Arijifu is captured and asked to convert to Islam, as is the case with many other captives. The Prophet personally asks Arijifu to convert:

2243	Akisema Mungamu	the Prophet said
	akita ewe ghulamu	calling young man
	nakupenda usilimu	I would like you to convert
	utii Mola Jabari.	so you may heed the Lord.

Those who do not co-operate and convert are killed on the spot by way of the sword. This narrative shows the depth of religious intolerance through two lovers, Dalgha and Mora. After their escape, Dalgha asks her fiancé to convert to Islam. This irritates him. He openly tells her that her suggestion is an insult to him and he would have killed her were it not that he loves her. The narrator says:

3703	Akisikia kilabu	When the dog heard this
	Dalgha aliyojibu	what Dalgha answered
	akangiwa na ghadhabu	he got angered
	maneno akiqariri	and said with vigor.

3704	Laula kukupenda	Were it not that I love you
	leo ningalikutinda	today I would cut your throat
	intiati hakupanda	and plant you in this earth
	kana kupanda shairi.	as though planting barley.

Dalgha on realizing that her fiancé will not cooperate takes a low profile and waits for an opportune time to kill him in his sleep. The love between them not withstanding, as well as Mora helping her escape from her father, Rasi 'IGhuli, Dalgha kills her love (stanza 3703 – 3720). It is here depicted that religious intolerance transcends the tolerance for the sake of love. The manner in which the lovers treat one another is cruel and oppressive.

There is also a hint at non-religious oppression in this poem. Through the tricks employed by Muhamadi's warriors, it is clear that travellers are vulnerable during the course of their journey through the wilderness. The fact that one of the tricks used to deceive the enemy (a made up story of an attack in the wilderness and subsequent looting of their property) is readily acceptable by Rasi 'lGhuli and his camp, is an indication that this is a common happening in the world of the narrative.

2.2.7 War

War is one other theme running through the narrative. This theme is also linked and interwoven with the other themes already discussed above.

The two camps with opposing view points are involved in a series of war plans, as well as numerous showdowns, in various battles described in the narrative text. In fact, our argument is that the story is about a religious war fought at a series of battles before Islam, through Muhamadi and his followers, triumphs.

Although the war pits Muhamadi and his men against Rasi 'lGhuli and his men, several techniques and participants are involved.

When Wafari binti Sadamu reports to the Prophet of the pain caused her by Rasi 'lGhuli, the prophet seeks to consult God for intervention. Angel Gabriel is sent from heaven to inform the Prophet that he needs to face Rasi 'lGhuli without fear. Angel Gabriel tells him:

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353	Kiwasili Jiburili	When Gabriel arrived
	akamwambia rasuli	he told the Prophet
	akusalimu Jabali	God greets you
	salamu nyingi kathiri.	many many greetings.

354	Asema Mola Manani	Thus says the Lord
	sifanye hofu moyoni	let not your heart be troubled
	usiingiwe na huzuni	do not be sorrowful
	nawe ndiwe mansuri.	you are the benefactor.

360	Ende kwa huyu kilabu	Go to this dog
	akampe ya sawabu	to tell him that of nobility
	amweleze kila babu	to explain to him everything
	pamwe kumpa hadhari.	as well as caution him.

This then seems to be a declaration that the war to be fought is a holy war. Not only do angel Gabriel and a group of angels come to deliver this important message to the prophet (stanza 352), but it is a signal that it is a holy war fully sanctioned from heaven. Muhamadi then gets a nod to pursue the 'infidel'.

Apart from such appearances by the angel to help guide Muhamadi in the war against Rasi 'lGhuli, we also see the angels take part in physically fighting the enemy in times of impending defeats by the enemy. The narrator says:

2226	Palikuwa zita bora	It was a tough battle
	kwa suvufu na matara	of swords and techniques
	Mola kishusha nusura	God sent down aid
	wakivunda makufari.	who crushed the Infidels.

On the other hand, Rasi 'lGhuli seeks intervention from his god on a number of occasions. He also seeks assistance from other principalities to help beef up his army that is overwhelmed. Rasi 'lGhuli sends his son, Daama, to take a letter to four leaders

(Sakasaki, Sukuki. Thaqifu and Mazini) seeking a reinforcement of troops (stanza 2542-2568).

Some battles in this war are fought by individuals at intervals, some by an individual taking on several enemies and others by groups who take on one another. In cases where an individual takes on the enemy troops one at a time, it is not clear why the rest of the troops take turns with the enemy as they get killed one by one. One can only deduce that this is perhaps so because the war is not just about defeating the enemy, but on who brings down the 'aggressors' and therefore the dependable hero.

2.3 FORMAL ASPECTS IN *UTENZI WA RASI 'LGHULI*

Alex Preminger and T.V.F. Brogan (1993:420) note that the term 'form' is one of the most widely used terminology in literary studies, despite being one of the most ambiguous. This is so because, as is noted in their encyclopedia, it is so variable and inclusive. The encyclopedia actually confirms that it is not easy to pin down what form is as it is used in varied ways in literary studies:

> At one level it can refer to the minutiae of the text, at another to the shapes of the text itself, at a third to the characteristics a text may share with others, at still another level to a transcendental or platonic model from which the text imperfectly derives, and it may have several of these meanings within the work of a single theorist.

The above extract points out what form entails. Three aspects stand out. These are style, structure and tradition of or within a given genre. Simply put, form refers to the way a

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literary work looks or is presented. This, then, refers to the structural and stylistic traits of a work of art

This study will therefore operationalise the above definition in our analysis of the formal aspects of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

2.3.1 Textual Structure

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli, just like many other Swahili long poetic texts, has three distinct parts. G. Miehe *et al*, (2002:39) have classified them as *dibaji* (prologue), central part and *tamati* (epilogue). Whereas we agree with the division of the poem into three parts, we do not agree with the terms used to refer to them. In fact in the strict sense the prologue and epilogue are used to refer to the beginning and end of a story, especially in a dramatic text. Since introductory and concluding parts are not part of the main narrative, which we here call the initial or narrative proper, we subsequently refer to them as pre-initial and post-initial narrative texts respectively.

2.3.1.1 Pre-initial Narrative Text

This is the narrative before the main or initial narrative. It is a conventionalized way of beginning long poems in Swahili poetry. This part contains several diverse aspects and the poets choose what to include here. However, the religious aspect is mandatory. Discussed below are the aspects forming the pre-initial narrative.

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The poet starts the poem by invoking the name of God. This is the case in most Swahili long poems. In the Swahili culture, religion is a way of life and is deeply rooted in all aspects of the people's lives including their literature as is shown below.

1.
Awali Bisumi 'Ilahi	I begin in the name of God
jina la Mola 'Ilahi	the name of God the benefactor
Pweke asiye shabihi	He who has no comparison
ndiye wahidi Qahari.	the single most powerful.

The first line of this opening stanza is a prayer in itself. 'Bisumi 'Ilahi' or 'bismillahi' in its broad usage is frequently used as a short prayer at the beginning of for instance a conversation or other business. Unlike most other *tenzi*, the poet, right from line two of stanza one to stanza seven outlines God's various traits or characteristics. Some of them are:

Jina la Mola 'Ilahi	In the name of God the benefactor
Ndiye Mwenye hai 'lQayumi	He that lives for ever
Ndiye hakimu Adili	He is the wise judge
Ndiye Mjuvi wa siri	He is the knower of secrets
Ndiye Ghafiri dhunubu	He is the forgiver of sins

All the attributes in the seven stanzas play an important role in the poem. As the narrative of Muhamadi and his antagonists progresses, it is noted that the Prophet's troops are much less than those of Rasi 'lGhuli, the terrain is tough and food and water are scarce. The enemy also seems to have a better army that is also well prepared and ready to repulse any aggression. Muhamadi's troops on the other hand do not seem to have any systematic plan for the war. God's characteristics, outlined in this section, therefore seem to foreground the preceding events in religion, hence making the war not only religious, but also serves to illuminate that God's intervention is key.

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At stanza nine the poet suddenly changes the general approach of his address to a much more focused one. He speaks directly to the human race (stanza 9-12) appealing to it to hasten to worship God the creator of heaven and earth.

Stanza thirteen talks of praise to Muhamadi (Prophet Mohammed). It is a common practice among poets to mention Muhamadi and his close followers (the caliphs). The poet here does not dedicate a lot of space in his reference to Muhamadi. He says:

13   Nikomile kuradidi   I am through with my explanation
        nimshukuru Wadudi   so I may thank the Affectionate
        na sifa za Muhamadi   and Muhamadi's praises
        kumsifu Siqadiri.   I praise him boundlessly.

Having started with a general portrait of God, then adopting the human race as his audience, the poet turns to a much more specialized target, his son Khamisi, whom he instructs to quickly provide him with a pen and good paper. This part (stanza 14-24) defines the role of the poet as the vehicle through which the narrative will be told. His description of the kind of instruments he would like and how soon seems to suggest the assertion of his place as an artist on whom the narrative will from now on depend on for its life.

This part also serves to explain the nature and the purpose of the narrative to be narrated. The narrator/composer says the story he is about to narrate is an extraordinary story recorded in a book in the Arabic language about the Yemen war during Muhamadi's time. He states that most people cannot access it as they do not understand Arabic - the reason behind his retelling it in Kiswahili, so that many can access it (stanza 29).

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In a manner akin to Mwanakupona's, the composer of *Utenzi wa Mwanakupona*, the poet states that he is not an expert composer, and is therefore likely to compromise prosodic rules. He then proceeds to advice his son, who is to record his composition, to take great care in writing, so that the composition becomes a pleasant read. This marks the end of the pre-initial narrative, which serves to lay ground for the narration of the main initial narrative.

This is not the case, however, with some modern poets who do not seek divine intervention during their composition nor do they care about prosodic rules. One such poet is Henry Muhanika (1981) who says that seeking divine intervention is making himself weak. He says that if he is unable to complete the composition others will complete it. A look at the first ten stanzas of his composition reveals his radical departure from tradition although these ten stanzas are actually a pre-initial narrative text. Here are the stanzas.

1.	Ndugu yangu sikiliza	Listen my brother
	Kirefu kisa naleta	I am bringing a long story
	Ingawa kilitendeka	Although it happened
	Kwa muda mfupi sana.	In a very short while.
2.	Sianzi kuomba dua	I do not begin with a prayer
	Kwa Mungu au Miungu	To God or gods
	Kitu ninategemea	What I rely on
	Hasa ni juhudi yangu.	Indeed is my effort.
3.	Kuomba eti nilindwe	Praying that I be guided
	Eti busara nipewe	That wisdom I be given
	Njia nisipotee	So I do not veer off
	Ni kujifanya mnyonge.	Is to make myself weak.
4.	Kazi hii nitaanza	I will start this work
	Tatatizo likitokea	If a problem crops up

Muhanika nikakwama	Muhanika I get stuck
Wengine wataifanya.	Others will do it.

5.
Siombi mtu kalamu	I do not ask anyone for a pen
Wino pia karatasi	Nor ink nor paper
Vifaa nihitajivyo	The items I need
Viko vyote mbele yangu.	Are all before me.

6.
Tangu lini niambie	Since when tell me
Mkulima mwenye nia	Did a farmer of intent
Shambani veye aende	Go to the farm
Bila jembe au panga?	Without a hoe or matchet?

7.
Usije kuniambia:	Do not tell me:
Sheria zake utenzi	The conventions of epic
Ulio safi utenzi	A good epic
Yatakiwa mistari	Requires lines
Minne kila ubeti.	That they be four per stanza.

8.
Nacho kina cha mwisho	And that the last rhyme
Kwa kituo cha utenzi	At the end of the epic
Mtunzi kukibadili	The composer to vary it
Anaharibu utenzi.	Spoils the epic.

9.
Mimi haya nayajua	I know all these
Sitaki kuyafuata	I do not want to adhere
Ukitaka hebu sema:	If you want just say:
Mtunzi huyu ni nanga	This composer is daft
Mwenye mambo kuhananga	He spoils everything.

10.
Nitalikubali hili	I will accept this
Hili ni bora zaidi	This is much better
Ninapolilinganisha	When I compare it
Na minyororo kufungwa	with getting chained
Au mtego kutegwa	Or getting snared
Na mimi nikaingia.	And I get into the trap.

Such is the radical departure from tradition. Of course the composition in focus here, *Utenzi wa Vita vya Kagera*, is a political piece depicting the war between Uganda and Tanzania though from the Tanzanian point of view. All the traditional conventions associated with Swahili long poems are rubbished and the author seems to pursue his

desired route of nonconformity to convention. However, by doing so, he ends up subjecting himself to the pre-initial text dictates before getting down to the business of presenting his narrative.

2.3.1.2 Initial Narrative

This is the core or main story. This narrative is the focus of the composer. In essence, this is the core part of the text in that it is the core story that the composer sets out to tell. The pre-initial or abstract sets the stage for this section, and post-initial or closing coda serves as its end note.

The initial narrative text, then, is the main story sandwiched between the pre-initial and post-initial narrative.

This part gives a detailed story of the war between Muhamadi and his followers on one side and Mukhaliqi bin Shahabu (Rasi 'lGhuli) and his followers on the other. Just like other war stories involving Muhamadi, an oppressed figure comes to Muhamadi and asks him to intervene and counter the oppressor. In this narrative, the story starts with a description of Muhamadi and his followers praying then comes a woman, Wafari binti Sadamu, who has been oppressed by Rasi 'lGhuli to report her tribulations in the hands of Rasi 'lGhuli to Muhamadi. Muhamadi then confirms the brutality of Rasi 'lGhuli from Ali. Muhamadi then prays for guidance and is granted permission to attack the 'infidel' who is fighting Islam. Wafari's complaints are actually the trigger of the war between the two opposing camps which finally Muhamadi and his team win.

This part comes after the initial narrative text. This part acts as the closing coda or formula of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* just as is the case in all long Swahili poetic compositions, be they narratives or not.

This section serves to clearly point out that this is the end of the embedded (initial) narrative text and, therefore, the first stanza of this closing coda marks the end of one part and signals the beginning of yet another section. The author – narrator says:

229   Ndiyo mwisho wa habari   This is the end of the story
        ya mwanzo hata akheri   from the start to the end
        ya sahaba na kufari   of the caliphs and the infidel
        ya Tumwa wetu Bashiri.   of Bashiri our Prophet.

One other interesting aspect in this section is the disclosure by the author-narrator of the time of the narrative. It is here pointed out that the events of the story (the war) took nine month, an important narrative aspect.

Just as is the case with many other classical Swahili compositions, the author-narrator makes known his name, but unlike other authors does not belabour to mention his lineage. He says:

4566   Nami mwenye kumaizi   I who knows
        hata shughuli na kazi   the project and work
        kitunga huu utenzi   composing this epic
        kuwaza na kufikiri.   thinking and reflecting.

4567   Ndimi mtii Illahi   I the one who obeys God
        pweke asiye shabihi   the one with no comparison

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Mgeni bin Faqihi   Mgeni son of Faqihi
ndilo jina madhukuri   is the famous name.

In this section, the author-narrator also asks readers to correct him if he has made any errors in his composition (stanza 4568). This is a common feature in the closing coda of most classical Swahili compositions.

Finally, the author-narrator asks for God's blessing for him and his family (parents) (pg. 229:4578 - 4584). Here the author-narrator asks God to ward off bad people, guard against Satan and to provide him with food and clothing.

2.3.2 Prosodic Conventions

This poem is composed within the classical Swahili prosodic conventions which emphasize the observation of uniform metrical patterns, rhymes and lines. G. Miehe *et al* (2002:31), rightly notes that 'Swahili' verse tradition is characterized by highly rigid and clearly defined prosodic conventions. Prosodic conventions, therefore, occupy an important part of Swahili classical poetry, without which a poem is seen as lacking or deficient in its composition. A poem that fails to conform to all the prosodic requirements is categorized as *guni*, a composition considered in classical poetry as inadequate in terms of style.

2.3.2.1 Metre

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli has a consistent metrical pattern of eight syllables in each line. As is the case with other prosodic conventions, the author must at all times balance the

accurate observance of metrical patterning and the intended message to his audience.

Here is an example:

4   Ni — pe u – li – yo - ku — ji - a   Tell me what brings you here
     1   2 3 4   5 6 7 8

na – mi ya – p a - te ne – le - a   so I may understand
 1   2 3   4   5 6   7 8

u – ne - le - ze yo - te – pi - a   say it all as well
 1 2   3   4 5   6   7 8

ya mwa - nzo ha - ta a — khe – ri.   from beginning to end.
 1 2   3   4   5 6   7   8

The excerpt shows the composer's adherence to the metric pattern of eight *mizani* (metre) per line, an important ingredient of Swahili prosodic poetry.

2.3.2.2 Rhyme

Rhyme is another outstanding feature of this poem. The first three lines end with the same sound, whereas the forth takes a different sound, but which recurs at the end of the forth line of each stanza. This repeated sound that keeps recurring at the end of each stanza acts as a closing tap of each stanza, as well as preparatory signal for the start of the next stanza. The repeated sound, a permanent feature in the *utenzi* sub-genre of Swahili poetry, is known as *bahari*. In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, the bahari is –*ri*. The following two stanzas will help demonstrate this:

Umari bun Maadi
Kamwambia Miqidadi
Na tuwegame anidi
Kwa upanga na khanjari.

Mikidadi akijihu
Akita ewe sahibu
Farasi ameiaabu
Na kwenenda haqadiri.

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2.3.2.3 Single Hemistich

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli, just as is the case with other classical Swahili verse compositions, is composed in cognizance of another key prosodic element; the hemistich. The author maintains a single hemistich in each of the 4584 stanzas. This is also in adherence to the strict prosodic conventions.

2.3.2.4 Four Line Stanza Form

Poets adopt various stanza forms in relation to the chosen subject of discussion and the manner of communicating the message. All Swahili _utenzi_ sub-genre poets prefer a four line stanza form, perhaps because of the intense nature of the message and may be because it is the most popular stanza form in Swahili poetry. The author of _Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli_ has also adopted this form in his composition.

2.3.3   Plot

Alex Preminger and T.V.F. Brogan (1993:916) have made an apt definition of plot, and this captures well the concerns of this sub-topic. They say:

> Plot may be defined as the pattern or structure of events within a text. Concepts of plot vary, but common to most of them is the notion of a sequence of actions related implicitly or explicitly by chronological order and perhaps also by causality.

The key issues in the above definition of plot are the patterns or structure of events within a text and the aspect of time as suggested by chronology. With the hindsight of Alex Preminger and T.V.F. Brogan's _(ibid)_ view of plot, we shall discuss plot in _Utenzi wa_

Rasi 'lGhuli in that light. Although traditionally plot has been associated with drama and prose narrative, it is important to note that it is also an important part in narrative poetry.

The following are the outstanding aspects that shape the plot of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

2.3.3.1 *Introduction/Opening*

The introduction here refers to the plot of the story of Rasi 'lGhuli which is the initial narrative of the text *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli* - the initial narrative which addresses "the story proper" and not the pre-initial or post-initial part of the text. In fact, what we have here classified as pre-initial and post-initial parts of the text could in modern day publishing be well taken care of by the blurb and introduction independent of the narrative text proper – what would largely be referred to as the secondary text.

The introduction of the story of Rasi 'lGhuli is immediate, reminiscent of dramatic plots. The author-narrator immediately shows clearly what the concerns of the plot will be. The beginning also creates an aura of expectations and interest, key plot aspects. The concerns of the plot are captured in the first 81 stanzas of the initial narrative (stanza 44-125). It is here that the religious nature of the prophet and caliphs is laid out as well as the complaints by Wafari with regard to Rasi 'lGhuli are laid bare. The stage for a contest between the Muslims and non-Muslims is set here.

2.3.3.2 Parallel Plotting

This is a key feature of the plot of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. Throughout the initial narrative text, events are presented in episodes that happen concurrently with the author adopting a back and forth mapping of events. Two or more events taking place at the same time but at different places are narrated by an author-narrator who seems to swap between episodes.

The shift in presentation of episodes is marked by a formula of the oral nature. In the absence of chapters to mark specific parts, as is the case in novels, as well as the sometimes short episodes, the formula play a key role in structuring of the plot. The phrase "qala rawi' is the mark of episodic swap. Here are some examples:

Qala rawi tabaini (1629:1)
Qala rawi 'Ikalamu (1897:1)
Qala rawi 'Ikhabari (1903:1)
Qala rawi msanifu (1988:1)

2.3.3.3 Anachronies

Gerald Prince (1989:5) describes anachrony as, "a discordance between the order in which events (are said to) occur and the order in which they are recounted."

From the above, it is clear that anachrony is an aspect of time relations between when an event is presented in the story's order and when it is said to have taken place. Narration of events in a story does not follow a strictly chronological order. The narrator can either narrate past events that took place before the current moment of narration, otherwise

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referred to as analepsis or flashback, or narrate a future event within the current moment of narration, a situation referred to as prolepsis or flash forward.

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli employs analepsis in its plot construction. One analeptic recounting is Wafari Binti Sadamu's narration of her oppression in the hands of Mukhaliqi bin Shahabu, otherwise widely refered to as Rasi 'lGhuli (stanza 79 121).

Whereas analepsis is a recurring feature in the plotting of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli,* proleptic instances are few and less clearly developed. One proleptic instance is in stanza 365, 371 and 372. In these stanzas, the prophet talks of good things such as accommodation and happiness for whoever that will volunteer to take on Rasi 'lGhuli and defeat him. The good situation here described is only possible after the war with Rasi 'lGhuli yet the war has not even began. This then becomes a case of prolepsis.

2.3.3.4 Climax and Closure

The narrative ends with poetic justice meted on Rasi 'lGhuli who is defeated, his head cut and placed on the gate that is the entry to the town. The overriding point of view with regard to the assessment of the character and activities of Rasi 'lGhuli is that of the author narrator whose opinion is that Rasi 'lGhuli is a bad person who deserves to be disciplined. From this perspective therefore, this is the climax of the Rasi 'lGhuli narrative where evil, or the axis of evil, is overcome by good. The other interesting aspect with regard to closure is the defeat of the enemy in both physical and spiritual warfare.

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After surrender, the vanquished join Islam. This closure therefore is greatly informed by the didactic and panegyric nature of the text.

2.3.4 Language

Poetry uses language in the most unique manner that goes beyond the limits of other literary genres. Helen Toner and Elizabeth Whittome (2003:113) capture this more aptly:

> Poetry can stretch words to their limit to record unique, direct impressions of experience. A word can achieve its full potential when a skilled poet combines it with other carefully selected words. The elements of word - its meaning, associations, context, history, sound, even its shape and length – all combine with other words to produce the distinctive qualities of a poem

The above quotation lays emphasis on the nature and function of poetic language, the subject of our focus here. It is through language that the structure and meaning of a poem are manifest. The language aspects that we shall here generally discuss include diction, schemes and tropes as well as the oral-written interface in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*.

2.3.4.1 Simile

This is one of the most frequently used literary device in this text. The similes used help capture the mood of the situation at hand in an emphatic manner. Some of the similes in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* are:

kuruka kana tuyuri	fly like a bird (stanza 431)
kana mayi ya bahari	like sea water (stanza 449)
laangaza kama nyota	shines like a star (stanza 452)
yukinga pepo za kusi.	he moved as the southern wind. (stanza 827)
akenda kana ikahu	he moved like an eagle (stanza 828)
yukinga simba wabari	as though he were a maned lion (stanza 833)

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The text is rich in the use of similes such that in some pages there is a simile in every two stanzas (pg.42). The author not only employs this device widely but also uses it appropriately and with ease.

2.3.4.2 Metaphor

This device is not as commonly used as the simile. We frequently come across it in the text mainly in situations where characters are invited to take part in narration through dialogue. Characters use these expressions to describe their abilities or those of their counterparts either as a way of showing their prowess at war or to intimidate the enemy. For instance. Shekhe Ali refers to himself as the 'famous/celebrated lion' who destroys the enemy even in their thousands without fearing their numbers (stanza 847). He says:

ndimi simba maarufu   I am the ingenious lion

In some instances, the opposing group also uses metaphoric expressions to describe certain characteristic traits. For example Rasi 'lGhuli describes his son Jendile as a fierce fighter whose fighting skills and prowess are no less than that of a lion. He says:

67   Ndiye asadi mkali   He is a fierce lion
        pakidhihiri qitali   when war breaks out
        humuoni akidhili   he is not abased
        wajapokuwa kathiri.   even when they are a multitude.

With the two antagonists referring to themselves or members of their groups as 'lions' the stakes between the opposing forces are raised and this sets pace for a serious confrontation with each of them expecting easy triumph over the other.

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2.3.4.3 *Hyperbole*

There are instances in the text where the author-narrator exaggerates certain situations. Exaggerations are used for purposes of emphasis. For example Shekhe Ali introduces himself to the enemy as the 'celebrated lion'. He tells the enemy:

43   Ndimi simba maarufu   I am the celebrated lion
        ndimi mvunda sulufu   I am the destroyer of mammoths
        wajapo kuwa elfu   when they come in the thousands
        siwajali sifikiri.   they do not bother me.

This metaphoric comparison not only emphasizes the ability of Ali as one of the fine fighters but also captures the ideal situations in war where the fighter sings in praise of himself not only to torment the enemy but to also psych oneself for the war.

Some exaggerations are mainly used to capture the gravity of the situation facing the characters. When Zuheri goes to the abode of Rasi 'lGhuli, he describes it as having a lot of houses and a big assembled crowd such that there is darkness in the day. This shows how dangerous the mission Zuheri is carrying out is and further serves to show the daring character of Zuheri.

439   Na nyumba zimesongana   And the houses are closely squeezed.
        qaumu imekutana   a bid crowd in attendance
        waona kiza mtana   making it dark in the day
        kana kunako matari.   as though its raining.

2.3.4.4 Euphemism

In certain situations the author opts to avoid blunt expressions and employs euphemism. The author-narrator describes Sufiani's death as 'sleep' and as such avoids mentioning death directly. He narrates as follows:

Wakashikana ajila	They tussled briefly
pasi kupita muhula	in no time
Sufiani amelala	Sufiani lay down
kadhii wake umuri.	his life brought to an end.

Whereas the euphemism 'amelala' would be said to be used with the intent of avoiding blunt language, it looks like the author was compelled to use this word and not 'amekufa' because of the dictates of classical Swahili poetry which require strict adherence to prosodic rules.

2.3.4.5 Opposites

This is another widely used style by the author of the *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*. The author uses opposites in many respects. These include:

2.3.4.5.1 Collective Expressions

These expressions capture the entire populations although a surface look at some of them suggests a particular section of the group.

mkuu wala saghiri   neither big nor small (stanza 1281)

There is also the collective expression of amounts of things as in:

qalili wala kashiri   little or big (stanza 969)

2.3.4.5.2 *Temporal Expressions*

Opposites are also used to express the duration of events. In the following example, the duration of the fight between Shekhe Ali and Zuheri is said to have started in the morning stopping at noon.

subuhi hata dhuhuri   morning to noon (stanza 860)

Others are:

esha hata ufajiri   evening to dawn (stanza 1082)
mutana kukawa kiza   day became night (stanza 888)
subuhi hata jioni   morning to evening (stanza 1081)

2.3.4.5.3 *Spatial Expressions*

The use of opposites serves to express or mark space. This is captured by the description of the reaction of opponents by Shekhe Ali. We are told that those at the lead take to the back as they run away from Ali's beating.

wa mbele hurudi nyuma   those in front go to the rear (stanza 851)

At times the spatial descriptions are manifest in two lines as opposed to most that are captured within a line. Here is an example:

huwangia kulumeni   he attacks them from the right
hitokea kushotoni   cutting through the left (stanza 158)

2.3.4.6 Repetitions

This text is rich in repetitions. In this text, repetitions serve various functions among them emphasis and prosodic convenience. Repetitions appear at various levels. These include:

2.3.4.6.1 Syllable Level

As already pointed out in this chapter, there are repetitions at syllable level. These repetitions mainly serve to achieve prosodic requirements of rhyme. This is why the first three lines in each stanza all end with the same syllable. This is in line with prosodic requirements that inform composition of Swahili classical poetry. On the other hand the fourth line of each stanza has a syllable that recurs through the stanzas forming this text. This too is a form of repetition guided by classical Swahili conventions. The following two stanzas will help us demonstrate this.

> 3691   Dalgha akinyamaza
> asi neno kumuuza
> na moyoni akiwaza
> akinama kufikiri.

> 3692   Akinyamaza katiti
> ukipita na wakati
> moyoni akitafiti
> kiwaza na kufikiri.

2.3.4.6.2 Word Level

There are words repeated severally in the poem. One of them is 'baada'. This word has an important function in this composition. It is used at the beginning of several stanzas to perform three key functions. One is to show the passage of time in situations where there is deletion of events, thus playing a key part in narrative summary. Secondly, it acts as a

launch pad for narrating the subsequent event. Finally, it helps the author attain with ease the prosodic dictates of Swahili classical poetry.

On page 54 and 55 'baada' and its other form 'baadaye' are used to begin six of the forty stanzas. A similar trend can be observed throughout the poem. One of the most interesting cases of word repetition is stanza 3555 where the same word is repeated to complete a line. One word 'ajnasi ajnasi' forms the line. What is of interest though is not the repetition of this word forming a line by itself but rather the oral tendency manifest in this section. Here is the stanza.

> 3555   Wakikutana unasi
> ajnasi ajnasi
> asikuona nafasi
> kwa kaumu kukithiri.

2.3.4.6.3 Line Level

Some lines are repeated in various stanzas wholly. It appears these repetitions are influenced by the need to conform to the strict prosodic requirements of classical Swahili poetry, especially in a long poem such as this. This scenario would also be influenced by the oral tradition which pervaded the Swahili compositions. This is regarded as oral traces in a written text.

Some of the repetitions come at the end of the stanza as is the case with stanza 1061 and 1082 respectively here below quoted:

1061 Hawambia malaini
      naomba kwenu nipeni
      ya Umari natieni
      esha hata ufajiri.

1082 Wakangia safarini
      wasishuke farasini
      subuhi hata jioni
      esha hata ufajiri

Another is stanza 1909 and 1936 where the forth line of each of these stanzas ends with

'idadi ya askari.'

The other case of repetition involves the formulaic coda for shift of narrative episodes.

This is seen in the first lines of stanzas that mark such a shift. They include:

Qala rawi 'Ikalama (3186, 3390, 4317, 4329)
Qala rawi 'Ikhabari (3428, 4201)
Qala rawi 'Ikitabu (4470, 1524)
Qala rawi tabaini (1619)
Qala rawi msanifu (1988)
Qala rawi 'Ikhabari (1903)
Qala rawi IKalamu (1897)

2.3.4.6.4 Parallelism

Parallelism, a kind of repetition, is a form of coordination where two or more words,

phrases or clauses are given equal status in a structure. James E. Robinson (1970:260)

states:

> When coordinate and indent patterns are intensified or extended in such a
> way that several pieces of an overall structure are placed in balance, the
> kind of asymmetry that is created is called parallelism.

There are several cases of parallelism in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* especially in contexts where characters boast of their heroic abilities as combatants. Two examples will suffice to demonstrate the use of parallelism.

When Zuheri meets Shekhe Ali and is asked to make known who he is, the author reveals:

44	Akiwamo kujisifu	He said in self praise
	ndimi simba maarufu	I am the coveted lion
	ndimi mvunda sufufu	I am the destroyer of mammoths
	wajapo kuwa kathiri.	Even when overwhelming in numbers.

The same syntactic patterns are manifest in the following stanza which shows the words of Shekhe Ali who is talking in self-praise.

124	Ndimi simba maarufu	I am the celebrated lion
	ndimi mvunda sufufu	I am the destroyer of many
	ndimi shekhe mausufu	I am the renown sheikh
	ndimi shekhe haidari.	I am the powerful sheikh.

2.3.4.7 Poetic License

A. Preminger and T.V.F. Brogan (1993:928) define poetic license as, "the freedom allowed the poet to depart in diction, grammar, or subject matter from the norms of prose discourse."

This definition shows that poetic license is concerned with the manner in which the poet uses language beyond the rules that govern its diction and grammar, an aspect widely associated with poetry.

Under poetic license we discuss the use of words and syntactic structures or grammar in so far as they are innovations outside of the Swahili language conventions.

It is also important to point out that in Swahili poetry poetic license is closely related to prosody. They are in fact, in most cases, two sides of the same coin for they play a complimentary role in classical poetry. In most cases prosodic conformity is dependent on poetic license and poetic license seems to be relevant because prosody depends on it to thrive.

2.3.4.7.1 Syllable Addition

So as to attain the desired rhyme or metric patterns, the poet attaches an additional syllable to a word that seems to fall short of the requirement of prosodic conformity.

A case of poetic license aimed at attaining the required eight syllable is in stanza 4551 where 'wasikupatu pumzi' is used instead of 'wasipate' which would have brought the syllabic count to seven making the line deficient of one syllable.

In some cases the noun 'Ali has been written 'Alia'. The author exercises the poetic license freedom to attain the desired eight syllables per line as well as attain the 'a' rhyme. An example of this is line one in the following stanza whose last word is *Alia* instead of *Ali*.

875 Na yule Shekhe Alia
   awele alisikia
   ya watu kumsifia
   ya kwamba kuna Zuheri

In certain circumstances, the author technically increases the number of syllables by changing glides to vowels and therefore increasing metre. Although not a very common feature in this composition, it none the less is employed and effectively serves to retain the consistency of eight syllables per line. In the following example (stanza 1661) the word *mwili* has an additional syllable attained from changing the glide w. Therefore, the word *mwili* is transcribed *as muili* subsequently transforming it into a three syllabic word instead of two although one can still argue this as a case of dialect use.

> 1661   Wakishitadi kwa kweli
> kwa dharuba kalikali
> wakangiwe na shughuli
> *muili* kitoa hari.

A similar technique can be seen in stanza 791 where the word *quruani* has been elongated to create four syllables instead of the three in *qurani*. It is, however, instructive to note that *quruani* is the preferred mode of pronounciation by the Swahili and the author has chosen to retain it over the written form *Qurani* most likely for prosodic conformity.

2.3.4.7.2 Syllable Deletion

In certain instances, the poet drops some syllables so as to attain the required number of syllables in a line. A case in point is the use of *kluza* instead of *akiuliza*. Here the markers of person, *a-*, and part of the root, *-li-*, are dispensed of but still the meaning is largely retained but only by placing this word within the context of its use. In the same stanza there is another case of syllable deletion in the use of *katibu* instead of *nikatibu* so as to achieve the desired number of syllables so that there is conformity to the metric pattern of

...e poem. There is also the use of *kita* instead of *akiita* to achieve the above said goal. This is captured in the two stanzas quoted below.

> 1246   Kasema nani kilabu
> *kiuza* kula jawabu
> akisema nikajibu
> hata *katibu* khatiri.

> 1247   Baadaye akisema
> *kita* sahibu tazama
> nimesikia kalama
> naona kuniqasiri.

In fact, this device is common for rhymed Swahili poetry.

2.3.4.7.3 Sound Shift

The poet has on occasion had to substitute one sound with another seeming to perform the same function as though in free variation. This is what is here referred to as 'sound shift.' The third line of the stanza quoted below ought to have ended with -*za* and not -*sha* as is the case. This is so because it enables the author to achieve the prosodic requirements of rhyme or simply a case of dialectical infusion which nonetheless serves to obtain the desired prosodic structure.

> Pamwe na Rabu Firasha
> akuzidishe maisha
> na kheri atakuongesha
> akwondolee na shari.

In this case therefore, -*sh*-, a voiceless sound takes the place of -*z*-, a voiced sound. These sounds then seem to function in free variation in the poetic context and not in formal standard language contexts. Another example where the author employs similar strategy

to enable him conform to prosodic requirement is the use of -*fu* in place of -*vu* as is in the word *mpotofu*. The sound -*f*- a voiceless fricative substitutes -*v*- a voiced fricative allowing them to operate in free variation in this context.

85   Baada ya kuushufu
        kiteua mpotofu
        watu khamsa alfu
        akiwahimu safari.

Another aspect with regard to sound shift or change is the change of the last sound in the hemistich so as to form a rhyme scheme. For example, the word *Qauma* in the stanza below should end with *u* and therefore read as *qaumu*. However, this will lead to negation of the strict prosodic requirements, in this case rhyme.

129   Wakakutana kwa shima
        pangu na ngao na chuma
        na mkuu wa qauma
        kisai ndiye amiri.

2.3.4.7.4 Unusual Syntax

One of the main features of poetic language is the extensive use of non-conforming syntactic structures. Although this is a feature of poetry in general, it is important to note here that in Swahili prosodic poetry, unusual syntax plays a key role in relation to rhyme and meter, important makers of this sub-genre of poetry.

Some words that would ordinarily be a part of the syntactic structure are conveniently dropped to attain the required metre. A common occurrence in the poem is the deletion of *ya* which in Swahili grammar should accompany *baada*.   So instead of using *baada ya*

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the poet in some instances uses *baada* only and is as such able to keep the line within the metric pattern requirement. The following stanza will help illustrate this.

1688   Hata kwa siku ya pili
        sahaba na Shekhe Ali
        baada kwishi kusali
        punde wawene ghubari.

The other form of unusual syntax in the poem is ordering of words. Where as this is also a feature of all poetry, in Swahili prosodic poetry this technique performs an important role of providing the required sound at the end of the line or hemistich in keeping with the dictates of rhyme. The following examples (stanza 2068-2069), *utamboni kidhihiri* and *utamboni kisimama* should have been respectively ordered as *kidhihiri utamboni* and *kisimama utamboni*. However, use of usual syntactic structure would have compromised rhyme in both cases and therefore causing non-conformity to the prosodic rhyme requirements.

2068   Akisema na Amini
        hata kimpa idhini
        akitoka iyo hini
        utamboni kidhihiri.

2069   *Utamboni kisimama*
        akiratili kusema
        kuwanadia qauma
        askari na kufari.

2.3.4.7.5 Arabic Sounds

The text uses sounds from the Arabic Alphabet. The sound *q* has been used in place of *k*. The Kiswahili alphabet does not have *q* which has been used in some parts of this text. It

most likely that the author seeks to show the difference between the two sounds.
whereas Arabic has both *q* and *k*. Kiswahili does not have *q*. Here are some of the examples:

qauli instead of *kauli*	(stanza 2539)
qaumu instead of *kaumu*	(stanza 2536)
qaratasi instead of *karatasi*	(stanza 2542)
qitali instead of *kitali*	(stanza 2548)
asibaqi instead of *asibaki*	(stanza 3183)
qala instead of *kala*	(stanza 3186)

2.3.4.7.6 *Arabic Phrases*

The text has cases where entire lines or large parts within the line have expressions in Arabic. Some of the phrases are:

Qala rawi 'lkalamu (stanza 592)
Bi haqi rabi firasha (stanza 1325)

In other cases nearly entire stanzas use Arabic as manifest in the following stanza.

525   Huwa 'llahu 'lwahidi
       Alfardu 'ssamadi
       Dhu 'lArishi 'lmajidi
       Muumba pepo na nari.

2.3.4.7.7 *Dialect*

Just as is the case with other Swahili classical poems, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* can not be divorced from the influence of dialects. Although the text is associated with the southern dialects region, Bagamoyo, there is a huge number of words from the northern dialects. These include:

utamboni (stanza 2833)	in the battle field
hamuuza (stanza 1165)	I asked him
zita (stanza 1686)	war; battle
waliata (stanza 1686)	they left/stopped
akimtinda (stanza 2831)	slitting his throat.

G. Miehe (et al)[4] have argued that the impact of northern Swahili may be the result of the knowledge of traditional[6] poems. The other view, in addition to this important observation, may be attributed to the nature of dialects. Whereas the people who speak them or the places where they are spoken may be geographically designated, some of the vocabulary is shared across sections, defying the physical geographic demarcations. In any case, dialects have a common origin in both space and time.

2.3.5 Irony

A. F. Scott (1965:151) describes irony as "the use of words, with humorous or satirical intention, so that the meaning is the direct opposite of what is actually said."

This view by Scott is however narrow, as irony need not be confined to humor and satire. Even in cases where there is not humor or satire, ironic situations can occur. Irony should as well not be confined to words or what is said and its meaning being the opposite. Irony can also occur in situations where actions are the opposite of what is said.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, there are several instances that are the direct opposites of one another. One of them is Rasi 'lGhuli's despise of what can befall him if attacked by

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In *Kala Shairi: German East Africa in Swahili Poems* (2002).
Traditional poetry refers to poems that conform to prosodic requirements of among other things strict adherence to rhyme schemes and metric patterns.

Muhamadi and his followers. He is the one who actually asks Wafari Binti Sadamu to report her tribulations in his hands to Muhamadi (stanza 117—129). His despise and arrogance becomes his Waterloo. It is ironical that the beginning of his tribulations and subsequent dethronement are engineered by his own words. Wafari narrates thus.

119	Enenda kwa Muhamadi		Go to Muhamadi
	aje na yake juhudi		let him come in his vigour
	na durui za hadidi		and armoured vest
	kwa upesi adhihiri.		fast may he come.
120	Enenda ukamwambie		Go and tell him
	kwa upesi atuyie		to fast come to us
	na weye silimatie		do you not delay
	ndiani usiusiri.		hasten on the way.

The action against Rasi 'IGhuli and his army of supporters present an ironic situation. Ideally, the army sent by Muhamadi is meant to intercede to bring justice. However, in the quest for justice for the downtrodden, Muhamadi's army attacks and treats the enemy with brute force. This situation then presents a scenario where the liberator turns out to be a merciless oppressor.

2.3.6 Narrative Voices

The entire text is narrated in first and third person. The two alternate but third person is largely predominant. Whereas the third person narration presents the story from without, first person presents it from within as characters in the story are given the opportunity to narrate events they took part in. However, the pre-initial and post-initial parts are narrated in first person narration by the author-narrator. These two modes of narration afford the

... the luxury of seeing events from both within and outside of the story and therefore enjoying the benefits of the short and long aesthetic distances from a single text.

2.3.7 Characters

This narrative has quite a high number of characters mainly because of the nature of the subject of the narrative. A text whose subject is war, and more so religious war, which is aimed at bringing about real or perceived change of status quo of one of the opponents, will certainly have a wide range of characters. In total they number no less than one hundred - a number unrivalled by the existing Swahili novels, a genre that narration is largely associated with. The large number of characters is one of the factors that make reading of *Utenzi wa Rusi 'lGhuli* a frustrating undertaking especially by a first reader. Probably due to the nature of the subject matter of the poem and the compressive nature of poetry, the characters' depths are not unveiled. We are only shown aspects that almost entirely pertain to the epicenter of the prevailing antagonism. We, therefore, see them through the war and religious view points.

The major characters are placed in juxtaposition of one another seeming to adopt the dramatic structure of antagonist and protagonist. Further, the characters are placed in confrontation of major obstacles which they strive to overcome as they retain their eyes on their stakes – a factor that keeps the opposing characters firmly on a war path to the end

The actors in this narrative range from individuals (Muhamadi, Ali, Rasi 'IGhuli, etc), collective actors (the armies), as well as figurative with anthropomorphic traits. They have been largely portrayed as either good or bad), a strategy that works well for the predominant theme, religion. There are, however, cases of characters who are flat, though not as many.

2.3.8 Setting

Setting refers to the context within which the action takes place. The story of Rasi 'IGhuli is set in the Middle East, switching from one location to another depending on the nature of actions; be it planning or field of combat. Some of the places mentioned include Adani (Aden) and Madina (Medina). In some situations the setting is highly specific, but in some it is generalized, especially in the desert/wilderness. This story uses a largely realistic setting as depicted by the names of real places referred to in the poem.

However, it is instructive to note that the paratexts of this story (among them the pre-initial and post-initial parts) are set in East Africa. This is deduced through the benefit of the paratext information.

2.3.9 Oral Tendencies

The text exhibits some oral formulae pointing to the oral nature of its composition. Milman Parry (1930:80) has defined formula as "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea."

Among the most common oral formulae in this poem are alloformy and parallelism.

Mugyabuso M. Mulokozi (2002:137) describes alloforms as repeated lines or phrases that express a given "core idea" even if they are presented in different lexical or syntactic structures. In the following examples of allorformy in the poem the idea presented is the emphasis of the place of the narrator. Loosely translated they all mean 'thus says the narrator'. This formula is used by the poet to give authenticity to his story and also protect him from any accusation that he is giving false information. The emphasis seems to be that the story has been told before by notable narrators.

Qala rawi 'Ikitabu	(stanza 433)
Qala rawi 'Ikalamu	(stanza 545)
Qala rawi tabaini	(stanza 567)
Qala rawi 'Ikalama	(stanza 709)
Qala rawi 'Ikhabari	(stanza 2264)

Examples of parallelism are:

2268   Gerezani akipita
       barazani akipita
       Waarabu akiweta
       kula ahali shauri.

3266   Na Mungu kiambia
       ya kesho kunandamia
       ya kwenda nisaidia
       ya kuwana na bashiri.

The repeated parts point to certain developed phrases and patterns which the poet constantly refers to for his composition. Given that the poet is dictating his composition, as he points out at the beginning, the formulas then become important building blocks for his composition.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli has rich thematic and stylistic components as highlighted in this background chapter. The themes are largely interlocked. The author seems conversant with manipulations of plot seeming to narrate and oscillate between episodes. This text is rich in structural aspects, more especially in narration. The author-narrative also on several occasions gives room to some characters to take the mantle of narrator. These aspects among others make *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* one of the most endowed poems in narration as well as one of the most dramatic verse narratives.

This chapter has discussed the various formal and thematic aspects in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, providing a general overview of this composition. The next three chapters will analyze narrative time, narrative levels and voices as well as characterization in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 NARRATIVE TIME

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter seeks to analyse narrative time in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. This is purely an aspect of time relations between story and narrative. Gerard Genette (1980:35) points out three areas of concern with regard to time, namely; order, duration and frequency.

We shall, therefore, seek to discuss the relations between story time and narrative time. That is, the order in which events in the story follow one another in succession and the order in which they are presented in the text. In narrative, events are not necessarily arranged in the chronological order of their happening. This is what shall be our point of focus under order. We shall also discuss the relationship between the duration of the events or story sections and the amount of space (length of text) devoted to the various events or story sections. It is this relationship that dictates narrative pace or rhythm. Finally, we shall discuss frequency. Here, the number of times an event is narrated in the text. what Gerard Genette (ibid) describes as relations between the representative capacities of the story and those of the narrative, will be discussed.

3.2 ORDER

Order refers to the relationship between the story chronology (the order in which the events of the story take place in the fictional world) and the narrative chronology (the order in which the events in the narrative are presented). The relationship between story order and narrative order presents various types of discordance which Gerard Genette (ibid) calls narrative anachronies.

The discordances are permitted in the assumption of there being a zero degree from where both story and narrative begin that would provide a temporal correspondence between them. Such point is only hypothetical but key in the study order in narrative.

We shall here classify anachronies into four broad categories. These are analepses, prolepses, and what we shall term here as micro and macro anachronies. We shall also discuss the reach and extent of anachronies in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

3.2 1 Micro Anachronies

Micro anachronies refer to anachronies whose manifestation is not characterised by large portions of returns. They are closely used such that they are largely unnoticeable in the course of reading a text. Despite their passing unnoticeably, mainly because they refer to small single events, they are a common occurrence in narratives. The following five stanzas from *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* will help illustrate this.

14.	Ewe mwanangu Khamisi	My son Khamisi
	nipatie qaratasi	give me a paper
	uniletee upesi	bring it to me quickly
	pasiwe kutaakhari.	without delay.

15.	Qaratasi iwe Shamu	Let it be from Syria
	iliyo njema naimu	good and pleasant
	na pambo ni maadimu	whose texture is rare
	twaa hiyo ya hariri.	pick the silk one.

16.	Wendapo kununua	When you go buying
	jitahidi kununua	Try to buy the best
	nawe mtu mwelewa	for you are knowledgeable
	si mchache wa nadhari.	not lacking in sense.

17.	Unapokwenda dukani	When you go to the shop
	usiusiri ndiani	do not delay on the way
	ufike kwa Selemani	get to Selemani's
	au kwa Isai mzuri.	or to the good Isa.

18.	Mpatie na mapesa	Give him the money
	uyatukue kabisa	carry it as you go
	ukiwasili kwa Isa	when you get to Isa's place
	usiwe kutaasari.	do not delay.

The events described from stanza 14 to 18 quoted above do not adhere to strict chronological order from stanza to stanza. This, therefore, presents a case of anachronies. If the events described above were to follow a chronological sequence, the order would be stanza 17, 16, 18, 15 and 14 coming last. A chronological sequence would be that Khamisi would hasten to get to the shop (stanza 17), choose the product (stanza 16), pay money to seal the transaction (stanza 18), take away the product and finally give it to the father (stanza 14).

A look at stanza 14 and 17 shows manifestation of anachronies. In stanza 14 line one would be followed by line three then line two and finally line four for Khamisi can only present the paper to his father (line 2) after bringing it to him (line 3). In stanza 18, the chronological order of events would have line two coming first (taking the money), then

line three (arriving at Isa's shop), followed by line one (paying him the money) and finally line four (not to delay).

The two stanzas discussed above are cases of micro prolepses at both line and stanza levels. This shows that narratives or narrative events do not necessarily follow a strict chronological order even at the lower levels where such occurrence is not anticipated.

However, unlike macro anachronies, micro anachronies are too limited to provide extra information on an event, character, or theme. Even if any such information were to be provided it would be too scanty to impact on any of the story aspects.

3.2.2 Macro Anachronies

These are anachronies that undertake to narrate events that take substantial amounts of both space and time making them easily noticeable. They serve to highlight aspects of a character, theme or event. Macro anachronies can be either analeptic or proleptic.

One of the macro anachronies is the narration by Wafari binti Sadamu. Wafari narrates how she was oppressed by Rasi 'lGhuli and how the oppression forced her to seek the intervention of Muhamadi. Her analeptic narrative begins at stanza 79 and runs on to stanza 121. Wafari narrates how she was being forced to abandon Islam and how she was threatened, consistently tortured and her children killed for their steadfastness in Islam.

This analepsis therefore helps shed light on Rasi 'lGhuli's character, the theme of religious struggle as well as narrate a series of earlier events preceding Wafari's visit to

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the prophet. This analepsis subsequently becomes the key to the conflict and battles between the antagonists that characterises the text.

Macro anachronies, unlike micro anachronies, provide information crucial not only to the understanding of the story, but also provide a link between the present and past or future events. This helps fill a void without which the story would cease to progress or certain events would seem to lack the motivating factor.

3.2.3 Analepses

Analepsis is one of the main types of anachronies, that is, the discrepancy between the order of the story and the order of the text. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002:46) provides the following definition:

> An analepsis is a narrative of a story-event at a point in the text after later events have been told. The narration returns, as it were, to a past point in the story.

Such 'returns' are generally referred to as flash-backs. Gerard Genette (ibid) has classified analepses into several categories. These include external analepses, internal analepses, mixed analepses and completing analepses. In this section we will not only discuss the various types of analepses outlined by Genette as used in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* but will also discuss other forms that we will refer to as *pseudo analepses*.

1.1.1 External Analepses

External analepses are those whose entire extent remains external to the extent of the first narrative[*]. They are therefore external in that they cover a temporal period earlier than the first temporal point of the first narrative.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* there are two outstanding cases of external analepses at the beginning of the text. The two analepses, one delivered by Wafari binti Sadamu and the other by Umari bin Umaya, come in quick succession of one another and provide crucial background information on the character of Rasi 'lGhuli, and the theme of religious intolerance. They also create expectation and interest, key plot elements. The first of these analepses narrated by Wafari binti Sadamu provides information on various key narrative aspects important to the ensuing intrigues that characterise this text.

The opening narrative proper on the story of Rasi 'lGhuli begins with a meeting of Muhamadi and his close followers in a mosque. It is then that Wafari arrives with a group of people on horses seeking to report her tribulations in the hands of Rasi 'lGhuli to Muhamadi.

From stanza 78 to 120, Wafari provides an analeptic description of her encounter with Rasi 'lGhuli. The entire extent of her experience with Rasi 'lGhuli is a narrative external to the first one; that is to say that these are events that happened long before the time of the first narrative.

Gerard Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, pg 49

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Wafari's narration tells of the rule of Rasi 'lGhuli's father, his death and eventual take over by Rasi 'lGhuli who, being an infidel like his father (from Wafari's point of view), becomes a cruel leader who tortures and kills Muslims.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002:46) says that "analepses provide information about the character, event or story line mentioned at that point in the text or about another character, event or story line." This is true of the narrative mediated by Wafari mentioned above as this analepsis provides information at 'the point in the text' as well as about characters. In the case of Wafari, we get information about her fight and her steadfastness in Islam. We are as well provided with information on Rasi 'lGhuli (Mukhariqi) and his father Shahabu.

The narrative provides information on character events and story-line, which become antecendents for subsequent events in the text.

The other external analepsis is provided by Umari at the inquiry of Muhamadi. Umari's opening shows that what he is about to narrate took place long ago — long before converting to Islam. He narrates:

133	Zamani za ujuhali	Long ago in time of ignorance
	sijamjua Jalali	having not known God
	wala Tumwa Mursali	nor prophet Muhamadi
	wala pepo wala nari.	nor heaven nor hell.

The analepsis provides information on Umari's earlier life, Rasi 'lGhuli's oppression and killing of his father and his eventual rise to the throne of his slain father. He also narrates of his involvement in idol worship (stanza 133—343).

This analepsis provides information that not only seems to justify and authenticate prior information by Wafari, but also provides a broad picture on the life and events surrounding Rasi 'lGhuli.

Another case of external analepsis is Zuheri's recounting of his marriage to the daughter of Maliki bun Riyahi, an event that occurs long before the starting point of the first narrative of this text (stanza 944—951). This analepsis also 'invites' another external analepsis when Zuheri's uncle Maliki bun Riyahi recounts how Rasi 'lGhuli invaded his land, took his property and killed his children (stanza 952). This then is an external analepsis within another external analepsis. This we refer to as extended external analepsis

According to Gerard Genette, "external analepses, by the very fact that they are external, never at any moment risk interfering with the first narrative, for their function is to fill out the first narrative by enlightening the reader on one or another 'antecendent'".[1] This is the case with the analeptic narration of Dalgha's strength, having asked her father to let her fight with those interested in marrying her. She defeated seventy of them — all men of strength (stanza 3636—3638). This analepsis does not interfere with the first narrative, which is about the confrontation between Dalgha and her father, who slaps her following

[1] Narrative Discourse An Essay in Method pg. 49-50

her advising him to join Islam to avoid the eminent danger from Muhamadi's army. This analepsis provides information about the character in focus — Dalgha. It not only helps the reader to get information concerning her character, but also serves to raise interest regarding her next step of action.

3.2.3.2 Internal Analepses

These are analepses that occur after the starting point of the first narrative. Such analepses also provide information on the characters, events of story-line as is the case with external analepses.

Most of the internal analepses in this text are recounts of earlier events. Gerard Genette (Ibid:50) makes the following important observation with regard to internal analepses.

> ...since their temporal field is contained within the temporal field of the
> first narrative, they present an obvious risk of redundancy or collision.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, internal analepses recount an earlier narrative event, making the internal analepsis redundant. However, the redundancy in most cases is only manifest from the point of view of the reader and not the character who the information is being relayed to. Such is the case with Fadhili's recounting of Wafari's visiting Muhamadi to Suliani (stanza 1968—1974).

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Daama's recounting of how Janadili was defeated, captured by Uramuramu and presented to Muhamadi is another case of internal analepsis.[1] This analepsis also provides information already in the domain of the reader and not the narratee.

1.2.3.3 Internal Homodiegetic Analepses

Internal homodiegetic analepses deal with the same story line/action as the first narrative and whose temporal scope falls within the primary narrative. Internal homodiegetic analepses are many in this poem, but one example will suffice here. Umari's analeptic narration of the events involving him after killing Jendile is homodiegetic, as it is an analepsis that does not digress from the primary narrative whose focus is Umari. The narrator narrates Umari's actions after killing Jendile, before Umari himself taking up the narration, giving details of how he fought the infidels and killed them before facing eminent danger, and prays to God to send Ali to help him among other happenings (stanza 1398 – 1517).

This analepsis provides information on the nature of the character of Umari, the Jihadist, as well as the vulnerability of the 'pagans', whose defeat, despite their big numbers, is just a prayer away, and therefore seeming to cement the place of religion and faith in a holy war' such as this.

[1] *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, pg 175: 3490-3493.

3.1.1.4 External Homodiegetic Analepses

These are more common in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* than the internal homodiegetic analepses. The grafted part in the following example gives information on the ability of Dalgha after differing and getting slapped by her father on her advising him to give in to Islam, just as some of his children have done. In three stanzas we are treated to an analepsis that tells us how the Arabs came to seek her hand in marriage, only for her to give a condition that she has to have a fight with any man who desires her, and that man can only marry her if he defeats her. She floors seventy of them.

3636	Walikuya waarabu na nia wakitulubu kutaka kumkhutubu naye qati asiqiri.	The Arabs came intending to get her so as to talk to her but she could not hear of it.
3637	Akimwambia babaye muume anitakaye sharti niwane naye anishindapo taqiri.	She said to her father a man interested in me with him I must fight if he beats me, I will give in.
3638	Wakitoka shujaani wali watu sabaini kubarizi utamboni kwa wote wasiqadiri.	When the great fighters surfaced they were seventy in number when they got to the battle field none of them triumphed.

This analepsis provides information on the character of Dalgha, which is key in understanding and appreciating her aggressive nature, as we are taken back to the primary narrative.

3.2.3.5 Pseudo Analepses

This narrative presents another set of analepses which we here designate as pseudo analepses. These are analepses created by characters but which in reality are not. In fact,

they are analepses from the point of view of the narratee but not the narrator or the reader. They are creations of the narrator, who is also a character in the story he/she is narrating, aiming to win sympathy or help from the narratee. The character therefore makes up stories to justify what they are pursuing, especially in a narrative such as *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, which has deceit as one of its central themes.

Pseudo analepses abound in this text. One such analepsis is the incidence evoked by Abdala, who has been sent by Ali to go and look for Umari, who has delayed to get back from his travel to look for water. On seeing an approaching group while on his journey, Abdala digs a hole and buries his clothes and makes up a story regarding his predicament. In this pseudo analepsis he narrates how he used to be a rich man, then somehow things did not work well for him and he became poor (stanza 1018—1020). He and his brother went to beg from Riyahi, who gave them horses and camels, but on their way back they were attacked by Ali, who not only took all they had been given, but also killed his brother. He claims that his feigning of death during the attack is what saved him (stanza 1034). They then take him into their town, where he sees Umari in chains and a yoke around his neck baking in the sun.

This of course is an episode created by Abdala seeking to get mercy and which he does get from the enemy. This works well for him, as he finally gets to identify the chained Umari as his attacker, and is finally allowed to watch over him only to collaborate with Umari and have him released.

Whereas this is an element of plot design probably meant to show the inability of Rasi lGhuli's men to manage security, it is also important to note that most tales, more so the Arabian tales, have a fair share of deceit in their composition, and *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli* takes advantage of this rich tradition.

3.2.4 Prolepses

Prolepsis refers to a transition to a later event or scene that interrupts the normal chronological development of the story. In narrative tradition 'prolepsis is clearly much less frequent than the inverse figure[10].' This observation is also true of *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli*, however, presents a number of prolepses. We encounter the first prolepsis at the beginning of the text with the narrator's instruction to his son, Khamisi, on sending him to the shop to buy a 'fine' paper for recording an 'outstanding story.' The events here described by the narrator are all proleptic. They include Khamisi going to the shop, picking out the best paper, not delaying on the way, paying for the paper, going to Isa's shop if Selemani's is closed, not going to see his brother Masudi, not to rest when back home but prepare the red ink, presenting the narrator with a traditional stool and the string that will guide good writings.[11] These are events narrated before their time, making them proleptic.

As with the case of analepses, there are also various types of prolepses, some of which are discussed below used by the author of *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli*.

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[10] Gerald Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay In Method*
[11] *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli*, stanza 14-24.

3.2.4.1 Internal Prolepses

One of the instances of internal prolepsis is manifested when Abdulati meets Ali. Abdulati narrates proleptic events that will take place if Ali accepts to ditch Islam. He talks of events that will take place in Maka where there will be a gathering of people and Ali, in chains, will admit defeat in the hands of Abdulati, and then he will be unchained, and if he worships idols he will be respected and given a position of leadership (stanza 688 – 693).

Internal prolepses can be further classified into homodiegetic and heterodiegetic prolepses.

3.2.4.2 Internal Homodiegetic Prolepses

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* internal homodiegetic prolepses mainly occur in situations where characters explain or highlight what they desire to do or what the outcome of a given event will be. The above example (3.2.4.1) is homodiegetic.

Since homodiegetic prolepses do not interfere with the story that they are grafted in, they merely complement it. In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* the complementation seems to be mainly that of strengthening the resolve of the characters who undertake to pursue what they have outlined in the prolepsis.

Such is the case with Harithi bun Hamamu's proleptic narration of what he will do to Umari, who has made Rasi 'lGhuli's men lose in one of the battles which they were likely to win. Harithi says:

3732	Namwendea alihini	I will go to him immediately
	hamwegama kwa taani	attack him ferociously
	nimlaze mtangani	bring him down
	na weye ukibusuri.	as you watch.

After this proleptic narration the story reverts back to its present and picks up with Harithi instructing his servant to prepare the horse for him so he may set out for the battle

This internal homodiegetic prolepsis also plays a key role in creating expectation on the part of the audience, a key plot element. The reader is curious to see how subsequent events unfold.

3.2.4.3 External Prolepsis

There are many instances of external prolepses in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. As a convention of Swahili long poem composition, the author – narrator concedes his weakness as composer of the verse, when he addresses those who shall read his composition, telling them they should not criticise him for the shortcoming, for he is neither an accomplished composer nor a teacher. He says:

33	Msije kuona kina	So you do not see rhyme
	kisichoshika maana	that does not conform
	mkawamo kuninena	and start criticising me
	wakuu hata saghiri.	the old and young

34	Mkanandika aibu	Putting me to shame
	wala pasipo sababu	even without reason
	kunirudi ni thawabu	correcting me is a blessing
	wala nami siqasiri.	nor will I be offended.

The time for criticism here described by the narrator is without doubt after the composition is complete, making this prolepsis external to the story.

3.2.4.4 External Homodiegetic Prolepses

External homodiegetic prolepses are also used in this narrative. The following two stanzas will serve to illustrate this.

364	Akitamka Habibu	The prophet spoke
	kuwambia asahabu	telling his followers
	nani mtaka thawabu	who wants blessings
	ende kwa huyo kufari.	so he may confront the infidel.

365	Ondoka insani	That he may leave now
	kamwendea maluuni	to face off the accursed
	tamdhamini peponi	I will guarantee him in heaven
	nyumba njema na sururi.	a good home and happiness.

Whereas the above excerpt is an external prolepsis whose events fall out of the events of the Rasi 'IGhuli story, it is also homodiegetic in that it does not focus on a story different from the primary one. This prolepsis, which is actually later repeated by the Muhamadi three times (stanza 368—372), just as it is external, makes a promise way off the reach of the followers, which they must put in extraordinary sacrifice to achieve. This seems to prepare them for the tough business of war ahead of them in hard conditions and with a thin army as compared to their enemy. Not only does this help the reader understand their motivation, but also prepares him to see how the said events will unfold.

3.2.5 Reach and Extent

Anachronies can actually reach into the future or the past either more or less far from the 'present' moment.[12] Gerard Genette calls this the anachrony's reach. He also says that the anachrony itself can also cover a duration of story that is more or less long. This he calls its extent.

The anachronies in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* vary in both reach and extent. For example, the instance evoked by Wafari (stanza 78—121) has a reach of many years going as far back as Wafari's giving birth to her children and marrying them off. Then there is the death of Rasi 'lGhuli's father, the ascendance of Rasi 'lGhuli to the throne, his subsequent persecution of Wafari's family, and finally his beating her. This anachrony has a reach of several years as well as an extent of several years. The same applies to the anachrony evoked by Umari (stanza 133—343). The main difference is that Umari's anachrony is more detailed than Wafari's.

The anachrony evoked by Abdulati, on the other hand, presents both reach and extent at a much lower scale (stanza 689—693). This prolepsis has a reach of a few days and basically covering the period of travel to Maka and an extent, as well, of a few days.

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[12] Gerard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay on Method*, Ithaca, N. Y. 1980

3.3 DURATION

Duration is one of the most difficult areas of analysis when dealing with narrative time. Whereas it is not as disturbing studying aspects of order and frequency, duration poses a challenge.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002:51-52) points out that it is hard to parallel text duration and story duration, for there is no way of measuring text duration, unlike dealing with order and frequency, whose paralleling of story and text events pauses no major challenge. She says:

> But it is much difficult to describe in parallel terms the duration of the text and that of the story, for the simple reason that there is no way of measuring text-duration. The only true temporal measure available is the time of reading and this varies from reader to reader, providing no objective standards.

Whereas the reading time of a text is not a sufficient parameter of measuring duration, using the time taken to compose a text does not help in this cause either. The amount of time used in writing a text is not only hard to reconstruct, but even if it were available to us, it may not be of significant importance for the effect of the text on the reader.[13]

Despite the said difficulty of studying duration, narratologists agree that the only way of gauging duration in a text is by paralleling the amount of time covered by events with the amount of space covered by those events. Mieke Bal (2009:99) makes an interesting analogy *apropos* speed when she says:

Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 2009, 1998

> Just as speed in traffic is gauged by juxtaposing the amount of time involved with the distance covered (she is doing sixty: she is travelling sixty kilometers in one hour), so too the amount of time covered by the fabula can be juxtaposed with the amount of space in the text each event requires: the number of pages, lines or words.[11]

The above view is popular and has been widely adopted by earlier narratologists, such as Gerard Genette (1980) and Shlomith Rimon-Kenan (2002). This is purely a case of the relationship between a temporal dimension and spatial dimension.

Narratives do change speed, sometimes accelerating. sometimes slowing down. This creates narrative rhythm. This is what Gerard Genette (1980:88) refers to as anisochronics arguing that there is no isochronous narrative. Genette uses the term anisochrony to refer to a variation in narrative speed and the term isochrony to refer to constant narrative speed.

Each episode in a narrative has a number of pages or paragraphs/stanzas devoted to it. Some episodes are clearly given more attention than others, thus enjoying more space devoted to them. The narrative then alternates between scene and summary presentation, creating rhythmic effects. This is well captured by Mieke Bal (ibid:100):

> Whether or not the attention is spread more or less evenly across the fabula, there will always be an alternation of sorts between extensive and summarizing presentation. This attention is generally viewed as the most important characteristic of the narrative genre; be that as it may, it is clearly an important marker.

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[11] This procedure was proposed by Gunther Muller (1967).

Narrative rhythm is created via several presentation strategies. These are ellipsis, summary, scene and pause.

3.3.1 Ellipses

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli has a number of incidences where story time is elided. Such elisions are at times indicated and at times not indicated. Such elisions are respectively referred to as definite ellipses and indefinite ellipses.

3.3.1.1 Definite Ellipses

On several occasions, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* shows the elided story time. In the following example, an entire ellipsis occurs and is clearly definite.

744	Kufika kwao wangwani kwa waqati wa jioni wakisonga mtoni wakinawikhi safari.	When they reached the wilderness at evening time they came to a river ending their journey.
745	Subuhi siku ya pili akitunza shekhe Ali akiona ndia mbili yamini wa aisari.	On the second day morning sheikh Ali looked he saw two ways on the right and left.

The above quote shows that there is a clearly definite ellipsis of an entire night. There is no doubt that several things would have taken place during this period (probably having to prepare supper, taking supper, praying, sleeping, taking sentry, waking up, conducting morning prayer, etc) but such events have been elided.

When reading *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, definite ellipses create a sense of urgency and seriousness.

2.5.1.2 Indefinite Ellipses

Just as is the case with definite ellipses, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* has several instances of indefinite ellipses. In some cases there is mention of several days of elided time. The sultan, for instance, keeps count of days that pass without any report from the war field. In fact, we are told of many days passing, seeming to go beyond the anticipation of the Sultan:

1344	Turudi kwa Sultani	Lets go back to the King
	kukaa kwake mjini	his wait in town
	akitunza hisabuni	keeping count
	masiku yamekithiri.	days surpassing.

1345	Kikeleti kungojea	He kept waiting
	awene kulimatia	seeing a delay
	ya kutoa kutokea	for not appearing
	mwanawe wala Umari.	his son nor Umari.

The ellipsis shown here does not provide a definite period of time elided. The committed narrative time is indefinite; a number of days.

Although Mieke Bal (2009) argues that 'the contents of the ellipsis need not be unimportant', the opposite is actually true. Omitted episodes are usually less important or even actually not important at all in the structure of the narrative. It can be important information alright but not important in relation to the story at a given point in time of the narrative

Mbde Bal (ibid) seems to isolate ellipsis from plot development, for the elided time helps the reader understand the situation being portrayed or be able to follow why there is a given turn of events or situation. Ellipsis then allows us to share the length of omitted time with the character, as is the case with Rasi 'lGhuli's wait mentioned above, so that we are able to appreciate the situation they are in, for without the elided time that has passed it would be hard to see, for instance, why Rasi 'lGhuli is anxious.

3.3.1.3 Explicit Ellipses

Most of the ellipses employed in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* are explicit. They indicate clearly the lapse of time that they elide. Definite and indefinite ellipses are examples of explicit ellipses in that they openly mention the lapsed time that is omitted in a narrative.

The example of definite ellipsis above clearly indicates how much time is elided — stretching from evening of the first day to morning of the second day. In the same breath, the indefinite ellipsis above is also clear on the lapse of time it elides — a number of days.

These ellipses not only dictate elapsed time but also serve to provide information of a diegetic nature. For instance, in the case of Shekhe Ali and Umari, we are informed that on the second day Ali looked and saw two ways; one going left and another right. This ellipsis then sets to anchor the next phase of their journey.

1.1.1.4 Implicit Ellipses

Implicit ellipses are the opposite of explicit ellipses. As Gerard Genette (1980:108) says, their presence is unannounced:

> Implicit ellipses, that is, those whose very presence is not announced in the text and which the reader can infer only from some chronological lacuna or gap in narrative continuity.

Implicit ellipses, therefore, are not outrightly stated. They are gaps that must be figured out by the readers. Implicit ellipses indicate indefinite time lapse. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* has instances of implicit ellipses. There is an ellipsis between the time when Rasi 'lGhuli slaps his daughter, Dalgha (stanza 3633), and the time he leaves home and gets to reflect on what he has done while on the way (stanza 3703). It is clear that time has elapsed but that is not openly stated. The elided time is implicit.

We will never know what Rasi 'lGhuli was thinking or doing prior to his moment of reflection. This confirms that there is a moment elided during this period. Ellipsis results from maximum speed in which case there is zero textual space covered in a situation where some story duration is covered.

Narratives do not cater for every moment in time of the characters. It is only the important events to the narrative that are given elaboration as they contribute to the development of the story. Authors pick information only necessary for the development of the story being narrated. Therefore, aspects of character's lives unrelated to the narrative are elided. Otherwise, it is enough to just have an entire narrative covering a

single day, for instance. In fact, events involving a character in a single day can cover hundreds of thousands of pages of narrative.

3.3.2 Pause

Whereas ellipsis is a manifestation of maximum speed, pause is a manifestation of minimum speed. In pause, some segment of the text corresponds to zero story duration. Mieke Bal (2009:106) says:

> This term includes all narrative sections in which no movement of the fabula time is implied. A great deal of attention is paid to one element, and in the meantime the fabula remains stationary. When it is continued later on, no time has passed.

Mgeni bin Faqihi frequently uses pauses during narration. There are two ways in which descriptive pauses are realised in the poem. One is through description of setting which serves to provide some useful information before getting back to the narrative. We are provided information on the city of the "infidels". The information is provided as the narration of war is sidelined for this period. Between Stanza 2275 and 2282 we are provided with detailed information regarding the city, which is said to be good, with a fence round it and a strong gate built with a lot of caution. It is a gate so heavy that it requires no less than seventy men to push it open. On the outside there is a trench around the perimeter wall. This is just some of the information we get from this section. The story narration therefore stops at stanza 2274 giving way to this descriptive pause before it again picks up from stanza 2283.

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The other way in which a pause is realized throughout the poem is by use of what we will here refer to as characters' poems. These are poems said to be composed and/or narrated by characters in self praise as they psyche themselves to combat the enemy.

When Zuheri gets to the battle field, he first declares his name and praises himself comparing himself to a lion. He states that he is out to fight his enemies and defeat them. This happens in a space of four stanzas (1805—1808) before the narrative again continues. Such parts designated as characters' compositions are many in this poem and do play a key role in the rhythm or pace of the narrative by lowering its tempo. These parts focus on a single element: the character engaged in self praise. The reader is provided the opportunity to infer character traits from such compositions which serve to slow down narrative pace. Since most characters pride of their prowess in combat, key narrative elements of expectation and interest are evoked and the reader reads on in search of relief.

3.3.3 Summary

Summary is realized when there is pace acceleration through a textual compression of a story-time. The result is a short statement of the main features of the story. The degrees of compression vary from summary to summary.

Mgeni bin Faqihi does not regularly use summary in this poem. However, one of the classic instances of the summary is at the beginning of the poem. The entire story is summarized in one stanza.

26	Hadithi hiyo yuani	The story know you
	ina maneno bayani	is clearly documented
	ya vita vya 'Iyamani	of the war of Yemen
	zamani zake Bashiri.	during the days of the Prophet.

This summary compresses the entire story into one stanza which is a drastic acceleration. There is a hint at more details, regarding the Yemen war during Muhamadi's time. The promised details are then provided in the bulk of the poem. This acceleration then gives way to deceleration where detailed information on the war is provided.

When Wafari binti Sadamu narrates the death of Shahabu and the eventual succession by his son, Mukhariqi (Rasi 'lGhuli), it is all compressed in only three stanzas. The details on the nature and reason of his death are not provided here.

81	Kukufuru akishika	He committed sacrilege
	ajali ikamfika	he died
	akifa wakamzika	when he died they buried him
	kwa mila ya ukufari.	in line with pagan practice.

82	Akiyadhuku mauti	He tasted death
	pasi muda na wakati	in a short while
	ikinenda intiati	he was interred
	kwenda pambana na nari.	to go face hell fire.

83	Akitawala mwanawe	His son reigned
	akinga kozi na mwewe	like hawk or kite
	ya Mola asiyajue	disbelieving in God
	akazidi kukufuri.	surpassing in paganism.

Stanza 81 gives a summary of the death of Rasi 'lGhuli's father. No details are given about how he died and the cause of the death. These details are later provided by Umari in his analeptic narration detailing how Shahabu's son, Rasi 'lGhuli, killed him for disciplining him.

stanza 83 also provides us with a summary of Rasi 'lGhuli's reign stating that he

surpassed in bad deeds (paganism). In this single stanza, the entire reign of Rasi 'lGhuli

is summarized and a conclusion about him reached — a bad man. Both examples above

give narration in a few stanzas of several days or years without providing details of

speech or action.

3.3.4 Scene

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli is very rich in the use of scene. In scene, the duration of the story

and that of the text are considered roughly identical.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002) points out that dialogue is the purest scenic form. This

shows that scene is not limited to dialogue. It is also available in non-dialogue form.

The conversation between Muhamadi and Umari presents a scenic form.

129	Umari bin Umaya	Umari son of Umaya
	akamjibu Nabia	answered the prophet
	inti yake yanelea	I know his country
	magereza na qusuri.	the prisons and fortresses.
130	Inti ya huyu juhali	The country of this simpleton
	najua kula mahali	I know it in entirety
	wala sitaki dalili	nor do I require a sign
	usiku au nahari.	night or day.
131	Akatamka Amini	The prophet said
	Umari nipe yakini	Umari tell me the truth
	walikwenda tenda nini	What was your mission
	inti zao makufari.	In the land of the infidels.
132	Na Umari akajibu	And Umari answered
	kusema naye Habibu	telling it to the Beloved

| takupa yangu sababu | I will give you my reasons |
| hata kwao hadhihiri. | for going to their country. |

Though the above exchange lacks punctuation marks showing direct speech forms, a trait manifest throughout *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, they show a scenic form of dialogue. Such use of language consisting exclusively of dialogue and a few 'stage directions', makes the passage look like a scene from a play than a segment or section of a narrative such as *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

Mgeni bin Faqihi also provides detailed event narrations that are considered scenic. Although this form of scene is not as common as that of dialogue, it is used in a number of places in the text. For instance, the narration of Ali's encounter with Rasi 'lGhuli's men at the entrance to their fort is scenic. Thirteen stanzas are dedicated to the unfolding events during this encounter.

2965	Shekhe Ali uchondoka	Sheikh Ali left
	achenenda kwa haraka	he moved with speed
	baada alipofika	after his arrival
	wakikutana kufari.	The infidels met.

2966	Wakitazama juhali	The simpletons looked
	wawene jiwe thaqili	they saw a big stone
	kwa papo wakiajili	there and then they hurried
	kumpiga haidari.	to hit the lion.

2967	Alli akilienga	Ali saw the stone
	hata jiwe likamsonga	even as it hit him
	kapita akilikinga	he blocked it
	lisiwe kumhasiri.	from hurting him.

2968	Papo awene jabali	At the moment he saw a rock
	akipanda Shekhe Ali	Sheikh Ali climbed
	juu alipowasili	when he got to the top
	awene nyuki kathiri.	he saw a lot of bees.

2969	Achenda kuwabusuru na nyuki wasimdhuru na Mola kuwaumuru kumtii haidari.	We went close to see them and the bees did not sting him for God instructed them to be obedient to the lion.
2970	Kiwana mujirima Ali akiwegama na nyuki wakimwamdama wakikimbia kufari.	When he saw the infidels Ali attacked them and the bees followed him the infidels ran away.
2971	Akiwandama kilabu kwa khasira na ghadhabu chenda akiwadhurubu kwa sefu Dhu 'lFurari.	He pursued the dogs with anger and rage he went beating them With the sword Dhu'lFurari.
2972	Kufari wakikimbia wasiweze vumilia mjini walipoingia na Ali amedhihiri.	The infidels ran away they could not persevere as they entered the town Ali was in sight.
2973	Alipofika langoni kilitia mikononi kilizoa iyo hini wakikimbia kufari.	When he got at the gate he held it with his hands he fell it immediately the infidels ran away.
2974	Ali kita kalamu kiweta islamu wakiya kutaqadamu kwa wote wakidhihiri.	Ali called out he called the Muslims they came first all of them showed up.
2975	Sahaba wakikutana kwa wote ajimaina na mali wakikusanya mbele ya tumwa Bashiri.	The caliphs met all of them and collected the property As the Prophet watched.
2976	Akikeleti Habibu na jamii asahabu akiwaqifu harubu kupumua askari.	The Beloved sat and all the caliphs interceding in the war giving the army a break.
2977	Akitazama juhali ya mambo kuwa thakili akikusanya rijali kiwapa mashauri.	When the infidel saw of the situation getting bad he assembled men and gave them instructions.

Mieke Bal (2009:104) argues that scenes employ material that grabs attention and that also acts as a bridge between sections in a narrative. She says:

> If a writer wishes to fill out a scene, she will automatically employ more attention grabbing material — material that can also serve to connect the preceding and following chapter. Thus scene is often a central moment from which the narrative can proceed in any direction.

The two examples above from *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* do serve to connect the preceding and following sections. The above exchange between Umari and Muhamadi is important in that it prepares ground for Umari's confirmation of the deeds of Rasi 'lGhuli. The confirmation is what informs Muhamadi to decide to go to war to avenge the suffering of Wafari in the hands of Rasi 'lGhuli. The second example involving Ali is used to show the turn of events in the story — Rasi 'lGhuli and his people vacate their city and move on to the next one after Ali's heroics, with the help of the bees, subdue them. The fall of this town is of course a step towards the eventual conquest of the Muslims and ouster of Rasi 'lGhuli.

3.4 FREQUENCY

Frequency is the relation between repetition of events in the story and their narration. It is an aspect of temporality concerned with the number of times an event occurs or is narrated in a story and the number of times that event is presented in the text. Frequency, therefore, is concerned with repetition of occurrences. However, this does not mean that any particular event can be repeated in exactly the same way. This is captured by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002:57) who says:

> ... repetition is a mental construct attained by an elimination of the specific qualities of each occurrence and a preservation of only those qualities which it shares with similar occurrences. Strictly speaking, no event is repeatable in all respects, nor is a repeated segment of the text quite the same, since its new location puts it in a different context which necessarily changes its meaning.

Gerard Genette (1980:113) states that repetition is 'a mental construct, which eliminates from each occurrence everything belonging to it that is peculiar to itself, in order to preserve only what it shares with all the others of the same class, which is an abstraction'.

There are therefore two issues involved in frequency. They are:

(i) Occurrence of an event which can happen once or severally.

(ii) Production of a narrative statement which can be done once or severally.

From the two possibilities above, we can derive three types of repetitions discussed below

3.4.1 Singulative Narration

This involves narrating once an event that happened only once. Singulative narrations are the most common in stories. Gerard Genette (ibid) says that in a singulative narrative "the singularness of the narrated statement corresponds with the singularness of the narrated event."

The author-narrator's proleptic narration of events on what he wants his son to do for him is singulative. The author asks his son to go buy a good paper from the shop and bring it

to him quickly. This narrative is not repeated anywhere in the text. This is an example of singulative narration where what was to happen once is narrated once.

The other form of singulative narration is where what happened *n* times is narrated *n* times. One occurrence in the story is mentioned only once in the text. Although this is not a common feature in narrative, it has been widely used in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. In occurrences involving fights, the narrator keeps mentioning how the victims are cut into pieces one after the other during combat. Such singulative narration is well captured in the fight between Zuheri and Rasi 'lGhuli's men.

1653	Ikashitadi harubu	The fight continued
	Zuheri kitaghadhabu	Zuheri got infuriated
	akimtinda kilabu	he slaughtered the dog
	na rasi kaitairi.	cutting off his head.

1654	Akishika kwa upesi	He fast held it
	akitwaa ile rasi	taking away the head
	akikitupa kwa kasi	threw it with force
	kundini mwa makufari.	in the midst of the infidels.

1655	Kundini kikiwasili	It landed in the crowd
	kupiga mtu wa pili	hitting the second person
	kikawa kumqutuli	chopping him
	ukisha wao umuri	ending their lives

1656	Baadaye akinadi	Later as he spoke
	pakija mtu shadidi	forth came a strong person
	yukinga kana asadi	who was like a lion
	jinale itwa Jabiri.	His name was Jabiri.

1657	Walipokwisha onana	On setting eyes on each other
	papale wakishikana	They entangled in fight
	akimtoma laina	he pierced the infidel
	mkuki kimkhasiri.	the spear hurting him.

| 1658 | Kimtoma kifuani | He pierced his chest |
| | ukitokea mgongoni | getting through the back |

kamwangusha farasini	throwing him off the horse
ajali ikadhihiri.	he died.

1659	Akija tena wa tatu	Again came a third one
	yukinga nyati wa mwitu	like a wild buffalo
	akinadi mara tatu	shouting thrice
	pale alipo Zuheri.	In Zuheri's presence.

The above extract shows a singulative narration of events with each happening getting narrated only once. What happened *n* times is narrated *n* times. In the above example each mention corresponds to one occurrence in the story.

It is also important to point out that these singulative repeats point to oral narrative tendencies where each little event is singularly narrated. Such singulative narration captures the interest of the audience, provokes their imagination and anticipation.

3.4.2 Repetitive Narration

In the repetitive narrative mode what happened once is told *n* times. That is, an event that happened once is narrated several times (more than once). There is therefore repetition in narration of an event that took place once. Repeating narratives may or may not change the narrator, focalizer, narrative subject, style, duration, etc.[13]

Wafari's experience in the hands of Rasi 'lGhuli is narrated twice. First, by Wafari herself at the beginning of the story (stanza 75—122) and later by 'lFadhili (stanza 1968—1974). In the first narrative instance, Wafari is the narrator. In this case the repetitive narration changes the narrator. In both instances it is characters narrating;

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[13] Shlomith Rimmon-Kennan (2002), *Narrative Fiction*, pg. 58.

Walari being a homodiegetic narrator and 'Iladhili a heterodiegetic narrator. This occurrence gets narrated twice courtesy of these two characters' narrations.

Likewise, the killing of Jendile by Umari is narrated three times. The first time by the author-narrator (stanza 1341—1342), second time by the idol (stanza 1365—1369) and the third time by 'IWaqasi (stanza 1340—1341).

The issue of Umari's cheating to gain entry into the city (that he is a poet who is also out to beg from the sultan) is narrated four times by various narrators.

3.4.3 Iterative Narration

In iterative narration what happened *n* times is narrated once. Repeated events are synthesized and narrated only once. Many narratives do not narrate all events singularly.

Mgeni bin Faqihi employs several sylleptic formulations in this text. One such syllepsis is manifest in the following stanza:

811	Akashitadi anidi	The infidel persisted
	sahaba kuwafisidi	killing the caliphs
	watu saba kwa idadi	seven of them in number
	aliyokuwa khasiri.	with such vengeance.

The above stanza narrates the deeds of the slave, *Mtwana*, who kills seven caliphs one after another in a battle, but the events are here narrated only once. In this case the syllepsis serves to summarise events that would otherwise have taken a lot of time and space. This narrative summary fits well within a poetic form, in this case *Utenzi na Rasi*

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Ghuli, whose key feature is compression. However, narrative summary is not a preserve of poetry.

Gérard Genette (ibid) says that a single narrative utterance takes upon itself several occurrences together of the same event (in other words, once again, several events considered only in terms of their analogy). In the following example, the author uses the expression 'each day' to compress several events.

1854	Twajitahidi kuwana	We strived to fight
	kwa kula siku twaona	for each day we saw
	makufari kwongezana	the infidels increasing
	kana mai ya bahari.	like the waters of the sea.

'Each day' is a single narrative utterance which has several occurrences of the same event put together as though it were one. The syllepsis is not only on 'each day' but also on 'the infidels increasing.' The increase here is not a one time happening but severally happening presented as one.

There are several iterative scenes within singulative scenes in *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli*. For instance, we are told of seventy men who went seeking Dalgha's hand in marriage and were not able to marry her for her condition was to fight with whoever that wanted to marry her. Only the one who would defeat her would marry her. She defeats all the seventy men. This part is iteratively presented (stanza 3638). This iterative narration is presented within a singulative scene. The iterative narrative serves as an informative frame that is key to understanding Dalgha in subsequent events involving her; her ability and bravery to fight as well as her fighting nature. The events that follow (sending her

servant to call her fiance, running away from home and her killing of the fiance) are repetitive.

Iterations can be said to be either external or internal. The composer of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* widely employs both iterations.

3.4.3.1 External Iterations

These are iterations that extend beyond the temporal scope of the scene that they are inserted into. The iterative here covers a period outside the period of the scene itself. Dalgha's fight with the seventy men who showed interest in marrying her is one such external iteration. This iteration is a reflection back to events that are not within the action in focus at the point in time of the narrative.

3638	Walitoka shujaani	Great fighters surfaced
	wali watu sabaini	seventy in number
	kubarizi utamboni	got to the bottle field
	kwa wote wasiqadiri.	non of them triumphed.

The above narrative is an event whose happening took place prior to the moment of the narrative where it is grafted. It is actually analeptic. This makes the iterative to be external.

In the same breath Rasi 'IGhuli's bad treatment of people, especially Wafari's constant beating, is an external iteration. External iterations provide important background information of an event or character.

3.4.2.2 Internal Iterations

Unlike external iterations, internal iterations cover the period of time of the scene being described. They do not go beyond the scope of the scene in focus. Internal iterations are also many in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. In fact, most battle scenes have an internal iteration. The nature of fighting presented in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, just as in other Swahili epics, tends in several occasions to pair the enemies in twos as they fight. Once one is defeated, another from the vanquished steps forward to fight the winner. Although such scenes start with a singulative narrative mode, they finally turn to iterative narrative mode. Here is one such iterative.

3845	Akiwa kuwafisidi kwa upanga na hadidi wahidi bada wahidi sabiini makufari.	She kept killing them with a sword and metal one after the other seventy infidels.
3846	Na wale awauao huzikata ndevu zao akizirusha kwa kwao na paruza zikatiri.	And those she killed she would cut their beards throwing them at them landing on them.
3847	Wakiona wapotofu Wakangiwa na khaufu Wakiwa kutawaqnfu pasi mtu kudhihiri.	The infidels on seeing this fear gripped them off they kept without anyone showing up.

This extract is rich in internal iterations. Within this narrative scene, there is the killing of seventy fighters by Dalgha, cutting off their beards, throwing them at the enemies, the beards landing on the enemies and the seeing of the enemies of each of the events. In this case, several events are iteratively presented. These events also fall within the scene that is in focus making the iterative internal.

3.5 CONCLUSION

From the above analysis of time in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, it is apparent that in both story and narrative, time is indispensable. Narrative fiction cannot exist without time. It is also clear that *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* employs diverse categories of time, sometimes subversively, in narrative presentation. Arguably, this is one of the richest texts in Swahili narrative poetry in so far as time presentation in both narrative and story is concerned

Where as most narrative texts present a good number of anachronies, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* does not only employ both analepsis and prolepsis. It also uses pseudo analepses thus presenting a new dimension in the study of anachronies.

Mgeni bin Faqihi has employed the use of ellipsis, pause, summary and scene to effectively moderate the rhythm of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. Of equal importance is the use of singulative, repetitive and iterative modes of narration used in abundancy.

Having discussed narrative time in this chapter, we shall analyse two narrative aspects; narrative levels and voices, in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 NARRATIVE LEVELS AND VOICES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we shall explore the narrating situation (instance) in the narrative discourse of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. The various elements will be discussed under three broad categories: person, temporal relations and subordination relations.

Narration or story-telling can occur at many different levels. These levels are a result of the various participants that take part in the narrative communication channel. After Booth's (1961) views on narration based on a semiotic model, Chatman (1978) has come up with a diagram showing the participants (six) in the narrative transactions.

Real author ··▶ Implied author ──▶ (narrator) ──▶ (narratee) ──▶ implied reader ··▶ real reader

The above diagram leaves out two narrative participants (the real author and the real reader) from the narrative transaction proper. They are represented by the implied author and the implied reader in the narrative transaction proper. In this regard, the implied author is a superior being that governs the consciousness of the entire work of art. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002:88) observes:

> ... implied authors are often more superior in intelligence and moral standards to the actual men and women who are real authors. In any event, it has to be put forward that the two need not be, and in fact are often not, identical. An author may embody in a work ideas, beliefs, emotions other than or even quite opposed to those he has in real life; he may also embody different ideas, beliefs and emotions in different works. Thus while the flesh and blood author is subject to the vicissitudes of real life, an implied author of a particular work is conceived as a stable entity, ideally consistent with itself within the work.

The implied author is, therefore, a construct only obtained by the reader of the text. The narrator is then distinct from the implied author in that the narrator is the 'voice' telling the story.

Whereas this is clearly distinct in most works of art, it is not as clear in Swahili narrative poetry and in this case *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. As is convention, the author (or is it the narrator?) gives an account of what he wants done by his son, Khamisi, in readiness for the composition and recording of the story of Rasi 'lGhuli. And there in lies the question: is this part of the narrative fictional or non-fictional? Whichever way we look at it, it poses some challenges. If it is fictional, then we can talk of the implied author and the narrator as one and the same thing, seeming to negate the above view advanced by among others Chatman (1978) and Rimmon-Kenan (2002). Whereas we can easily differentiate the real author from the implied author, it is hard to isolate the implied author from the narrator especially when dealing with the abstract and closing coda of this text.

For purposes of this study, we shall treat the addressee, Khamisi, as an imagined entity in the diegesis of this particular narrative situation. The fact that Khamisi does not respond to this narrative situation nor is he thanked or told to sign off at the end of his imagined

unrolling of the story, makes him a hypothetical audience. The abstract and closing coda then provide the frame in which the secondary story is embedded.

Chatman (ibid) presents the narrator and narratee as optional participants in the communication situation. Rimmon-Kenan (2002) opposes this and emphasizes their role as important in a communication situation. Rimmon-Kenan argues that in a tale there is always a teller who cannot be overlooked in the communication channel. This teller, an important participant in the communication situation, is the narrator. With a narrator, there must then also be a narratee addressed by the narrator. The most interesting observation by Rimmon-Kenan is that a narrator can in some instances be his own narratee. This then takes us to the issue of addressor and addressee. In *Utenzi wa Al Inkishafi* for instance, the persona addresses his heart. Put in another way, the addressor addresses himself.

10 Kimakwe kuisa dibaji yangu   On the completion of my introduction
    penda kuuonya na moyo wangu   I would like to warn my heart
    Utetwe ni hawaa ya ulimwengu   for being held captive by worldly things
    hila za Rajimi ziughuriye.   satan's trickeries are cheating it.

11 Moyo wangu nini huzindukani   My heart why don't you realize
    likughurielo, hela, ni n'ni?   say, what is it cheating you?
    Hunelezi nami kalibaini   why not make it known to me
    liwapo na sura nisikataye?   so if its valid I do not reject it?

Although Rimmon-Kenan picks only four of the six participants proposed by Chatman to what she considers key participants in the communication channel, it is only true to the extent of text analysis. It is, however, hard to imagine the existence of a text without the implied author and the implied reader.

It has already been argued by Booth (1961:75) and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002:87), and we here quote verbatim, that:

(i) the implied author is more superior in intelligence and moral standards to the actual men and women who are real.

(ii) the implied author of a particular work is conceived as a stable entity, ideally consistent with itself within the work.

From the above we can, therefore, argue that confining the superiority of the intelligence of the implied narrator to norms inherent in a work of art is too limiting. It is the same implied narrator's intelligence that structures the work. On consistency, a work of art does not only have ideas consistently presented but that there must also be consistency in the manner in which the ideas are presented (a formal aspect).

In a narrative communication situation, the six participants are important as they are connected as in a chain. In some narrative situations, some of the participants in the chain seem not to be as distinct as already argued above with regard to *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*

Gerard Genette (1980: 213) points out that poetics is experiencing difficulty in the approach of generating the instance of narrative discourse otherwise also referred to as narrating. This he says is caused by a kind of hesitation - an unconscious one — to recognize as well as respect the independence of the narrating instance. Genette further says that when dealing with a fictional narrative this should not happen. He says:

> ... critics restrict questions of narrative enunciating to questions of "point of view," on the other hand they identify the narrating instance with the instance of 'writing', the narrator with the author, the recipient of the narrative with the reader of the work: a confusion that is perhaps legitimate in the case of a historical narrative or a real autobiography, but not when we are dealing with a narrative of fiction, where the role of narrator is itself fictive, even if assumed directly by the author, and where the supposed narrating situation can be very different from the act of writing (or of dictating) which refers to it.

The first part of the above quotation serves to highlight the concern already raised by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan and Symour Chatman, quoted above, concerning the participants in a narrative communication channel. Our point of concern lies in the second part whose emphasis is on the role of the narrator. Genette clarifies that the narrator's role remains fictive even when an author directly assumes the role of narrator. Therefore, even as the author of *Utenzi wa Rasi IGhuli* seems to directly take up the role of the narrator, the narrator's role will indeed be treated as purely fictive in this analysis.

4.2 TEMPORAL RELATIONS

Narration "can entertain various temporal relations with the events of the story."[18] Gerard Genette (1980:215) argues that a story must be located in time in relation with the act of narrating and this subsequently provides three temporal options in story narration; the past, present and future tense. He argues as follows:

> I can very well tell a story without specifying the place where it happens, and this place is more or less distant from the place where I am telling it; nevertheless, it is almost impossible for me not to locate the story in time with respect to my narrating act, since I must necessarily tell the story in a present, past or future tense. This is perhaps why the temporal determinations of the narrating instance are manifestly more important than its spatial determinations.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction [2nd Edn]* London and New York, 2002.

According to Genette, therefore, time of the narrating is a much more important aspect in narrative discourse than setting. In fact, it would be hard to comprehend a narrative without an indication of the distance between story and narration. Events in a story can be told after they happen, before they happen, during their happening or in alternation. The four types of narration are discussed below as used in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

4.2.1 Ulterior Narration

The term 'ulterior narration' is used by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002) to refer to narration of events after their happening. Genette refers to such narration as 'subsequent narrating' and notes that this is by far the most prevalent form of narration in narratives. This type of narrating is marked by the use of past tense. Gerard Genette (1980:220) states that:

> The use of a past tense is enough to make a narrative subsequent, although without indicating the temporal interval which separates the moment of the narrating from the moment of the story. In classical "third person" narrative, this interval appears generally indeterminate, and the question irrelevant, the preterite marking a sort of ageless past: the story can be dated, as often is in Balzac, without narrating being so.

Genette's observation quoted above poses several pertinent issues worth discussing here with regard to *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli*. All the narrating instances in *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli* apart from the framing text (narrative) and a few instances of an anterior narration, are presented in the past tense making them ulterior narrations. The author has chosen his narrator to present the story in a manner that shows that the events narrated preceded the narrating. The following example will suffice to demonstrate this.

44	Twaa mwanzo wa kalamu	Document the beginning of the narrative
	siku moya nafahamu	one day for sure
	ondokile Muungamu	out went the confessor
	Mtume wetu Bashiri.	our Prophet Bashiri.

45	Kwondoka kwake Amini	When the Faithful left
	katika mle nyumbani	going out of the house
	akenda msikitini	he went to the mosque
	wakati wa 'Ifajiri.	early in the morning.

46	Akiadhini Bilali	Bilali made a prayer call
	Sauti akiratili	his voice projecting
	Wakipulika rijali	the men heard it
	Wakuu hata saghiri.	The old and the young.

Stanza 44 clearly marks the narrative as preceding the narration. By the narrator using "one day" and "out went", we automatically deduce that the event here presented, is narrated after its happening.

As Genette points out above, there is no indication of the temporal interval separating the moment of the narrating from the moment of the story. Perhaps the closest we get to see a kind of temporal indication between the moment of the narrating and the moment of the story is when the author-narrator states that the story he is about to narrate took place during the time of prophet Muhamadi. Even then we cannot place a finger on the exact period of Muhamadi's time — but we can roughly have it placed within a certain range of time. But again, there is the problem of placing the narrating instance. The publication of this narrative is 1979 but this for sure is not the time of the narrating. Narrating (recording) may have taken place a couple of days, months or years prior to the dating of this text.

Despite this challenge, in some instances the temporal interval separating the moment of the narrating from the moment of the story is clearly presented. For instance Umari's instance of narrating of the deeds of Rasi 'IGhuli at the start of the poem, has an interval of twenty years between it and the story's happening. The narrator, Umari, states the time separating the moment of the story and that of the narrating captured below.

323	Kwondoka kwangu Amini	My departure the Faithful
	inti yake maluuni	to the land of the damned
	hata leo alihini	to date this very moment
	idadi takukhubiri.	the span I shall tell you.

324	Ya tangu huo wakati	Since that time
	hata leo ni mudati	to date its time
	ni ishirini sanati	it is twenty years
	hisabu sikukithiri.	my counting precise.

The two examples discussed above help demonstrate that the distance between the happening of events and the narration can vary from one narrative instance to another or even from one text to another. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* has several narration instances that epitomize this scenario.

4.2.2 Anterior Narration

Anterior narration occurs when the future tense is used in narration. Some times the present tense is used. Gerald Prince (1989:6) defines anterior narration as, "A narration preceding in time the narrated situations and events; a prior narrating. Anterior narration is characteristic of predictive narration."

anterior narration, therefore, the moment of the narrating precedes the moment of the story. The narrated events are told before the time of their happening. Since this kind of narration is rare, it is seen as a predictive type of narration for the norm is that events are mainly narrated after their happening.

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli has several narrating instances where narration of events takes place before the happening of those events. The examples discussed under prolepsis in chapter 3 apply here. Narration of events before they happen is indeed a proleptic instance as evidenced in the following example.

3077	Nimesikia kalamu	I have heard word
	maleuni azuumu	that the damned one is planning
	kesho kwenda kwa sanamu	to tomorrow visit the idol
	ya kwenda kustajiri.	so as to get assistance.
3078	Na mimi simuamini	And I do not trust him
	afikapo sanamuni	when he gets to the idol
	nakhofia shaitani	I fear that Satan
	kinenda akimghuri.	might cheat him.
3079	Akighurika kilabu	If the dog gets cheated
	akingiwa na ghadhabu	and is filled with fury
	moyoni akituluhu	his heart may want
	ya kumuua Zuberi.	to kill Zuberi.
3080	Nataka mwenye juhudi	I want one that is zealous
	awe thabiti fuadi	with a strong heart
	amwelekee Wadudi	to face God
	na kutakasa dhamiri.	and cleanse his conscience.
3081	Ende inti ya kilabu	That he may go to the dog's country
	na roho yake kitibu	and satisfy his heart
	akatonya taratibu	so he may make plans
	amfungue Zuberi.	to set free Zuberi.

Muhamadi's narration here is a case of anterior narration. He predicts what is likely to happen to Zuberi - getting killed by Rasi 'IGhuli who is set to visit the idol. Muhamadi predicts that the idol will cheat him into killing Zuberi. Also narrated prior, is the act of going to free Zuberl who is being detained by Rasi 'IGhuli. All these situations and events are narrated before they happen making this narrative instance prior or anterior narration.

Predictive narrations, such as the one cited above, apart from using the future tense, sometimes use the present.[1] In the above example the author uses future markers such as 'kesho', 'amfungue' which point to the future. From the above excerpt, it is also clear that the narrator uses the present tense as well as seen in such words as 'nataka', 'unaamini' and 'afikapo'.

By using 'kesho' (tomorrow) the narrator marks clearly the temporal interval separating the moment of the narrating and the moment of the story - one day. Unlike ulterior narration, in anterior narration interval plays a much more significant role in the narrative. This is so because it points to a goal unattained at the moment of the narrating unlike in ulterior narration where that goal or anticipation has already been attained. In *Lterci wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, this clearly marked temporal interval of one day raises (to use dramatic discourse) the stakes and therefore becomes an important factor in the plot's causality. Likewise, from the point of view of the reader, the level of interest in the story rises. On the part of the actants, it provides them motivation and urgency to pursue the enemy with the intention of saving a comrade at arms.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction (2nd Edn)*, London and New York, 2002, Pg 91.

4.2.3 Simultaneous Narration

Simultaneous narration takes place when narration of the story takes place at the same time as the action. Both take place at the same time. Reporting of an event is narrated at the very time that it is taking place.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, there are narrating situations that show simultaneity of the moment of narrating and the moment of the event happening. This is manifest from stanza 35 to 43. Here the narrator is speaking to the narratee, Khamisi his son, asking him to immediately get hold of the pen and start recording the story he is about to recount. In this monologue, Khamisi is a passive listener ready with pen to write down his father's narrative. The narrator narrates how he desires Khamisi to document the narrative.

| 35 | Ewe mwanangu Khamisi
shika hima qarutasi
na kalamu kwa upesi
pasiwe na kuusiri. | My dear son Khamisi
hasten to get hold of the paper
and fast the pen
without further ado. |
| 36 | Ogope kutaqarabu
nikwambie matulubu
nikupalo ukutubu
usiwe kutaakhari. | I ear not to move close
that I may tell you my desire
what I tell you may record
so you may not worry. |

There is here concurrence in time of narrating and time of the happening of the event. Khamisi has to immediately hold the writing paper and pick up the pen in readiness for the task of recording the story of Rasi 'lGhuli as presented by his father. He is also to dispense with his fear and move close to his father, the narrator, so as to capture in writing his desire. These show that the narrating here is simultaneous with the situations and events narrated.

1.2.4 Intercalated Narration

Mgeni bin Faqihi also employs intercalated narration in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*. These are instances where the moment of narrating and the moment of action follow each other in alternation. Gerard Genette (1980:217) calls this type of narration 'interpolated' and goes on to say that it is the most complex in that:

> ... It involves a narrating with several instances, and hence the story and the narrating can become entangled in such a way that the latter has an effect on the former.

A case in point in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* is the narrator's narration from stanza 27 to 34. Stanza 25 and 26 introduce the subject undertaken by the narrator in this part of the text, that is, the war of 'IYamani that took place during the time of Muhamadi. This serves as an exposition.

Stanza 27 and 28 are largely external analepses. In stanza 27, the narrator details that he saw the story, read it and understood it. It then soothed his heart and has since been reflecting on it. In stanza 28 the narrator says that when he reflects on it, it pleases him and this guides his heart to compose it in verse form. The two stanzas quoted below are therefore largely an instance of narrating an event or situation after it has happened - ulterior narration.

27	Haiona haisoma	I have seen and read it
	maana ni kufahama	the aim is to understand
	hatibu wangu mtima	to sooth my heart
	huwaza na kufikiri	I think and reflect.

28	Kufikiri nikiwaza	I thought and reflected
	haona kunipendeza	I found it appealing to me

moyoni nikilekeza	my heart decided
kutunga kwa shairi	to compose in verse.

Stanza 29 is then an instance of anterior narration. The narrator says that he would like to retell the story in the Swahili language for not many people understand the Arabic language in which it is narrated. In stanza 30, line one and two, the narrator reverts to anterior narration. Here he says that he kept agonizing that most people are not competent in Arabic. In line three and four, he says he will compose to enable them access the entire story. This is a case of anterior narration.

Stanza 31 and 32 are instances of simultaneous narration. The narrator says he is not an expert composer nor is he a teacher. Our main focus here is the use of present tense which shows that the situation narrated obtains at the time of the narrating therefore making the narration simultaneous.

Finally, stanza 33 and 34 provide an instance of anterior narration. Here the narrator talks of the response of the audience to his work upon reading it. He says that they should not smite him upon reading his work and finding it falling short of expectation. The use of the world "msije" here translated as "so that you do not" is a clear use of future tense, an indication that the narration precedes the happening.

Thus, the entire narrative (stanza 25 to 34) presents several situations where the relationship between the moment of narrating and the moment of the story keep alternating. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002) observes that in interpolated narration, an

event of the recent past is narrated which helps trigger an event of the near future. Such is the case with the example above that has been the subject of our analysis here.

4.3 NARRATIVE DURATION

Narrative duration is one other temporal determination of narration. It refers to the time it takes to narrate a story. However, a majority of stories do not show the time it takes to tell a story. What most stories do is show the time it takes for an event or situation to take place. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* is not an exception. The author does not indicate how long it took to narrate/record the story. For instance, we do know that the war between Muhamadi and Rasi 'IGhuli's men takes nine months but we do not know the time taken by the author to compose or tell this story. On the length of time in the war, we are told:

4565	Kuwana kwao zitani	Their fight in this war
	makufari wa Amini	the infidels and the Faithful
	idadiye mbayani	its time that you may know
	yali tisia shahari.	nine months it was.

4.4 SUBORDINATION RELATIONS

Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli presents an interesting scenario worth discussing regarding subordination relations. This narrative provides a rich ground for the study of narrative levels in a narrative text making it one of the richest Swahili literary texts in this regard. The author of this text does not employ a single story chronologically arranged. Indeed, as Peter Barry (2002:235) indicates:

> Stories are not always presented 'straight'. Often writers make use of 'frame narratives (also called 'primary narratives') which contain within them 'embedded narratives' (also called 'secondary narratives').

As pointed out above by Barry, narratives can take complex structures. These structures result in narratives within narratives — tales can exist within other tales. Shlomith Rimmon-Kennan (2002:92) notes that apart from narration of the story, there can also be narration in the story. Regarding narration in the story she says:

> A character whose actions are the object of narration can himself in turn engage in narrating a story. Within his story there may, of course, be yet another character who narrates another story, and so on in infinite regress. Such narratives within narratives create a stratification of levels whereby each inner narrative is a subordinate to the narrative within which it is embedded.

Narrative embedding, therefore, involves not only change of narrator but also change of narratee. A character narrating a story actually has fellow characters as narratees. As a narrator changes, so does the narratee. Gerard Genette (1980) uses such terms as extradiegetic, intradiegetic and metadiegetic to refer to these levels. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, however, advances the use of first-degree narrative, second degree narrative and third degree narrative to refer to the various levels of narrative embedment. We find Rimmon-Kenan's terms less confusing and will therefore use them in this section.

4.4.1 First Degree Narrative

The narrator's story before the narrative proper[18] begins and after the narrative proper, account for first degree narrative. The part provides the abstract and coda of the story of Rasi 'lGhuli thereby embedding the narrative proper within It. Apart from this first degree narrative, otherwise also referred to as the primary narrative, largely accounting

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[18] Narrative proper refers to the intended story – the story the narrator deliberately sets out to narrate (the story of Rasi 'lGhuli) as opposed to the abstract and coda of the text where he is narrating but not seemingly aware of this act.

the narrator's preparation to narrate and have his son, Khamisi, document the story, it also mentions the story proper that is about to be narrated and also shows that the story proper has come to an end. In essence, it provides both a preamble and a conclusion.

Unlike most other narratives, the narrator of the first degree narrative in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, where as he is also a character in the events he narrates, actually goes on to be the narrator of the second degree narrative where he does not participate in the events recounted

This primary narrative is not the main story as it were but only comes first and therefore anchors the secondary narrative which is the main story. The primary or frame narrative in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is, as Peter Barry (2002:232) puts it, double ended; that is, the frame situation is reverted to at the end of the embedded story.

4.4.2 Second Degree Narratives

Manfred Jahn (2005:N 2.4.2) describes a second degree narrative as a narrative that is embedded in a first-degree narrative. As Barry (2002) points out, the second narrative is usually the main story. Such is the case with *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* where the story of Rasi 'lGhuli is the main story embedded in the primary story. Apart from a few stanzas dealing with the primary narrative, the entire text is occupied by the secondary or second degree narrative. Second degree narratives fall within a category that Genette (1980) refers to as metanarratives, that is, narratives within narratives.

The narrator of a second degree narrative is usually a character in the first degree narrative who takes up the role of narrating or writing a story that is then read by other characters. In Katama Mkangi's novel, *Mafuta* (1984), the embedded story is read by Zuka and his friends after the author of the story is accosted and beaten for stealing fruits on sale from a dosing seller and drops his coat which has a manuscript. The story occupies chapter one to chapter nine of the novel. The introduction, 'utangulizi' and the last chapter, that is chapter ten, are occupied by the primary narrative. Although, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* has a similar structure, the narrator does not change. After narrating the story in which he is a character (the primary narrative), he goes on to narrate the embedded story.

Second degree narratives may not only be presented by way of a character directly narrating. Letters can also be used to present embedded narratives. For instance, in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, Rasi 'lGhuli's letter to Qatirifu seeking his support in the fight with Muhamadi's men is a case of an embedded narrative (stanza 2544 — 2548). The content of this letter is presented by the narrator.

4.4.3 Third Degree Narratives

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli presents several cases of third degree narratives — narratives embedded in second degree narratives. In this kind of narrative, a character in the second degree narrative narrates his story creating a third degree narrative.

in third degree narratives, the audience or narratees are the characters in the second degree narrative. Cases of third degree narratives are Wafari binti Sadamu's recounting her experience in the hands of Rasi 'lGhuli where she narrates a story that she was part of then and which she is its narrator. The other example is that of Umari bin Umaya who recounts his escapades in Rasi 'lGhuli's land before he converted to Islam. Both of these third degree narratives are analepses. Likewise the various war episodes narrated by the characters are third degree narratives. The author of this epic tends to employ this narrative level when the characters step out to fight — they themselves narrate what transpired. This is a deliberate effort by the narrator to reduce the aesthetic distance courtesy of the first person narration so as to appeal to both the internal (narratees) and external (readers) audience towards the 'holy' war by giving it a sense of immediacy and intensity.

4.4.4 Functions of Embedded Narratives in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*

Embedded narratives, also referred to as hypodiegetic or metadiegetic narratives, serve different purposes in relation to narratives they are inserted or grafted into. An embedded narrative can serve one or several of these functions at a time. The embedded narratives in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* mainly serve the following two purposes.

4.4.4.1 Explanatory Function

Embedded narratives can explain what has led to the current situation. The metadiegesis helps explain reasons behind the events narrated in the diegesis. The cause of the events

In the diegesis is explained. The relationship here between the events of the metadiegesis and the diegesis is direct causality.

When the story of Rasi 'lGhuli begins, we are told of Muhamadi leading his close followers in a prayer one early morning. They then see dust from afar and finally a group of people led by a woman arrives and the woman asks to see prophet Muhamadi. Muhamadi comes to meet her and asks her what her problem is. She then starts to narrate her ordeal in the oppressive manners of Rasi 'lGhuli – a metadiegetic narrative where the narrator, Wafari binti Sadamu, narrates her own story.

This metadiegetic narrative further gives way to another metadiegetic narrative by Umari who recounts what he knows about Rasi 'lGhuli.

Wafari's metadiegic narration explains why she has come to see the prophet. It helps explain why she is insecure and desperate and why there is need for the prophet to intervene in her cause. Umari's recounting of events also helps explain why the current situation with regard to Rasi 'lGhuli's oppression obtains thereby helping confirm that the complainant's pledge needs consideration.

4.4.4.2 Actional Function

Apart from answering why the situation at the point in time of a narrative is the way it is, metadiegetic narratives also help advance the action of the diegetic narrative.

For instance, the metadiegetic (also referred to as hypo-hypodiegetic) narrative by Zuberi, advances the action of a face-off with Rasi 'lGhuli. This narrative gives impetus to the war on Rasi 'lGhuli as it motivates Zuberi to take arms and avenge the pain caused to his father in-law (stanza 943-955). Such also is the function of Rasi 'lGhuli's letter to Qatirifu. It provides the opportunity to further engage in the war against their enemies.

Similarly, metadiegetic narratives provide no explicit relationship between them and the diegetic level. They play the role of distraction and obstraction. Abdala's narration, which I have in this study (3.2.3.5), referred to as a pseudo analepsis, is an imaginary story he creates to distract his enemies from attacking him and as a result obstract their intended act. He cheats them through his narrative that he and his brother have been attacked by Ali who kills his brother (Abdala's) and injures him. They then take him into their town where he sees Umari in chains. Although the main role of this narrative is to distract and obstract the enemy from pursuing their goals, it changes the direction of the plot enabling the weak to triumph over the mighty. Sheherazade's chain of narratives in the *Tales from 1001 Arabian Nights* (1992) is a classic example of a metadiegetic narrative performing an actional function.

4.4.5 Metalepsis

The transition from one narrative level to another is achieved by an act of narration where the reader's attention to the shift is either marked or unmarked. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* employs both modes in narrative shift.

4.5.1 Marked Transitions

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli largely uses marked narrative transitions. In such instances the act of narration draws the attention of the reader to the change in narrative level. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* presents a rather interesting case of marked narrative transitions. Marked transitions have several markers.

The shift from the diegetic level to the metadiegetic level in Wafari's recounting of her story shows a narrative transition which has several markers of transition. This can be mainly attributed to the nature of verse form which employs repetition as one of its key structural devices. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* being a prosodic poem, makes the use of repetition more pronounced. The following two stanzas show the 'double' marking of the shift of the narrative level. In stanza 75, the heterodiegetic narrator points to the beginning of Wafari's turn in narrating and actually indicates this character to take up the narrating, where as markers in stanzas 76 and 78 are mainifest to us through an homodiegetic narrator, Wafari binti Sadamu.

75	Mtu mke akanena	The woman said
	nisikize maulana	listen to me my Lord
	takupa yote maana	I will tell you the reason
	khabari zilizojiri.	all that happened.
76	Twaa mwanzo wa kalamu	Take my first word
	takupa yangu isimu	I will give you my name
	Wafari binti Sadamu	Wafari daughter of Sadamu
	ndilo jina madhukuri.	is my prominent name.
78	Nisikize tumwa wetu	Listen to me our prophet
	huko janibu ya kwetu	in our home area
	kuna khabithi ya watu	there is a bad person
	Sultani wa kufari.	King of infidels.

This is also the case with the narrator of the extradiegetic level who in stanza 25 clearly states that there is a story in a book written in Arabic that he intends to narrate. Then in stanza 44 he clearly shows that the narration has now set in motion.

44   Twaa mwanzo wa kalamu   Record the beginning of the story
        siku moya nafahamu   one day I remember
        ondokile muungama   the believer left
        mtume wetu, Bashiri.   our prophet, Bashiri.

The first two lines of this stanza clearly show that there is a narrative just about to be told by a heterodiegic narrator who just prior to this narrative instance has been a homodiegetic narrator in the 'pre-initial' text.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, transitions between episodes are also clearly marked. The narration then shows the narrator's clear drawing of the reader's attention to the change of episode. This change allows the narrator to narrate simultaneous events that take place in two separate locations making the presentation of events appear as though in a movie. Formulas are widely used to mark such transitions. Here is one such formula.

433   Qala rawi 'lkitabu   The narrator says
        maneno kuyahawihu   to arrange the words
        tuyatenge kila babu   demarcate every part
        msome mkifasiri.   so you may read and interpret.

434   Hayo niliyosanifu   That I have composed
        Ya Alii maarufu   of the ingenous Ali
        yawekeni muwaqafu   put it aside
        turejee kwa Zuberi.   lets get back to Zuberi.

The two stanzas show the narrator's invitation of the reader to join him in his story's world - asking the reader to put aside the story of Ali and get back with him to the story

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of Zuberi. The narrator then here addresses the reader. The author here plays with the double temporality of the story and the narrating.[19]

4.4.5.2 Unmarked Transitions

There are situations in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* where narrative transitions are not marked. The narrator in the second degree narrative gives way to a character in his story who takes up the narration of that same story. This is a common feature in episodes involving actual war. When the main characters take to war, they undertake the narrating through the war. Such characters narrate in first person and thereby reducing the aesthetic distance between the story (narrating) and the narratee. This being a poem focusing on religion, and more specifically a "holy war", the change of narrator suits the intentions of the author's implied audience.

Unmarked transitions present a situation akin to news reporting where the narrator gives way to the voice of the focalized to talk. However, this mode of transition can be a problem to the reader who suddenly finds a first person narrator (homodiegetic) in charge of the narration up till then undertaken by a third person (heterodiegetic) narrator. The four stanzas below show the sudden change of transition courtesy of the unmarked transition in an episode focusing on one of Umari's fighting instances with the enemy.

1405	Nyikani akipotea	He disappeared into the wild
	wasimuone asia	and they could not figure him out
	ndia aliyokungia	the route he took
	wala kuona ashari	Nor see any sign.

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[19] Gerard Genette (1980) *Narrative Discourse An Essay in method* Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, pg. 235

1406	Kule mbele akipata	When he got far ahead
	roho yake akajuta	his soul regretted
	kisema yani kuwata	he said why should I leave
	asipokuwa khasiri.	without causing them pain.

1407	Hisimama kuwangoja	I stood and waited for them
	Na kusudi kuwafuja	to intentionally cause them harm
	Punde niwene wakija	suddenly I saw them coming
	Jamii ya makufari.	a group of infidels.

1408	Pana moja farisi	There was one horse
	niwene kuya kwa kasi	I saw coming fast
	yukinga pepo wa kusi	like the southern wind
	au rihi ya matari.	or windy rain.

Stanza 1405 and 1406 are narrated by a narrator who is outside the narrated events who then gives way to a character in this narrated events, Umari, to take up the narrating. This happens without any notice of change of person of narrating.

4.5 NARRATIVE VOICES

Narratives present a typology of narrative agents that tell the story. The narrative agents or narrators, as they are popularly referred to, vary from text to text or from one part of the text to the other depending on the author's choice of narrative agent. It is through these voices in the story that we hear the story being narrated. Narrators have been variously classified depending either on the grammatical forms (first, second or third person narrator) or on the position of the narrator relative to the story being narrated.

Perhaps the most familiar and easy way of looking at narrators is by way of the grammatical criteria mentioned above. Although the concepts 'first' and 'third' person narrator look straight forward, they do present challenging and interesting situations

when probed further as discussed here below. The other, not so familiar way, is that of discussing narrator in relation to their position with regard to the story i.e. heterodiegetic, homodiegetic, hypodiegetic, etc. In this section, we shall discuss the various types of narrators as presented in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

4.5.1 First Person Narration

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli presents several instances where events are narrated in first person. The pronoun 'I' is used. The framing narrative uses first person narration where the agent, is also a character in what he narrates.

Steven Cohan and Linda M. Shires (1988:90) observe that In first person narration the narrator is a character in the story being narrated.

> When a narrator is also a character in the story, however peripheral,
> the narration is character-bound, told in the first person (so named
> because a first-person pronoun - I - is used to refer to the character
> who narrates).

Stanza 14 of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is presented by a first person narrative agent. This agent seeks to be provided a pen by his son, Khamisi, and without delay. Stanza 16 to 22 the author presents the narrative in second person. The pronoun 'you' is used.

This shows that a narrative may not necessarily stick to one mode of narration. In this instance, a first person narration invites a second person mode of narration to take up the narrating of proleptic events. We would argue, as we shall argue through this section, that what really makes a narrative first, second or third person narration is not the mere use of

pronoun but anchorage of the narrator. In the example given above, the narrator, who keeps referring to himself as 'I', seems not to disappear from narration even as the second person pronoun is initiated into the narrative. Even with the use of this second person pronoun there surely must be a voice talking to the implied narratee, Khamisi. So, who might this be? Definitely his father, the narrator, who, in this context is a first person narrator. In fact, the 'you' can only be interpreted in the context of the 'I' in the text.

4.5.2 Second Person Narration

As already pointed above, there are markers of second person narration in the use of the pronoun 'you'. The narrator uses 'you' in instructing his son on what he needs to do to provide him a good pen to be used in recording the story he is about to narrate. Here is an extract of second person narration as is linguistically marked by the pronoun 'you'.

17	Unapokwenda dukani	When you go to the shop
	usiusiri ndiani	do not delay on the way
	ufike kwa Selemani	get to Selemani's place
	au kwa Isa mzuri.	or to good Isa's.

18	Mpatie na mapesa	Give him the money
	uyatukue kabisa	carry it as you go
	ukiwasili kwa Isa	when you get to Isa's place
	usiwe kutaasari.	do not delay.

It looks a straight forward matter classifying narration as we have done as a second person narration. However, critically looked at, the voice speaking is that of the narratee's father which here seems to be giving instructions to the narratee. It is the 'you' within the story and not the 'you' without of the story. If the focus is on the 'you' within the story, then we would argue, the narrative is here presented in first person (this would

then be treated as mere instructions narrated and explained, rolled out to an actant within the events presented) — which, in our view, is what it is as opposed to a situation where the narratee is not within the narrated world.

What seems apparent, though, is the ever present image of the first person narrator in this so called second person narration. The more the 'you' is referred to, the more the speaker's voice is present. It is that voice; the voice of the narratee, producing the 'you'. The 'you' here seems not to be independent as are the 'first person' and 'third person' pronoun. The 'second person' pronoun would be dead without either the first or third person pronoun driving it; seeming to tell it what it is doing, has done or is to do – either ordering or seeming to remind it of something. It is therefore an entity dependent on it's fellow persons for survival.

In stanza 14 the first and second persons seem to co-exist creating a blurred situation that it becomes hard to say which person is dominant. But again it is the first person seeming to invite the second person — re-energizing it, giving it room to be manifest in a few stanzas — before the first person again quickly taking over as narrative agent (stanza 15 to 24).

14	Ewe mwanangu Khamisi	You my son Khamisi
	nipatie qaratasi	give me a paper
	uniletee upesi	you bring it to me quickly
	pasiwe kutaakhari.	without delay.

15	Qaratasi iwe shamu	Let it be from Syria
	iliyo njema naimu	good and pleasant
	na pambo ni maadimu	whose texture is rare
	twaa hiyo ya hariri.	pick the silk one.

16	Wendapo ukinunua	When you go buying
	jitahidi kutcua	try to choose the best
	nawe ni mtu mwelewa	for you are knowledgeable
	si mchache wa nadhari.	not lacking in sense.

In stanza 14 there is the use of 'you' a second person linguistic marker as well 'me' and 'my' showing a first person voice.

4.5.3 Third Person Narration

The story of Rasi 'lGhuli, a second level narrative, is largely narrated in third person. The mediating voice tells of a story that it does not take part in - it narrates events in a world it is not part of. The linguistic marker is 'he' or 'she.'

The narrator of the heterodiegetic or first degree narrative where he is a participant, narrates another story where he is not a participant. He takes the role of observer who recounts the events observed or rather a narratee who recounts what in his own words is a story in a book he had read written in Arabic.

25	Pana hadithi ajabu	There is a unique story
	yandikwa ndani kitabu	written in a book
	kwa lugha ya Waarabu	in the language of the Arabs
	nayo hadithi khiyari.	and it is a good story.

29	Hapenda kuibadili	I wish to retell it
	kwa lugha ya suwahili	in the Swahili language
	kiarabu ni qalili	it is a few who Arabic
	wajuao tafsiri.	can understand.

From line two of stanza 44 this diegetic narrative is narrated by a third person voice and is controlled by it up to the end (stanza 4563). This is the dominant voice in this diegetic

(second degree) narrative. However, this dominant voice now and again takes a back seat and invites first person narrators to recount certain event. Some of the characters at the diegetic level who take up the narrating of events at the hypodiegetic or third degree level are Umari, Zuberi, Wafari binti Sadamu and the angels. First person narrations, are also realized through the use of letters such as the one written by Rasi 'lGhuli seeking army support from his neighbours to help beef up his army so as to form a strong force to take on Muhamudi's army.

The story of Rasi 'lGhuli, therefore, presents two sets of narration shifting between them. This is an example of a narrative using both first and third person narration. Steven Cohan and Linda M. Shires' (1988:91) views aptly capture the narrative voice situation in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

> ... a single narration can be told both in the first and in the third person. Many third person narrations frame or alternate with first person ones. Even uncomplicated third person narrations at times insert a section of secondary narration by a character ... likewise, more than one first person narrator can assume responsibility for the narration with the multiple accounts appearing in succession (one after another) ....

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, as has been pointed out already, there is more than one first person narrator. The first person narrations by Zuberi, Umari and Ali come in succession as is the case with Wafari binti Sadamu's and Umari's (at the initial part of the story of Rasi 'lGhuli).

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli is largely narrated by a single narrator but who from time to time inserts other characters' accounts in the narration. The third person narrator gives room to

the first person narrators so they may not only give an account of the narrative from their point of view but that they may also give a first hand account of events and figures they so well understand. The change of narrative mode from third person narration to first person narration, enables the author to recruit the reader to the cause of the character narrating thereby appealing to their emotions as triggered by the narrated situation. The use of first person narration by characters in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* achieves this aim. Being a text concerned with religious struggles, the events narrated in first person serve to emphatically appeal for sympathy and pride for Islam among the Muslim audience — the implied readers.

4.5.4 The 'Person' Paradox

We have discussed the three types of narration based on the linguistic criteria above. However, this kind of classification poses a challenge. Classification of narrative agents based on pronouns exposes a number of limitations. The main limitation which has been discussed above has to do with the narrator. In the example discussed under second person narration above, it is hard to point out where the second person takes part in the narrating As has been pointed out, the use of the second person pronoun only refers to the narratee. The second person referred to here is never the narrator but the narrate (who in this case is also the narrated).

Likewise, the third person narration view is hardly convincing. In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, just like in other narratives, the third person is never a narrator. The third person pronoun is usually in reference to the narrated and not the narrating agent. This is why,

for instance, the so called third person narrator in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* keeps reminding us that the narrator is an amorphous entity roaming all over the story and weaving together the various narrative episodes into a single intelligible web.

Although first person narration seems to present a case in favour of a first person narrator, it is also not the case. It only seems so because the character being narrated is also the agent narrating the story.

It is apparent that classification of narrators based on the linguistic criteria poses serious questions seeking a re-evaluation of this traditional criteria. Steven Cohan and Linda M. Shires (1988:91-92) rightly observe that:

> The classification of first and third person narrations usefully designates the internal or external relation of narrating agent to the story, but we must also acknowledge the problem it poses for analysis. Strictly speaking, a "third person narrator" is a contradiction in terms: a third person cannot narrate. The pronouns *he* and *she* refer to the characters being narrated, not to an agency responsible for the narration. A first person pronoun appears to refer to a narrator only because of circumstance; the character being narrated happens to be a narrating agent as well.

4.5.5 The Narrator's Status

The paradox of 'person' then poses more challenges than solutions in the study of narrative voice. Several scholars (Gerard Genette, 1980; Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, 2002) have resorted to classifying narrators depending on their level in relation to the story. Such classification sees narrators as being first degree (extradiegetic), second degree (intradiegetic), third degree (hypodiegetic) or even fourth degree (hypo-hypodiegetic). This classification is based on the narrator's status by narrative level.

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The narrator's status can also be defined by its relationship to the story. Here the narrator can either be heterodiegetic or homodiegetic.

4.5.5.1 Heterodiegetic Narrator

A heterodiegetic narrator is one who is absent or outside the story he/she narrates. In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, the story of Rasi 'lGhuli is in some parts told by a narrator who is absent from it. By use of formulas, it is constantly brought to our attention that there is a narrator who is outside of the story being narrated. Alloformy is one of the oral formulas used in this poem. Some instances of allorformy in the poem are:

Qala rawi 'Ikitabu (stanza 433)
Qala rawi 'Ikalamu (stanza 545)
Qala rawi tabaini (stanza 567)
Qala rawi 'Ikalama (stanza 709)
Qala rawi 'Ikhabari (stanza 2264)

The heterodiegetic narrator in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'Ghuli* from time to time gives way to homodiegetic narrators to take part in the narrating. Where as heterodiegetic narration has a long aesthetic distance, it is supposed to make up for this with a neutral voice and view of issues. However, the heterodiegetic narrator in this text is as subjective as the homodiegetic narrators in presenting the events in this narrative. For instance, the heterodiegetic narrator is judgemental by for example referring to Rasi 'lGhuli and his followers as 'infidels'. This denies the text a neutral narrative agent expected of a heterodiegetic narrative. It is also important to note that this heterodiegetic narrator provides several opportunities for those in support of Muhamadi and his team to narrate certain important events such as war encounters between the protagonists. This denies

of the sides a chance to provide the reader with their side of the story. On reading the text one feels they have been sidelined and marginalized in a story they are an integral part of. This is most probably so because of the narratees, the Muslims, who are deliberately showing almost entirely one party's side of the story.

4.5.5.2 Homodiegetic Narrators

As already pointed above, this text uses homodiegetic narrators in some instances. Characters are let to narrate events in which they are also participants. At the beginning, Mgeni bin Faqihi is a character in the proleptic events he narrates. Homodiegetic narration has of course a short aesthetic distance. Therefore, the narrator in this instance commands the message as he requires his son to do. This then elevates the narrator to a higher level because he is in command. Umari, Ali and Wafari are also homodiegetic narrators as they narrate stories which they are a part of.

The homodiegetic type of narration can be classified into two types of categories depending on the level of presence of the narrator. One is where the narrator is the hero of the story he narrates. Here the narrator is at the centre of the actions in the narrative he tells. In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, this type of homodiegetic narration is prevalent. All the narrative instances mediated by characters at war, such as Umari and Ali, tell of combat events where they are key players. This also applies to Wafari's narration of events that involve her before coming to meet prophet Muhamadi.

The other type of homodiegetic narration is where the narrator plays a secondary role. The narrator in this case seems to be a spectator who is seeing and reporting the unfolding events. The pre-initial text of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* has the narrator giving instructions to his son to go to the shop and buy writing materials for purposes of recording the impending narrative. These instructions are a proleptic narration of events to be undertaken by Khamisi. Here the narrator narrates what will happen but which he does not take part in – and when they will take place he will not participate.

4.5.5.3 Extradiegetic Narrators

Generally, extradiegetic narrators are first degree narrators. Gerald Prince (2003) explains that the narrator of a primary narrative is always extradiegetic. The same view is held by Gerard Genette (1980). In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* the primary narrative, also referred to as first degree narrative is that told by a named narrator, Mgeni bin Faqihi. The narrator is actually a character in the first narrative he presents. He is therefore not an extradiegetic narrator for he is part of the diegesis of the first narrative. Swahili narrative poetry goes against the view that the narrator of a primary narrative is always extradiegetic.

4.5.5.4 Intradiegetic Narrators

Intradiegetic narrators are those that are part of the diegesis presented by an extradiegetic narrator. An intradiegetic narrator is one who functions as a character in the diegesis he presents. There are several characters who narrate events that they are taking part in in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. They include the angels, Umari, Wafari, Ali and Zuberi. These characters do narrate events they are taking part in at various points of the narrative. They

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are therefore intradiegetic narrators. The same applies to the main narrator of this narrative.

Extradiegetic as well as intradiegetic narrators can be either homediegetic or heterodiegetic. They can therefore be further classified as extradiegetic-heterodiegetic, extradiegetic-homodiegetic, intradiegetic-heterodiegetic or intradiegetic-extradiegetic.

4.6 LEVEL OF NARRATOR PERCEPTIBILITY

A narrative text offers varied degrees of narrator perceptibility. Parts of a text exhibit the presence of the narrator more covertly while others exhibit it less covertly. Narrator covertness is marked by features such as speaker identification in a dialogue, setting description, references to the past, character description, among other indicators. Some of the indicators of the presence of a narrator in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* are discussed below based on Seymour Chatman's (1978) listing starting with maximum covertness to maximum overtness. Apart from the six indicators of narrator presence in text provided by Chatman, we shall discuss one more that is unique to this text; what we have designated as narratee direction.

4.6.1   Setting Description

The description of setting in a text presents minimal narrator perceptibility. Setting description is largely utilized in prose forms which show it in great detail as opposed to epic poetry which largely focuses on the actions of the characters. This is also so given the nature of poetry where compression is a key trait. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* does not

provide detailed setting descriptions but has non the less setting descriptions that point to the presence of someone describing the setting and this someone is the narrator. In a written play, setting description is mainly done at the beginning of the scene whereas in film it is shown directly through pictures. One of the setting descriptions in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is captured in the following stanza.

585	Wangwani alipofika ndiaze zina mashaka mna simba na majoka na majini na namiri.	In the wilderness the routes were problematic there were lions and big snakes and genii and leopards.

The description of setting above can rightly be termed as minimalist and even the minimal description given of the setting is also attached to the character of the moment, Mazidi, who is alone in the wilderness at night. The setting is actually described in language and the description is certainly not by the experiencing character but by an observer. That observer is the narrator.

4.6.2 Character Identification

One of the roles of the narrator is to provide information that is not available to the narratee. The narrator actually gets to share the knowledge he has with regard to a given character with the narratee and thereby serving his role in the communication channel. The narrator provides his prior knowledge of the character described. Character identification in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is summarily provided as opposed to prose narratives.

1555	Chondoka Muqaliqali	Muqaliqali set off
	yukinga simba mkali	like a fierce lion
	pamwe na wale rijali	together with those men
	mashujaa majasuri.	the brave heroes.

The men referred to above have been identified as not only being brave but also heroic. Their bravery and hero status must be based on their prior actions which are here used as the basis for their being referred to using these traits. It is the narrator who has this kind of knowledge which he here shares with the narratee.

4.6.3 Temporal Summary

Temporal summary points to a deliberate effort to account for the passage of time. This serves to satisfy the curiosity of the narratee eager to know what may have taken place at some point of the narrative. The narrator can choose to describe what took place within a given period in a concise manner as these three stanzas from *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* show. We are here told of the two day interval which experienced a break from the war. Burials and consultations were the major events during this period. These are summarily presented. The presenter is the narrator who seeks to satisfy the curiosity of the narratee who seeks to know the developments after the serious fight.

1686	Turudi kunako zita	Let us revisit the war field
	siku ile waliata	that day they stopped
	pasiwe mtu kuteta	without any party quarreling
	islamu na kufari.	muslims and infidels.

1687	Kukaa kupumzika	After taking leave
	na kusimama kuzika	and winding up the burials
	pasi mtu mdirika	without one daring fight
	yakavuta mashauri.	consultations began.

1688	Hata kwa siku ya pili	On the second day
	sahaba na shekhe Ali	the caliphs and Sheikh Ali
	baada kwisha kusali	after the prayers
	punde wawene ghubari.	immediately they saw dust.

Temporal summary is also manifest in the amount of time a narrator dedicates his narrating to. Temporal summary is an indication of a regulator who decides on what parts of a narrative need more time to narrate and which ones need less time to narrate. That regulator is the narrator. In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, there are parts that are given more prominence and others relegated to summaries. Here is an example of this kind of temporal summary.

3636	Walikuya waarabu	The Arabs came
	na nia wakitulubu	intending to get her
	kutaka kumkhutubu	so as to talk to her
	naye qati asiqiri.	but she could not hear them.
3637	Akimwambia babaye	She said to her father
	muume anitakaye	A man interested in me
	sharti niwane naye	with him I must fight
	anishindapo taqiri.	if he beats me I will give in.
3638	Wakitoka shujaani	Great fighters surfaced
	wali watu sabaini	seventy in number
	kubarizi utamboni	got to the battle field
	kwa wote wasiqadiri.	none of them triumphed.

The above described events of Wafari's fighting with men proposing to marry her is not singular. The events are iteratively presented cutting down on the exact number of fights and their precise details. The decision to have these analeptic events iteratively presented with conciseness is an indicator of the presence of the narrator. Here the narrator feels this part of the narrative should be compressed as to provide little information only

enough to foreground the character of Wafari; a character we are just about to see take on both friend and foe in a number of fights.

4.6.4 Definition of Character

Unlike character identification where the narrator bases his information about a character on prior knowledge about him or his acquaintance with the character, character definition refers to the narrator's generalization of the character. The generalization serves to provide authoritative characterization. Character definitions have a greater impact when mediated by an extradiegetic narrator. Since an extradiegetic narrator does not belong to the world he narrates, the information he gives sums up the figural traits of a character without the need for the narratee to re-evaluate the evaluation by the narrator. The extradiegetic narrator's voice is assumed to be neutral and reliable unless it poses situations leading to inconsistencies and therefore its unreliability. In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, Kasai is labeled as follows:

2768   Wakakutana kwa shima   They met full of gusto
        panga na ngao na chuma   swords and shields and metals
        na mkuu wa kauma   and the leader of the multitude
        Kisai ndiye amiri.   Kisai was the commander.

2769   Huyu sei kipofu   Although blind
        ali mtu maarufu   he was ingenious
        ni shujaa mausufu   a hero with accolades
        akisha kutakabari.   full of pride.

2770   Silaha yake kilabu   The dog's weapon
        ni kausi na nishabu   was bow and arrow
        angiapo na ghadhabu   when filled with rage
        kamwe mtu haqadiri.   he spared not a person.

The information provided above summarily gives us information on Kasai. The source of this information that makes an appraisal of the character is definitely that of the narrator.

4.6.5   Reports of Characters' Thoughts and Words

The other way through which the narrator's presence in a text is realized is through reports on what the characters deliberately do not make known as well as information extracted from an unconscious character. The narrator is here omniscient and therefore able to tell things about a character that would otherwise have remained unknown to the narratee. The narrator can either tell what the character thinks or says but does not utter or utters what is inaudible such as mumbling. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* presents us with such a scenario as is here shown.

3793	Niwape ya sultani	I tell you about the king
	kutoka kwake nyumbani	after leaving his home
	alipopata ndiani	while on his way
	akinama kufikiri.	he bowed as he reflected.
3794	Akijuta na moyowe	He regretted deeply
	ya kumpiga mwanawe	about beating his child
	akirudi kwa mkewe	he went back to his wife
	kwenda mpa mashauri.	to give her his thoughts.

The sultan's deep reflection on what he had done to his daughter is something he does not say but is captured through a source that is able to penetrate his inner feelings and thoughts and subsequently communicating it to the narratee. This source observing the inner goings on in a character is the narrator.

4.6.6 Commentary

Commentaries in a text either touch on the story or the narration. They are realized through interpretation, judgement or generalization. One of the most notable forms of commentary in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, just as is the case with most other classical Swahili narrative poems, is that touching on the narration. The narrators have a tendency of expressing their weakness in composition at the beginning and at times at the end of the text. The narrator of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* expressly states that he is an inexperienced composer.

31	Nachelea ni mjinga	I am afraid am inexperienced
	sijui sana kutunga	I lack in composition skill
	na maneno kuyapanga	and putting words in proper order
	yataka mtu mahiri.	requires a skilled person.

4.6.7 Narratee Direction

Narratee direction refers to the direct address to the narratee by a voice in the text. *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli* presents a rare but interesting aspect of narrator presence by way of direct address to the audience imploring it to follow him as the narrative shifts from episode to episode. This is achieved through the use of formulas. In these formulas the narrator openly points out that he is the one talking in the poem. He keeps telling the narratee to accompany him back to some point of the story although 'back' does not mean an analeptic situation but rather a change of episode. One such narratee direction by the narrator is captured in the following two stanzas.

3792	Qala rawi msanifu	Thus says the composer
	ya Dalgha maarufu	of Dalgha the ingenious
	yawekeni muwaqafu	put it aside
	turejee kwa kufari.	we get back to the infidel.

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3793	Niwape ya sultani	I tell you about the king
	kutoka kwake nyumbani	after leaving his home
	alipopata ndiani	while on his way
	akinama kufikiri.	he bowed as he reflected.

In the first stanza above, the narrator clearly states that the composer is doing the talking, that is, the narrating. He addresses the narratees as though he is making an oral presentation with an audience before him. He also invites the narratees to put the events involving Dalgha aside and shift with him to the events involving the king. Here the narrator seeks to guide the narratees so that they do not lose track of the narrative as it shifts from one episode to another. There being no markers of episode shift, the narrator plays the two roles: narrator and director or signifier of change of episode. In the second stanza above, the narrator is distinct in his role of narration by stating that he is next going to narrate events relating to the king.

Narratee directing by the narrator is the most covert form of narrator presence in a narrative text. It not only signifies presence of a narrator but also creates a sense of a controlling being in the text without whom narration of the story will not be possible nor its clarity to the narratees.

4.7 FUNCTIONS OF THE NARRATOR

Narrators are mainly associated with the act of narrating a story. Whereas this is the primary function of a narrator, the narrator's discourse points to its performing of other functions in narrative text; fictional or real. The functions include giving direction on the

text, attestation and communication. In respect of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, the narrator performs the following functions.

4.7.1 Narrative Function

As already pointed out above this is the major function of the narrator without which he will cease to be a narrator. It is this role that gives the narrator his status. We would add that without the narrator, there is actually no narrative. The narrator is the vehicle through which the story is arranged and communicated. It is the narrator who chooses, for instance, which events should be given more weight and which ones deserve less weight.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, there are several narrators but then there is one major narrator who from time to time cedes ground allowing other narrators to take over the narrating before again reverting to the major narrator. These several narrators all narrate a story at various parts of the narrative.

4.7.2 Directing Function

The narrator serves to give directions of the discourse. He is therefore concerned with the narrative text. The internal organization of the text is laid bare through the directions provided by the narrator. The narrator in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* gives direction on several issues. For instance, he points out who says what in conversations. It would be hard for the narratee to figure out who says what in a conversation without the narrator's intervention. There would be no coherence without such directions. These two stanzas will demonstrate this.

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2806	Akitamka Rasuli	The prophet said
	yuko wapi Shekhe Ali	where is Sheikh Ali
	mzoevu wa kitali	the experienced fighter
	kwa sefu Dhu 'll uqari.	of the long sword of Dhu 'll uqari.

2808	Akisikia Alia	When Ali heard this
	labeka akiitika	yes, he answered
	achondoka ajilia	he left immediately
	kwa Tumwa akidhihiri.	and appeared before the prophet.

These two stanzas show clearly what Muhamadi utters and what Ali utters. This is an important function that narrators in this text play throughout the narration.

The other type of directing done by the main narrator in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is that of making it clear by overtly stating the change of narrative episode. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is structured by many episodes which would be confusing to follow. The narrator takes it upon himself to make clear the direction that the narrative is taking. This issue has also been discussed under degree of narrator perceptibility.

4.7.3 Narratee Contact Function

The narrators in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* maintain narratee contact in the course of their narrating. They from time to time — be they intradiegetic or heterodiegetic — turn to their narratees. Some of the narratees are present such as Khamisi who is being given directions on securing good writing materials to record the narrator's story, Muhamadi to whom Wafari's story is told and Rasi 'lGhuli who is a narratee to several narrators in the text. At the beginning of the text, the narrator addresses his Muslim narratees whom he wants his message to reach — the reason he is actually retelling an Arabian story originally told in Arabic. Some narrators maintain narratees contact by referring to the

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narratees by name in the course of their narration. Wafari binti Sadamu keeps mentioning the name of the prophet whom she addresses. In certain other situations the narrator keeps asking the narratees to follow him in his narrative especially when there is a change in episodes that are being narrated. We shall, again, use the following example to illustrate this.

3792 Qala rawi msanifu   Thus says the composer
      ya Dalgha maarufu   of Dalgha the ingenious
      yawekeni muwaqafu   put it aside
      turejee kwa kufari.   we get back to the infidel.

3793 Niwape ya sultani   I tell you about the king
      kutoka kwake nyumbani   after leaving his home
      alipopata ndiani   while on his way
      akinama kufikiri.   he bowed as he reflected.

In stanza 3792 the narrator is appealing to the narratees to abandon the story of Dalgha for a while and follow him as he narrates about the king. In some cases he says 'let us put aside' ideally collapsing the two worlds, that of the narrator and of the narratee, into one – especially of the real reader's. Subsequently, the narrator and narratees seem to share the same 'now' thus strengthening their contact.

4.7.4 Attestation Function

The main narrator in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* also performs the function of attestation in two ways. First, the narrator discloses the source of the story he seeks to narrate. He says it is an Arabian story he read in a book written in Arabic. This attestation is both moral and intellectual. The narrator says:

25	Pana hadithi ajabu	There is a wonderful story
	yandikwa ndani kitabu	written in a book
	kwa lugha ya waarabu	in Arabic language
	nayo hadithi khiyari.	and it's a good story.
27	Haiona haisoma	I saw and read it
	maana ni kufahama	I understood it
	hatibu wangu mtima	It satisfied my heart
	huwaza na kufikiri	I think and reflect about it.
28	Hufikiri nikiwaza	I think and reflect
	haona kunipendeza	I find it appealing to me
	moyoni nikilekeza	my heart I direct
	kutunga kwa ushairi.	to compose it in verse.

The other form of attestation by the narrator is with regard to his ability as a composer. He says that he is incompetent and may not be able to conform fully to the prosodic dictates of the kind of poetry he is to compose (stanza 31-34).

The various types of narrator function discussed above have no clear demarcation between them; they at times overlap. Some functions stand out more than others in given situations in a narrative.

4.8 NARRATEES

Just as narrators, narratees are important in narrative fiction. The communication channel cannot be complete without both narrator and narratee. It is hard to image a narrator telling a story to the self. There will be no communication taking place. The narrator has a narratee in mind when narrating.

Susan Keen (2003:34) makes an important observation that sums up the narrator-narratee existence in a text and the relationship between them. She says:

> The characters operate within the story world, where the narrator (and narratee) may also be located; especially when the story is self-narrated by a first-person narrator… However, the narrator and narratee often exist outside the story world. The communication of the narrator implies the existence of a narratee existing at the same narrative level. This is the entity to whom the narration is directed, overtly or covertly (implicitly). In some texts the narratee is given a name through direct address.

Mgeni bin Faqihi's *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* has a wide range of narratees. The text offers several narratees and at various levels, overt and covert as discussed in this section.

4.8.1 Extradiegetic Narratees

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli has narratees that are a level above the first narrative. These narratees are directly addressed by the narrator though not openly mentioned (stanza 25—34). Before narrating the story of Rasi 'lGhuli, the narrator says that only few can read the Arabic language in which the story he is about to narrate is told and therefore seeks to have it written in Kiswahili. He also says that because of his inexperience in composing poems he is bound to make structural mistakes and invites the narratees to point them out. These preliminary remarks show that there are narratees outside the narrative that are being addressed. These are his fellow Muslims (among whom are narratees who understand the prosodic dictates of the kind of poem expected of the composer/narrator) who he intends the message about their prophet to reach. In stanza 44 he refers to the prophet as 'Mtume wetu' (our prophet). 'Our" here can only refer to the Muslim faithful.

4.8.2 Intradiegetic Narratees

There are many intradiegetic narratees in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. Khamisi is one such narratee. The narrator addresses him and gives him a chronology of events he has to take part in in preparation for the documentation of the narrative. Likewise, Muhamadi is an intradiegetic narratee as he listens to Wafari and Umari narrate to him about Rasi 'lGhuli. All characters whom the letters in the text are sent to are intradiegetic narratees for they are within the world of the story being narrated. All intradiegetic narratees are directly addressed and are at the same narrative level as the narrator.

4.8.3 Covert Narratees

The Muslim community to which the narrator belongs is a set of narratees referred to as covert. They are merely silent addressees of the narrator. They do not in any way take part in the story being narrated. One would describe them as silent listeners. Covert narratees present a sense of inferiority in comparison to the narrator. One would easily classify Khamisi in this category for he does not take part in his father's narration; he only listens. However, the fact that he is recording the story as told by his father, the narrator, means that he actually takes part in the proleptic events narrated by his father in the form of instructions to him.

4.8.4 Overt Narratees

There are several overt narratees in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. They participate in the story by commenting on issues or taking part in the action. Muhamadi is one such narratee who not only, for example, probes Umari, the narrator of the moment, to tell him the reason

for his going to the land of Rasi 'lGhuli. At some point Umari and Ali become overt narratees when leading their fellow fighters in war. Fighters such as Zuberi get back to narrate the developments at the war field or their first hand experience at the hands of Rasi 'lGhuli and his men. Rasi 'lGhuli similarly gets reports on the war from his lieutenants making him an overt narratee.

4.9 CONCLUSION

We have discussed in this chapter narrative levels and voices. The text exhibits various temporal relations providing a rich dichotomy showing that narration in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* entertains various temporal relations with story events. We have also pointed out that *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* enjoys up to three narrative subordination relations key to the structure of this narrative. It has been shown that the text uses both marked and unmarked narrative shifts. Our analysis has also shown that *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* has diverse narrators and narratees; all key in the narrative communication channel.

We shall in the next chapter discuss one other narrative aspect in *Utenzi we Rasi 'lGhuli*; characterization.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 CHARACTERIZATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Characters are an integral part of a narrative. They serve various purposes key to the structure of narrative. These include plot development, theme manifestation and development, understanding of character and at times contribute towards setting of the story. However, the role of character in narrative is not the subject of this chapter.

This chapter will analyze the textual indicators of character manifest in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. This will be done by analyzing character traits either directly or indirectly presented. Whereas direct definition of character indicators points directly to personality traits of a character, indirect presentation requires the reader to infer the qualities or rather the character traits of a character through the provided presentation.

5.2 DIRECT DEFINITION

Direct definition is one of the two ways in which a text indicates character. This mode of making known characters' traits openly qualifies characters' qualities by use of adjectives. A character is directly described as 'good', 'bad', 'greedy', 'kind', 'ambitious', 'lazy', etc.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, direct definition of character is widely used. This is done by both the heterodiegetic narrator and the characters some of whom at times double as autodiegetic narrators. Let us now discuss these two forms of direct definition.

5.2.1 Definition by Narrator

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli presents different sets of narrators some of whom are characters in the stories they narrate (autodiegetic narrators). However, we are here referring to the main narrator of this epic. It is this narrator that is outside the narrated events and is, therefore, presumed neutral hence reliable. The main narrator of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* directly states the traits of Kasai whom we are able to know that he is not only blind but also an ingenious and reputable hero (stanza 2569). He is an unshakable hero who engages in corrupt practices (stanza 2584).

2569	Huyu sei kipofu	This blind one
	ali mtu maarufu	was an ingenious person
	ni shujaa mausufu	a hero of repute
	akishakutakabari.	full of pride.

2584	Ali shujaa shadidi	He was an unshakable hero
	na thabiti wa fuadi	and of strong heart
	kazi yake ufisadi	of corrupt practice
	Ali anidi jabari.	he was a strong unbeliever.

The narrating voice of the above stanzas is the most authoritative in the text and therefore the character traits mentioned are reliable. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2004:60) argues that when such character traits are not attributed to a character, the reader is implicitly

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Although heterodiegetic narrators are largely presumed to be neutral as they are mainly observers of the happenings in a narrative, in a text such as *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* it is hard to comfortably qualify them as such since the narrator is a key vehicle of the predominant ideology in the text. This, therefore, may compromise the narrator's evaluation of character.

invited to accept such definitions. However, where as this is largely so, it may not apply to *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, a text a majority of whose major characters and the main narrator are carriers of the predominant ideological point of view. Such a narrator's definition of character may not be accepted by a reader and may therefore require a further re-evaluation by the reader.

In works such as *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, where the author seeks to articulate a given ideology, the reliability of character definition by the narrator may not be absolute and may therefore be subject to the reader's interpretation. This interpretation is based on the societal norms that inform a reader's view of issues. In fact, even texts that adopt a neutral narrative voice, the narrator's generalizations of character are based on certain norms which the reader must relate to before accepting such definitions. In an issue such as religion, as is the case with *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, various ideological viewpoints are bound to counter one another and therefore compromise the total acceptability of the narrator severely undermining his authority.

5.2.2 Definition by Characters

Characters can directly name the qualities of other characters. However, such an evaluative view of a character by another character cannot count as direct characterization for it does not originate from an authoritative voice. Character definition of traits has to be subjected to a re-evaluation by the reader based on the broader text-continuum. The text-continuum provides information about a character upon which the reader can make an objective evaluation of that character. Essentially, definition by

character is not treated as an objective view, and therefore cannot be readily relied on. It has to be compared with other character traits of the character under focus available through other characterization sources in the text.

The following examples show how character traits in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* can be directly presented by another character in a narrative.

77	Na baba yangu fahamu	And my father understand
	ali mtu mahashumu	was a respected person
	ni mkuu wa qaumu	a leader of multitudes
	na askari kathiri.	and a big army.

78	Nisikize Tumwa wetu	Listen to me our prophet
	huko janibu za kwetu	in our environs
	kuna khabithi ya watu	there is a bad person
	sultani wa kufari.	the king of the infidels.

79	Takupa tena Habibu	I will give you again the Beloved
	jina la huyu kilabu	the name of this dog
	jinale itwa Shahabu	his name is Shahabu
	ali mtu mashuhuri.	a notorious person.

80	Wala hajui Khalaqi	Nor does he know the Creator
	na mwanawe mnafiki	and his son a hypocrite
	isimuye Mukhariqi	his name Mukhariqi
	ali anidi jahari.	who is stubbornly obstinate.

In stanza 77, the character, Wafari binti Sadamu, describes her father as a respected person and a great leader who commanded a huge army. Then in stanza 78 she describes a person living in their midst as not only bad but also a leading infidel who commands a following. This leader of infidels is Shahabu who is described by Wafari in stanza 79 as a notorious person. In stanza 80 Wafari also refers to Mukhariqi as a hypocrite who is obstinate.

The above characteristics attributed to Shahabu and his son, Mukhariqi, need to be re-evaluated based on other bits of information provided regarding the two characters in other parts of the text. For instance, Umari's narration of his earlier encounter with Mukhariqi points to a contrasting character trait of this same character. Umari explains that before his conversion to Islam he sought assistance from Mukhariqi in form of property which he was readily granted. This then forces us to re-examine the information provided by Wafari on the character of Mukhariqi as a bad person. Both narrators, however, point out that Mukhariqi did not favour Islam — a factor manifest throughout the text-continuum.

One other reason why character definition by an actant needs a re-evaluation is the subjective nature of their evaluation of fellow characters. For example, in stanza 79 Wafari refers to Shahabu as a dog. Apart from this being a subjective view of Shahabu by Wafari. It also shows the ideology informing her reference of Mukhariqi to a dog — a demeaning expression used to refer to non-Muslims throughout the text. Such expressions can be prejudicial hence the need to assess them within the broader character indicators distributed in the text.

As Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983:60) observes, the qualities of a character presented by either the narrator or a character in the story can be held highly if it tallies with other markers of character traits in the text such as a character's behavior or other concrete information. She says:

Definition is a kin to generalization and conceptualization. It is also both explicit and supra-temporal. Consequently, its dominance in a given text is liable to produce a rational, authoritative and static impression. This impression may be alleviated if the definitions seem to emerge gradually from concrete details, or are immediately exemplified by specific behavior, or presented together with other means of characterization.

Where as the above observation is key, it is also important to note that mere definition of character presented in whatever manner cannot be authoritative unless supported by specific character behavior or lack of it. This then suggests that direct character definition is dependent on indirect character presentation, an aspect to be discussed next.

Direct character definition infringes on the freedom of the reader who is denied the opportunity to assess the character. Instead the narrating agent evaluates a character and presents the reader with a finished product. This is true of direct character definition in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

5.3 INDIRECT PRESENTATION

Character presentation is indirect when a trait is not mentioned. Instead various ways are adopted to display and exemplify character trait. It is then left to the reader to infer the trait or quality implied. This mode of character presentation provides room for the reader to make judgment as to the quality of the character in contrast to direct definition. However, indirect presentation presents a scenario where varied inferences can be made with regard to character trait even when the same action is the subject of focus. For instance we can make several inferences on a character who is displayed as using harsh language. Such a character can be described as arrogant, harsh, unpolished, inconsiderate,

and so forth. It is all about the reader's interpretation, conviction and at times the ideological point of view guiding the interpreter of a character's action or behavior. Readers with contrasting ideologies would ascribe contrasting traits to the same character.

Tuen A. Van Dijk (1988:21—22) articulates this:

> At one level of analysis, opinions and ideologies involve beliefs and mental representations and our approach first takes the cognitive perspective. On the other hand, the ideologies and opinions of newspapers are usually not personal, but social, institutional or political. This requires an account in terms of social and societal structures… since we examine in particular the sometimes subtle textual expressions of ideologically based opinions, this sociocognitive orientation will be embedded in a discourse analytical framework.

Although Tuen A. Van Dijk's observation above is based on newspapers, it is also applicable in literary texts and other forms of expression other than newspapers. The author of a literary text is a product of a society which has a way of viewing things. This view is then captured in a literary work by the author either consciously or unconsciously. Likewise, the reader is also influenced by the collective societal way of viewing things. Although different people can have differing viewpoints on certain issues, these are only minute. There is the overall view that is predominant but which individual people ascribe certain minor peculiarities to shape their view. The overall view still looms large in how people and societies perceive things. Such perceptions are inherent in texts and among readers of texts.

Indirect presentation can, among other ways, employ the following modes of character presentation.

5.3.1 Action

Action refers to what characters do. That which a character does is one of the ways by which a reader is able to infer his or her personality. Richard Gill (1985:144) says:

> The way in which a character is shown as acting or reacting is one of the chief ways in which authors establish personality. An author can make everything a character does important.

Where as the above comment is important, we wish to observe that even the less important things that characters do can help the reader establish their personality. This emphasis is on action and incidents. The manner in which the incidents unfold is informed by the nature of actant(s) involved. It is actually hard to divorce character from action or action from character. The two are intertwined. H. Porter Abbott (2002:124) captures this more aptly:

> Insofar as the incidents involve people, how those incidents play out is driven by the nature of the people involved. Characters, to put this in narratological terms, have *agency*; they cause things to happen. Conversely, as these people drive the action, they necessarily reveal who they are in terms of their motives, their strength, weakness, trustworthiness, capacity to love, hate, cherish, adore, deplore, and so on. By their actions do we know them.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, the author employs the action strategy to help us infer character personality. For instance, we can infer Zuberi's commitment and resolve to take on the enemy of Islam through the narrator's depiction of consistent travel through the

wilderness day and night. We are told that he never disembarked from the camel till he got to his destination.

435   Zuberi alipondoka   When Zuberi left
       ngamiani hakushuka   he did not get off the camel
       akikata ile nyika   he went through the wilderness
       bi laili wa nahari   night and day.

We can further infer from the above stanza that Zuberi is a brave figure for it requires courage to travel through the wilderness (especially at night and on a slow mode of transport such as the camel which makes it hard for him to either chase the enemy or run away from it) and to take war to the enemy's territory single handedly. However, one with an anti-Muslim ideology would as well see Zuberi as a reckless war monger who can go to great heights to take on an antagonist. Regardless of the point of view adopted as to the personality of Zuberi, action no doubt presents the reader with a development in which the figure takes an active role through which trait can be inferred.

Action can be presented in many ways and categories and can signify various things. These are discussed below.

5.3.1.1 Types of Action

Implication of character trait or personality through action can be done through non-routine actions as well as routine actions. Both sets of actions have been employed in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. Although figure personality is mainly inferred through the routine actions tending to obscure our view of character from the non-routine mode, it is

important to bear in mind that actions are also an important source through which figural traits can be deduced.

5.3.1.1.1 Habitual Actions

Habitual actions, also referred to as routine actions are those that keep recurring. They are actions that characters keep taking part in. Characters repeatedly engage in them making them routine occurrences.

Characters' habitual actions in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* are presented through a narrating agent outside the narrated story as well as through a narrating agent taking part in the narrated story. The main narrator in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* narrates the actions taken by various characters at various stages of the text-continuum. One such event is the forcing of the conquered to convert to Islam if they have to be spared the sword. Those who do not heed this directive are killed where as those who heed are spared. Among those spared for converting are Zuheri, Uramuramu, Muqaliqali, Janadili and Sarimu. Among those who are killed for refusing to convert are Abdulati and Muqatili. This shows the ideological commitment of the Muslim fraternity and their unrelenting pursuit of their goal.

The other habitual action on the part of the Muslims is their devotion to prayer portraying them as a prayerful lot.

On the side of Rasi 'IGhuli, he and his men keep falling victim of the strategy employed by Muhamadi's men from time to time. Each time a stranger arrives and cheats them that he is on their side, they easily trust him only for that stranger to turn against them. For instance, it is through such deceit that Umari is able to free Zuberi from incarceration. This portrays Rasi 'IGhuli and his men as inept and inadequate. However, for someone with a different viewpoint this would as well be interpreted that Rasi 'IGhuli and his people are kind hearted for they treat outsiders well. Another habitual action which shows Rasi 'IGhuli's inadequacy in the war, is the request for military aid from outside when his army is overcome.

The above observation of contrasting trait interpretation by the reader points to the reader's reliance on extratextual knowledge to inform his interpretation. The extratextual information can be either based on facts or ideology. This is well captured by Michael Toolan (2001:86—87):

> What this amounts to saying is that, in our making sense of any particular text, we have extensive resources of knowledge (sometimes called extratextual knowledge, or knowledge of the world), which we can bring to bear on our interpretation of the text under scrutiny. That 'bringing to bear' will vary from reader to reader (depth, accuracy) of a reader's knowledge, and the interpretative evaluation the reader makes of that knowledge. We might summarize these two components of adducible background knowledge as facts and ideology.

5.3.1.1.2 Non-routine Actions

Non-routine actions have also been used in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* to depict a character's personality. These are one-time actions. Although one-time actions can be argued as lacking the consistency in an action necessary to ascribe a given trait to a figure, they too

can indeed help infer a trait in a character. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983:61) underlines this view.

> Although a one-time action does not reflect constant qualities, it is not less characteristic of the character. On the contrary, its dramatic impact often suggests that the traits it reveals are qualitatively more crucial than the numerous habits which represent the character's routine.

One of the non-routine actions in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is Shahabu's disciplining of his son Mukhariqi (Rasi 'lGhuli) after the Arabs petition Shahabu to take action against his son who has killed their people and taken their wealth (stanza 173). Shahabu then has his son put under arrest after he refuses to heed his father's warning.

188	Na babaye akiona ya kileo kimshona akiamuru watwana kumfunga taisiri.	And his father on seeing beer had the better of him he instructed the slaves to chain him immediately.
189	Akiamuru abidi ya kumfunga Quyudi na mikufu ya hadidi shingoni ikadhihiri.	He instructed the slave to shackle him with metal rings visible on his neck.
190	Akitoa na idhini ya kumtia chumbani na watu kuwa langoni khamsini askari.	He also gave permission to have him incarcerated and placed sentry at the entrance fifty soldiers.

This one time action becomes the turning point of their relationship. Mukhariqi finally arranges to secure his release and then kills his father in the most brutal manner and takes over the reigns of power. His action, apart from showing Shahabu as a disciplinarian who respects good relations with his neighbours and depicting Mukharaqi as an inhuman being who enjoys blood on his hands, also serves to present a turning point in the

narrative. Shahabu's reign comes to an end and Mukhariqi's begins. With Mukhariqi in power, oppression increases and this becomes the basis for Wafari's search for help from Muhamadi who engages him in a series of battles in a protracted war that only ends with the defeat and killing of Mukhariqi.

Zuheri's father in-laws's action to have him marry his daughter without seeking to be paid dowry is another example of non-routine action. He does this as he asks Zuheri to go revenge on his behalf for what Rasi 'lGhuli had done to him — killing his children and taking his wealth. This depicts Zuheri's father in-law as an opportunistic and revengeful character. But more importantly, this action propels Zuheri to immediately heed Muhamadi's call for someone to volunteer to go out and fight Rasi 'lGhuli. Zuheri's subsequent capture and detention by Rasi 'lGhuli sets the stage for a prolonged war between the two opposing forces.

5.3.1.2 Modes of Action Obtainance
Both forms of actions discussed above are obtainable in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* through acts of commission, acts of omission as well as contemplated acts. The three categories of acts are discussed below.

5.3.1.2.1 Acts of Commission
An act of commission obtains when a character performs something. Here a character does something that leads the readers to infer the character's personality. In *Utenzi wa Rasi lGhuli*, just as is the case with other narratives, characters do take part in some

event that they perform. For instance, Zuheri's decision to go to war is an act of commission. Likewise, the decision and instructions given by Muhamadi to the caliphs who spearhead the war against Rasi 'lGhuli are acts of commission. One of Muhamadi's acts of commission is his leading of prayer sessions. This routine action is one of the outstanding acts of commission by Muhamadi that characterise him as a committed Muslim.

Dalgha's non-routine action of soothing his angry lover is an act of commission. On realizing that her lover, Mora bun Kaabu, is annoyed by her suggestion that they obey God and his prophet (stanza 3698), she decides to sooth him with a plan to kill him later. Her ability to keep a low profile portrays her as shrewd.

3706	Dalgha akitazama	Dalgha saw
	ghadhabu za mujirima	the infidel's rage
	na yale aliyosema	and that which he said
	na hila akidabiri.	she sensed danger.

3707	Akiwa kumpumbaza	She started flattering him
	maneno akifuuza	words steadily flowing
	akima kumbembeleza	she kept soothing him
	hata katihu khatiri.	till his heart healed.

5.3.1.2.2 Acts of Omission

There are not as many acts where characters fail to do what they are supposed to do. However, there are a number of instances where acts of omission occur in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*.

There is habitual lack of scrutiny of strangers making their presence in Rasi 'lGhuli's territory. Rasi 'lGhuli is on several occasions cheated by his enemies who pose as desperate people seeking help from him in form of material or military aid. One such stranger is Umari. This act of omission keeps costing them troops or lead to their losing a prisoner from their custody. This is how they lose Zuberi and Umari from custody.

5.3.1.2.3 Contemplated Acts

A contemplated act obtains when a character is not able to have his plan or intention executed. In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, Mora bun Kaabu contemplates taking stern action on Dalgha who suggests they abandon their way of life and convert to Islam. This irks Kaabu who informs her that were it not for his love for her, he would have had to kill her. He says:

3704	Laula kukupenda	Were it not I love you
	leo ningalikutinda	today I would have slaughtered you
	intiati hakupanda	bury you in the ground
	kana kupanda shairi.	like planting barley.
3705	Leo unenele neno	Today you have said something
	lisokuwa na mfano	that has no equivalent
	kwa hayo ni matukano	for that is an insult
	uliyo kuyadhukuri.	that you have thought of.

This contemplated act portrays Kaabu as an emotional character in a hurry to respond to situations that threaten his ideological position. At the same time this contemplated act sets the stage for Dalgha to strategise and kill him. Dalgha's act ultimately weakens Rasi 'lGhuli's team and strengthens Muhamadi's group. This adds another turn in the events of the story.

5.3.1.3 Action and Symbolism

Some actions in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* are symbolic. After Dalgha's killing of Rabu, she comes across two people hunting a donkey. She chases it and slays it. She then skins it and proceeds to roast its meat. She serves it and eats with them.

3773	Ndiani kiwasili	While on the way
	kitupa mato kwa mbali	she looked far beyond
	awene watu wawili	and saw two people
	wamo kuwinda hamiri.	hunting a donkey.
3774	hamiri akikimbia	The donkey ran away
	Dalgha achangalia	As Dalgha watched
	kila anako kujia	of where it would surface
	akima kumbusuri.	then she saw it.
3775	Hamiri alipopata	When the donkey approached
	Dalgha anapopita	where Dalgha was passing
	awele kumfuata	she followed it
	asiwe kitaakhari.	without delay.
3776	Baada ya kikhutufu	After a fast chase
	Dalgha akimshufu	Dalgha saw it
	akimpiga kwa sefu	she struck it with a sword
	warabu wakibusuri.	as the Arabs watched.
3777	Farasini akishuka	She dismounted her horse
	hamiri akimshika	got hold of the donkey
	akimtinda haraka	slaughtered it quickly
	akiamili na nari.	and started the fire.
3778	Asiwe kupumzika	She did not take a break
	akimtuna haraka	she skinned it quickly
	baada moto kuwaka	after lighting the fire
	kumwoka asiusiri.	she roasted it without delay.
3784	Na nyama akiokea	And the meat she roasted
	kisha akiwandikia	then she served them
	akila nao pamova	ate with them
	kwa heshima na qadiri.	with respect and worth.

This action has a symbolic angle to it. The hunting down of the donkey symbolizes the desire of the two parties to hunt down those not of their like who hinder their road to religious satisfaction. As they make a meal out of the donkey for bodily satisfaction, so will they get satisfaction by subduing their opponents. Likewise their common goal of hunting down the donkey for a common good symbolizes their co-operation in defense of Islam. The sharing of the meal also symbolizes their oneness in the cause they are pursuing. It is this kind of co-operation and unity of purpose that Dalgha has been missing and that she is out to seek. She gets it in the wild when she comes across her two brothers chasing a donkey for a meal.

Another action that can be symbolically interpreted is the wall put around all the towns in Rasi 'lGhuli's territory. It is within these walls that Rasi 'lGhuli lives with his army protecting him. The wall symbolizes Rasi 'lGhuli's alienation from the rest of the world. He lives in his little enclosed life so divergent from the rest of the world seeming to be preoccupied with his own view of things. This act of commission places him in an act of omission; being unable to listen and take into account the concerns of the various groups of people who feel oppressed by him. It is this act of omission that gets him into conflict with Wafari who seeks Muhamadi's help.

5.3.2 Speech

Characters' speeches in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* are one other way through which we can infer character traits. Character speech can be presented as conversation or as an activity taking place in the mind of the character. Character trait can be realized through the

content put forth and through the manner in which its content has been presented. Character speech can point to the personality of the character speaking or that of the character spoken about. All these speech aspects manifest in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* and will be the subject of discussion below.

5.3.2.1 Dialogic Speeches

Conversation is the most utilized form of character speech. Most literary composers find this more convenient to use. The narrator in the text gives way for the characters to be heard through their very voices through the use of direct discourse. There are several instances in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* where characters speak or converse directly in a language that can be directly associated or linked to them.

After Umari's departure to Yumani, where his mission is to free Zuberi, Abdala 'lJahini converses with Muhamadi and asks to be allowed to follow Umari whom he describes as his friend.

3088	Kita ewe Tumwa wangu	He called out my Prophet
	Umari rafiki yangu	Umari is my friend
	haitibu roho yangu	my heart is restless
	kutomwandama Umari.	for not accompanying Umari.

3089	Akitamka Amini	The Faithful answered
	kumwambia 'lJahini	in response to 'lJahini
	nikupilie idhini	I give you permission
	ya kwenda kwa makufari.	to go to the infidels.

Abdala's speech shows him as a character who minds the welfare of others and who holds his friends dearly. This is why he is unsettled when his friend, Umari, goes to war

alone. He requests to go and join him so they can fight together. On the other hand Muhamadi's speech above shows that he is a character who listens to advice and acts on it immediately. He is therefore portrayed as calculative.

It is, however, important to remember that character speech has to be evaluated within a broader text continuum to ascertain the real trait attributable to a character. Some character speeches can present ironic situations and may thus mislead as to the personality of a character if evaluated in isolation of other events and situations in the text. For instance, in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* some characters, among them Umari, at some point create stories about oppression meted on them so as to win sympathy from certain quotas. This would easily lead a reader who is not keen to attribute weakness to such characters which would be misleading. Mieke Bal (2009:126) observes:

> When a character appears the first time, we do not yet know very much about it. The qualities that are implied in the first presentation are not all grasped by the reader. In the course of the narrative the relevant characteristics are repeated so often – in a different form, however – that they emerge more clearly. Repetition is thus an important principle of the construction of the image of a character.

5.3.2.2 Monologic Speeches

Apart from characters engaging in a discourse exchange, they can also make known some information about them through the use of monologue. Most of these are presented in form of praise poems composed by characters going to war or at war. Characters such as Umari, Abdala, Ali and Zuheri sing in self praise. In the following stanzas Zuheri talks in praise of himself.

1806	Ndimi simba maarufu	I am the ingenous lion
	ndimi mvunda sufufu	I am the destroyer of multitudes
	nishikapo yangu sefu	when I hold my sword
	hawadhili makufari.	I humble the infidels.

1807	Kuya kwangu matulubu	My aim of coming
	kuwangia kwa harubu	is to confront you in war
	muona leo ajabu	so you may find this day unusual
	na mauti ahmari.	with bloody deaths.

Through this monologic speech, Zuheri comes across as a character full of self praise, prides in killing in the name of religion as well as a brave fighter.

Monologic speeches are also realized through the use of epistles. Rasi 'IGhuli is in the habit of writing letters requesting his friends to join him in war when he finds his army subdued by Muhamadi's men. Here is one such letter.

2544	Nawapa yangu kalamu	I present you my word
	yasomeni mfahamu	read it and understand
	nashtaki madhulumu	I the oppressed report
	na kwenu nistajiri.	so I may get your help.

2545	Nimejiwa na harabu	I have been attacked by perverts
	Muhamadi na warabu	Muhamadi and the Arabs
	nia zao watulubu	their desired aim
	inti zetu kudamiri.	to destroy our countries.

2546	Wakanikusa matungu	They have caused me pain
	wametwaa nti yangu	they have taken my country
	na kusilimu wanangu	and converted my children to Islam
	nami nali kibusuri.	as I watched.

2547	Nami sina muamana	I have no hope
	Hiwatunza nawaona	when I scrutinize them
	Wakisha kwetu kuwana	after they are through with us
	Na kwenu watadhihiri.	they will come to you.

2548	Nataka kwenu rijali	I ask for young men from you
	waniauni qitali	to help me in the war
	na mimi tawapa mali	and I will give them wealth
	kama lulu na johari.	like pearls and jewels.

Through this letter several character traits attributable to Rasi 'IGhuli can be inferred. He here comes across as a worried fearful character obsessed with an imminent fall from power if foreign military aid is not secured. Rasi 'IGhuli also comes across as a pained person having watched his children convert to Islam against his will — he describes the Muslim insurgency as an act by perverts. He is also pained by the annexation of his country by the Muslims. The letter also presents Rasi 'IGhuli as a character who recognizes the importance of co-operation with others with the aim of safeguarding his interests. And of course one can add that in this regard he is self-centered.

5.3.2.3 Speech as Silent Activity of the Mind

A character's speech can also be presented as a silent activity taking place in the mind.[21] The narrator can focus on what is going on in the character's mind. Such thoughts can be used to infer a characters personality. Although not uttered, such thoughts present an opportunity for the reader to have an insight as to the personality of the character.

Shahabu's thoughts and feelings are captured through the description of what is happening in his mind in the following stanzas.

182	Babaye kataharaki	His father bewildered
	akangiwa shukuki	he got perplexed
	kwa mwanawe haonyeki	for his son not heeding warning
	akipotewa shauri.	he was short of advice.

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[1] In this case, speech is not exclusively confined to an utterance but is also broadened to account for language attributable to a character

Through this excerpt depicting the silent activity in Rasi 'IGhuli's father's mind, we deduce that Shahabu is a concerned parent wanting his son to do that which is right. He appears responsible for taking the pain to explain to his son what is required of him only to be hurt by his son's obstinate stance. This excerpt also presents Rasi 'IGhuli as an obstinate character who cares not to heed the advice given by his father.

5.3.2.4 Indicators of Trait through Speech

We have observed above that characters' personality can be deduced through their speech either through conversation or as a silent activity taking place in their mind. We now turn to the way character traits are indicated. This is through the content presented by the character and through the language use by the character. Indeed, both the uttered and the manner of uttering do present the reader with the opportunity to make deductions with regard to the personality of a character.

5.3.2.4.1 Indication of Trait through Content

Characters do not just speak. They speak to pass on some message. In other words they give out some content necessary at particular stages of the text-continuum. What they say can be used by the reader to infer what qualities they possess. Most of the characters in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* do speak and their speech provides content necessary for the reader to deduce what their personalities are.

The content of Zuberi's speech to the Sultan shows that he is forthright in his dealings. After volunteering to go and fight Rasi 'IGhuli following Muhamadi's suggestion that

someone volunteer to take him on in his country, Zuberi is detained and on the second day he appears before the Sultan. He tells the Sultan that he has been sent by prophet Muhamadi and the reason is that a woman went to report before Muhamadi that the Sultan, Rasi 'lGhuli, had killed her children and taken her property by force. He even names the woman, Wafari daughter of Sadamu (stanza 513—517).

Zuberi is also portrayed as a firm believer of Islam who does not fear preaching out its message even to the most powerful and fierce opposer of it as is evident when he submits to Rasi 'lGhuli. He says:

519	Kufika kwangu mjini	On my entry into town
	kiajili shaitani	Satan hastened
	akangia sanamuni	got into the idol
	maqusudi kukughuri	to intentionally cheat you.

520	Na wee ukati yashika	And you heeded
	sanamu kuwa Rabuka	the idol to be God
	hujui kesho mashaka	not knowing tomorrow has distress
	kuna adhabu ya nari	there is punishment by fire.

522	Umeshika ukaidi	You are obstinate
	na mambo ya ufisadi	preferring the corrupt
	na sanamu kuabudu	worshipping the idol
	wako ujinga dhahiri.	your ignorance manifest

524	Kwani hukhofu Mungu	Don't you fear God
	muumba nti na mbingu	the creator of earth and heaven
	na majini hata tungu	and the genii and ants
	na shamsi na qamari.	and the sun and moon.

The content of this speech no doubt presents Zuberi as a devout Muslim who speaks in its favour even in the midst of hostility and danger to his life. He emphasises the high place of God as the creator of heaven, earth and all that there is in the universe.

It is, however, instructive to note that it is not in all situations that characters' utterances can be taken to actually capture the nature of character of the speaker. A character's speech must be put in context and interpreted within the wider text-continuum. For instance, a character's speech can be ironic or deceitful aimed at the character attaining their goal. In this case, it can be misleading to use the character's words as a direct indicator of their character. In fact, the opposite will be true of the character.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, Abdala's speech presents the opposite of what he means and therefore who he really is. From what he says, he would be instantly classified as retributive when he asks to be left to discipline Umari who is in custody for the injustices he claims Umari meted on him. We are told:

1051	Abdala akasema	Abdala said
	Kwani kufanya huruma	why pity them
	Na hawa si watu wema	for they are not good people
	Wala si watu wa kheri.	nor do they mean well.

1052	Nateni sayidi yangu	Allow me my Lord
	Nitwae qisasi changu	to have my revenge
	Wameua nduu yangu	they have killed my brother
	Na mimi kunikhasiri.	and pained me.

A speech such as this may give the reader a wrong impression of the character. The true trait is captured through the analysis of this utterance in relation to other parts of the text.

It is true that Zuberi is retributive, and this is the reason he is in Rasi 'lGhuli's territory, but it is certainly not in this instance. This instance presents the opposite of what we get from it. He is actually not hostile to Umari but he seeks to deceive the enemy. He is, therefore, devious.

5.3.2.4.2 Indication of Trait through Form

Characters not only speak but also speak in a particular manner. Their choice of words portrays what kind of characters they are. For instance, in several parts of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* the Muslim faithful refer to the non-Muslims as 'dogs' or 'infidels'. This shows their attitude and perception of those opposed or do not subscribe to their religious ideology. They degrade them to the level of an animal, the dog. Implying that non-Muslims are savage or equal to a dog; an animal considered unclean among Muslims.

Ali, just like most characters engaging in the war, has a tendency of praising himself before the enemy. It is a kind of chest thumping aimed at scaring the enemy into submission and maybe to also help the character engaged in self-praise to gather the courage to face the enemy. It may also be used to lure the enemy into fighting. In the following stanzas, Ali praises himself as a fearless soldier who destroys multitudes.

2461	Kamjibu ajilia	He answered immediately
	Akita ndimi Alia	saying Ali me it is
	ibunu amu Nabia	the cousin of the Prophet
	Muhamadi 'lBashiri.	Muhamadi the Foreteller.

2462	Ndimi simba maarufu	I am the celebrated lion
	ndimi mvunda sufulu	I am the breaker of multitudes
	ndimi shekhe mausufu	I am the reknown Sheikh
	ndimi shekhe Haidari.	I am the Lion sheikh.

We can infer from these words that Ali is a character who prides in his relationship with Muhamadi and that he also prides in his success in combat. He compares himself to a celebrated lion — a conqueror of others. His choice of lion as his object of comparison is no coincidence. He aims at showing his prowess in combat which is also supported by other evidence in the text. We therefore infer that he is strong and courageous. He is also brutal. This can be inferred through the use of the word 'breaker'. The act of breaking something suggests roughness meted on the object. As we shall see later, these attributes suggested by the character through choice of words in his speech aptly capture his qualities mentioned elsewhere in the text through his physical description.

However, the characters in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* have not been assigned language use that is unique to them. We cannot single out any character that uses language in a unique way that makes them stand out in this regard. The language they use does not vary although a few words and expressions can be attributed to a group. This makes the characters have a kind of 'group language' attributable to their group. This phenomenon is not only unique but can actually be used to explain the uniqueness of this poem. Since it is deeply rooted in ideology and the major characters share the same ideology as the narrator, then their speech and thought has been intentionally regulated by the author albeit unconsciously. Even then, a text need not to have individuated language. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002:64) observes:

> The form or style of speech is a common means of characterization in texts where the character's language is individuated and distinguished from that of the narrator. Style may be indicative of origin, dwelling place, social class, or profession.

As we have already pointed out above, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* does not employ character speech style that individuates characters and does, therefore, not make characters sharing a common goal or ideology stand out as individuals. They largely have generalized traits a situation that would have been avoided by their use of language unique to them as individuals.

5.3.2.5 Focus of Character's Speech

A character's speech can serve to characterize the character who utters the speech or another character that the speaker is talking about or even both. The speech produced by the character therefore not only characterizes the speaking character but can also give information about another character, other than the one speaking, sufficient to enable the reader to infer certain character traits. It is this scenario that we refer to as the focus of character's speech.

5.3.2.5.1 Focus on the Speaking Character

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli presents several situations where a character's speech provides information on the speaking character. Various examples of characters' speeches quoted above show this. However, we shall use the following example to buttress this point.

2937	Akiwambia anidi	The stubborn one told them
	na tuwane kwa juhudi	let us fight with vigour
	tuwanie auladi	we fight for the children
	na unyonge tusikiri.	let us not accept weakness.

2938	Tuwatapo asahabu	When we leave the caliphs
	kutoa kuwadhuruhu	withdrawing from fighting them
	itatupata aibu	it will ashame us
	kwa warabu ndiyo ari.	that is the desire of the Arabs.

2939	Na kana hasadiqi	And if you do not believe
	hayo ninayonatiqi	what I am saying
	yatunzeni tahakiqi	reflect on them
	mzidi na kufikiri.	and think about it.

The above speech by Rasi 'lGhuli to his army can help us infer several traits attributable to him. He comes across as a determined leader of his team but who is afraid of losing the war. Losing the war means that he and his team will suffer the shame that will come thereof. We then infer that he is a concerned leader. One other issue that comes out of his speech is the view that the army should fight for the children. This utterance will not doubt whip up emotions of patriotism among the soldiers who will heed his word to keep resisting the enemy. This then makes us assess him as being calculative.

5.3.2.5.2 Focus on the Spoken Character

Some character speeches in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* focus not on the speaking character but on the spoken character. At times when characters speak, they speak about other characters and not about themselves. They, therefore, provide information that the reader can use to make assessment of the nature of character of the spoken actant.

The most outstanding use of this mode of reflection of character is done by Wafari binti Sadamu and Umari bin Umaya in their submission to Muhamadi as to the kind of person Mukhariqi (Rasi 'lGhuli) is. They both provide an extensive narration that touches greatly on the character of Rasi 'lGhuli. Umari gives his assessment of Rasi 'lGhuli as follows:

162	Na huyu wake waladi	And this his son
	ali jabari anidi	was stubbornly obstinate
	kazi yake ufisadi	engaging in corrupt ways
	kwa jeuri kukithiri.	with unprecedented rudeness.

163	Mwana hiyo mnafiki	That hypocrite son
	na yinale Mukhariqi	his name Mukhariqi
	raia amewadhiqi	had caused the citizens suffering
	kawakalia kwa shari.	causing them adversity.

This speech by Umari portrays Rasi 'lGhuli as a stubborn character who constantly causes pain to others. He is portrayed as a brutal character who is feared by others whom he keeps paining. Umari builds on this evaluation of Rasi 'lGhuli to finally show him as beastly. He kills his father in cold blood and takes over the reigns of power. As such, through Umari's speech, the qualities of Rasi 'lGhuli are realised by the reader.

5.3.3 External Appearance

A character's external appearance can be used to imply his trait or traits. There is bound to exist a direct relationship between external appearance and personality trait. The author of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* provides information on the external appearance of characters which suggests their personality traits.

The narrator gives the external appearance of Ali in some detail in the following two stanzas.

602	Kitunza akitazama	He looked out at him
	amuene muadhama	and saw the exalted
	naye mfupi wa qama	he was of a short stature
	na matoye yanawiri.	and his eyes sparkling.

603	Kifua chake kipana	His chest broad
	muwili umejazana	his body stout
	mikono iviringana	his hands well built
	na wajihi mdawari.	and a rounded face.

The narrator here describes Ali's external appearance from the point of view of Mazidi who has been sent by the minister (waziri) to give him information on the impending attack by Rasi 'lGhuli's army. The sparkling eyes described point to a sharp focused person. A broad chest and stout body imply a character that is strong and his well built hands further stress the physical power and energy in him.

These characteristics portray Ali as a strong fighter who is physically fit for the impending war. And indeed the available information in sections of the text that follow confirm his strength.

Most poetic compositions, however, do not have the luxury of describing in detail a character's external appearance. Such is the case with *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. Prose narratives exploit this form of character presentation in great detail as is captured in the following excerpt from Shafi Adam Safi's (1991:1) *Vuta n'Kuvute*.

Yasmin alikuwa na kijiuso kidogo cha mdawari mfano wa tungule na macho makubwa ambayo kila wakati yalionekana kama yanalengwa lengwa na machozi. Alikuwa na pua ndogo, nyembamba na chini ya pua hiyo ilipangana midomo miwili mizuri iliyokuwa haitulii kwa tabia yake ya kuchekacheka, huku akionyesha safu mbili za meno yake mazuri. Alikuwa na kichaka cha nywele nyeusi zilizokoza ambazo zilianguka kwa utulivu juu ya mabega yake. Alikuwa si mrefu lakini hakuwa mfupi wa kuchusha, na matege aliyokuwa nayo yalizidi kuutia haiba mwendo wake wakati anapotembea.

[Yasmin had a small rounded face like that of a European tomato plant with big eyes that all the time looked tearful. She had a small thin nose and below it fell in place her two beautiful little lips that were constantly in action courtesy of her jovial character of laughing from time to time as she showed her two sets of nice teeth. She had thick dark black hair that fell calmly on her shoulders. She wasn't tall nor was she so short as to irritate, and her bowed legs spiced her movement as she walked.]

The paragraph quoted above gives detailed information on Yasmin's external appearance making the reader acquaint with her fully. The reader is able to build in his mind the kind of person he will engage with in the remaining 276 pages of the novel. It is a powerful picture starting from the hair, head, face, and legs. This is not a key feature in poetic narrative compositions not only because of its nature of compressing the various components that structure it, but also because of its focus on action.

Character trait can also be suggested through the use of figurative language that requires the reader to decipher the comparison suggested. In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* there are instances where similes are used to suggest the nature of the character being portrayed. A case in point is Rasi 'lGhuli's appearance after killing his father and taking over power. We are told:

267	Baada kupita ndani	After getting in
	amuwene maluuni	he saw the damned one
	amekeleti kitini	seated on a chair
	mato kama zingiluri.	eyes like a cinnabar.
274	Nyumbani alipotika	When he got in the house
	amuwene mushirika	he saw the idol worshipper
	upangawe ameshika	holding his sword
	yukinga simba wabari	looking like a maned lion.

Stanza 267 is focalized through a young man, an attendant of the fallen king, who describes the eyes of the killer, Rasi 'IGhuli, as being yellow as a cinnabar. This then makes Rasi 'IGhuli come across as a scary character. Yellow eyes are associated with inordinate character. Stanza 274 is focalized through the minister of the fallen king. The minister compares Rasi 'IGhuli's appearance to that of a maned lion. A tough figure is what we can infer from this observation. The mane suggests a male lion; strong, uncompromising and brutal. Such is our interpretation of the character of Rasi 'IGhuli in this context.

5.3.4 Environment

The setting can on occasion reveal the personality of a character. This includes human environment and physical environment. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002:66) underscores this fact when she observes that:

> A character's physical surrounding (room, house, street, town) as well as his human environment (family, social class) are also often used as trait-connoting metonymies. As with external appearance, the relation of contiguity is frequently supplemented by that of causality.

Certain character traits in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* can be linked with the environment or setting with which they are associated with. For example, at the initial stages of this narrative, prophet Muhamadi is said to be in a mosque as Bilali calls for a prayer. The caliphs then join Muhamadi for the morning prayer.

45	Kwondoka kwake Amini	The Faithful one on leaving
	katika mle nyumbani	from the house
	akaenda msikitini	went to the mosque
	waqati wa 'Ifajiri.	early in the morning.

46	Akiadhini Bilali	Bilali called out aloud for prayers
	sauti akiratili	the voice pronounced
	wakipulika rijali	the men heard
	wakuu hata saghiri.	big and small.

47	Sahaba wakikutana	The caliphs met
	kwa wote ajmaina	all the four men
	Alli na Athumana	Ali and Athuman
	wa kadha Abu Bakari.	as well as Abu Bakari.

From the above stanzas the physical surrounding of Muhamadi is outlined. He is in a mosque early in the morning. This surrounding leads us to infer that he is a religious man through his presence in the mosque. Secondly, there is the time of the day: early in the morning. This shows that this is the first event undertaken as the day breaks. The implication of this is that this character puts prayer first before any other business and serves to emphasize his commitment to the religion he serves: Islam.

On the human environment, he is surrounded by the caliphs; his close followers. The people around him such as Ali and Umari (stanza 48) attend the morning prayers without any one failing. This then points to Muhamadi's ability as a leader to guide his close followers. He is, therefore, an able leader who leads his followers with great success. This leadership and oneness of the followers of Muhamadi is seen through out the poem. The other trait we can infer from this is that of Muhamadi and his followers working together as a team – they are co-operative.

Muhamadi's nemesis, Rasi 'lGhuli, is associated with an environment which is in contrast to Muhamadi's. This environment is captured through Zuberi's localization as follows:

451	Hitunza maluuni kavaa taji kichwani kakeleti kitandani cha dhahabu ahmari.	I saw the damned with a crown on his head seated on the bed of red gold.
452	Na taji lake lameta kichwani limempata laangaza kama nyota kwa dururi na johari.	And his crown glittering well fitted on is head shinning like a star with pearls and jewels.
453	Wamesimama ahidi watu alfu idadi panga na ngao hadidi kula mtu yu tayari.	The servants stood a thousand people in number swords and shields of iron each of them at the ready.
454	Na mikuki mikononi mia tano kulumeni mia tano kushoto ghairi ya askari.	And spears in their hands five hundred on the right five hundred on the left soldiers without regard.
455	Wamejipamba thabu majambia na dhahabu na wengine madhuruhu vinanda na mazumari.	Neatly dressed swords and gold others playing the organs and clarionets.
456	Hapo walipojulusi wamekutana unasi kwa zakula kula jinsi na mirashi ya hamri.	At their place of sitting converged people for food of all kinds and jars of wine.

The physical surrounding above points to the king, Rasi 'lGhuli, as a character who exalts himself. This is suggested by the crown on his head and the bed of red gold that he is seated on. There is also the sense of self importance suggested by this description. And from the religious point of view, Rasi 'lGhuli is immersed in material possessions. He is

well decorated by nice looking expensive things which in turn reflect his engrossment with them. They also suggest class for it is the rich and the powerful that can access such.

The human environment shows the heavy presence of an army that is well armed around him. This depicts him as militant and confrontational. The fact that Rasi 'lGhuli is protected by a big army shows that his social class is high. We are also told of people engaged in provision of entertainment and others enjoying a variety of meals and lots of beer. All these characterize Rasi 'lGhuli as an hedonist - meaning he prefers entertainment and good times unlike Muhamadi whose environment suggests that he is humble and religious.

5.4 ANALOGY

Authors at times reinforce character traits by the use of analogy. Characterization by analogy stresses similarity between name and trait. In our analysis of analogy in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, we shall focus on two forms of analogy; analogous names and analogy between characters.

5.4.1 Analogous Names

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2002:68) lists four ways in which character traits can be reinforced through analogy. We shall however focus on one — the mode employed in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. That is the use of allegorical names.

Allegorical names suggest or point to the main traits of character. This sets the stage for a pre-destined type of character at the onset of the reader's encounter with him or her. The author, or narrator for that matter, who already understands the events and characters' roles before the commencement of narrative, makes judgment about a given character and proceeds to confirm that evaluation in the narrative text-continuum. In most cases, texts that employ the use of allegorical names seem to divide the actants in the narrative as either being good or bad. This categorization is evident in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*

This narrative with an eponymous title loosely means the 'Epic of the Head of Snake". Rasi 'IGhuli, whose real name is Mukhariqi bin Shahabu, has been given this derogatory name to reinforce his personality as a dangerous, evil being. Throughout the story, Rasi 'IGhuli is portrayed as such. He is against what the overriding ideology emphasizes as the true religion and roots for through out the text. His religion is, therefore, seen as sheer idol worship. In addition, Rasi 'IGhuli oppresses both the Muslim and non-Muslim fraternity. His actions are therefore injurious to their well being.

Another character in this text whose name is allegorical is Abdala. This name means the servant of God. When the Muslim army is sent out by Muhamadi to make a follow up on Zuberi and Ali, Abdala is among those leading it, others being Said and Umari. He therefore sets out to serve God in a holy war. In fact, he endangers his life by venturing alone into enemy ground where he pretends to have been accosted by Umari, beaten, his brother killed, and their belongings taken away.

Other allegorical names include Mazidi (meaning one who goes overboard), Muqatili (meaning a ruffian), Saidi (meaning master) and Muqaliqali (meaning the hostile one).

It is, however, important to note that allegorical names on their own do not show the traits of a character but merely point to them. They merely reinforce trait that is manifest throughout the text inferred by analysis of characters' speeches or narrators' evaluation or description of actant.

5.4.2 Character Analogy

Characters can be presented in similar circumstances with similarities and differences in their behaviour. The similarities and differences help bring out their individual traits.

In *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* we can broadly categorize characters as a juxtaposition of the good and bad. Those on the side of Muhamadi are contrasted with those on the side of Rasi 'IGhuli. The generalised conclusion is that those on the side of Muhamadi are God fearing faithful men whereas those on the side of Rasi 'IGhuli are idol worshippers preoccupied with aggression and oppression of all and sundry. The behaviours of individuals on the two sides of the divide are in contrast.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed characterization in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*. Direct definition and indirect presentation have largely been used to show the characters' qualities. However, character juxtaposition and analogous names have been used to reinforce character trait. It is also clear from our analysis that a character indicator does not always

infer one single trait in exclusion of others. In fact, one character indicator can point to several character traits as has been demonstrated in our discussion above. Finally, we have argued that ascribing a character a trait is informed by ideological leanings especially with regard to *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* and this can lead to contrasting evaluations and deduction of trait of the same character.

This chapter on characterization brings to a close our analysis of narrative aspects in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*. We shall, in the next chapter, make our conclusions of this research.

CHAPTER 6

6.0 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter deals with conclusions of this research. The conclusions are based on the analyses carried out in the preceding chapters. This chapter is divided into four parts. The first part outlines the research findings. The second part evaluates the hypotheses set out at the onset of this research. The hypotheses are evaluated against the findings of each chapter. The third part of this chapter points out the contributions made by this research to the study of Swahili literature especially with regard to narration in Swahili epic poetry. The fourth part of this chapter makes recommendations for further research.

6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

With regard to narrative time, this study posits that the ordering of events in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* is not linear. The text is rich with anachronies. Both analepses and prolepses help the narratee to understand the 'present' happening in the story by narrating the past or future events. The past events, therefore, help provide information that is important not only to understanding happenings of the moment but also help to understand the characters in focus as well as influence the direction events in the story will take. This is the case with Wafari's analeptic narration. On the other hand, prolepsis plays a big role in this narrative. This being a story of bitterly opposed parties, the proleptic narrations provide the motivation for the characters to pursue their goals. For instance, Muhamadi's

proleptic explanation to his followers of the ultimate prize for those who fight and defeat Rasi 'IGhuli (good life and beautiful women) invigorates them to take up arms. This then becomes their motivation thus enabling the plot of the story to roll on.

It is also evident from our analysis that narrative duration is modulated by aspects such as ellipsis, pause, summary and scene. Their use mitigates and influences the rhythm of this narrative. For example, elided instances provide a fast pace in narrative where as the use of scene markedly slows down the pace of the narrative. These two provide extreme degrees of pace and therefore rhythm variance in narrative.

The last aspect of time is frequency. Our study has shown that *Utenzi wa Rasi IGhuli* is rich in repetition of events in the story. The author of the text has employed singulative, repetitive and iterative forms of narration.

This research has also analyzed the narrative levels and voices in *Utenzi wa Rasi IGhuli*. This narrative's narration entertains various temporal relations with the events of the story. There are instances of narration taking place after the happening of events (ulterior narration), narration taking place before the happening of events (anterior narration), narration taking place at the same time as the narrated events (simultaneous narration) and narrating with several instances (intercalated narration). All these impact on the plot and presentation of events. In particular, simultaneous narration gives the narrative a sense of immediacy and intensity a kin to that created in drama.

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli presents several narrative levels. These are first, second and third degree levels of narrative. The second and third degree narratives are embedded narratives which narrate the main story of the epic. From our analysis it is evident that these embedded narratives play various roles in the text-continuum. Their functions include explaining what leads to the prevailing situation and advancement of action of the diegetic narrative. We have also discussed metalepsis and concluded that *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* employs both marked and unmarked narrative transitions. The marked transitions make it easy for the reader to follow the events of the story where as the unmarked transitions pose a challenge to a not-so-keen reader.

On narrative voice, the study concludes that first, second and third person narrations are employed and goes further to argue that these terms do not reflect the narrator or narration. They in fact refer to the narrated, that is, the subject of the narrator. We have further demonstrated that some narrators in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* are heterodiegetic and others homodiegetic providing varied points of view. This study has also shown that some parts of the text show the presence of the narrator more covertly while others show it less covertly. Apart from the six indicators of narrator presence in the text provided by Chatman (1978) namely: setting description, character identification, temporal summary, definition of character, reports on characters' thoughts and words, and commentary, *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* has one other indicator of narrator presence – what we have designated as narratee direction.

The chapter on narrative levels and voices closes with an analysis of the functions of narrators and types of narratees. The functions of the narrator in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* have been identified as narrating of the story, giving discourse directions, maintaining narratee contact and attestation of both source of the story and ability of the narrator to compose. The study proceeds to shows that narratees are an important part in the narrative channel. It has been demonstrated that narratees in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* are both extradiegetic and intradiegetic. The text also presents overt and covert narratees.

The use of several narrating agents helps provide narration freshness and thereby breaking the monotony of a single overriding narrative agent.

This research also analyzed textual indicators of character. Direct character definition through both narrator and characters has been discussed. Indirect presentation, which forms the bulk of textual indicators of character has also been delved into in this study. It has been argued that characters' actions, speech and external appearance are some of the key indicators of character in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. It has also been concluded that setting can on occasion reveal a character's personality. We have also shown that character traits can be reinforced by analogy. We have argued that ideology, especially in a text based on divergent religious view points such as *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, offers opposing interpretations as to the person of the character in question depending on which ideological stand point the reader or narratee of the text leans towards. We have also shown that a character indicator does not exclusively denote a single trait. Several traits can be inferred from a single character indicator.

6.3 REMARKS ON THE HYPOTHESES

The first hypothesis stated that "*Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* employs key narrative strategies that are mainly associated with prose narratives." This hypothesis is motivated by lack of research work carried out on narration in Swahili narrative poetry. Critics hardly talk about narration in narrative poetry yet this is the overriding feature of this kind of poems.

This research has established that key narrative strategies, mainly associated with prose, have been employed in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*. These include the way time is handled in narrative as well as the existence of various narrative levels and voices in the text. Key character indicators have also been employed in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* although the genre does not present the author with the luxury of explaining the external appearance of character as opposed to the luxury, for instance, the novelist enjoys.

The second hypothesis was: "The various narrative strategies used in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* are an important structural component of the poem." This hypothesis has been proved to be entirely true. For instance, the use of anachronies is important in that it not only provides information important to the understanding of the present by referring to past events (analepsis) but that the analepsis becomes an important trigger for the next set of actions in the narrative. This provides an avenue for event causality; a key plot element. Likewise, the use of prolepsis serves, for example, to provide the impetus necessary for characters to pursue a given goal. The promise of a better tomorrow through prolepsis motivates characters to pursue what would ordinarily not be pursued.

The different narrative levels present the narratee with a different narrator. This not only helps to change and break the monotony of narrator within the text-continuum but also serves to present diverse points of view thus enriching the structure of the poem. The marked transitions clearly indicate the shift from one episode or narrative level to another. This brings clarity when reading the poem as it also presupposes a change of setting and at times time.

The various character indicators also contribute to the structure of the poem. For instance, the juxtaposition of characters not only shows their opposing view points but also presents them as opposing forces key to the structure of the poem. *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* exploits juxtaposition at the level of character, setting, plot and theme.

The last hypothesis stated that, "The poetic nature of *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* impacts on various narrative strategies employed in the poem." This hypothesis was proved to be largely true. With regard to narrative time, the poetic nature of the text does not impact on the three aspects of time namely; order, duration and frequency. Although repetitive narration appears to be used more than can be cited in prose, it is not because of the repetitive nature of poetry but because of the oral influence manifest in the text.

Concerning narrative levels and voices, this text presents several narrative levels and several narrative voices. By the very nature of Swahili classical poetry, especially the long poem, the first degree narrative becomes a permanent narrative structural feature. The place of the first degree narrative is dictated by the prosodic dictates of the genre.

The use of first, second and third person narrators present a unique case of narration. This may, however, be attributed partially to the poetic nature of the narrative as well as the author's effort in presenting the story. The poetic nature impacts on first person narration at the beginning and end of the poem. However, this also alludes to the oral nature of the composition.

With regard to characterization, there isn't much impact by the poetic nature of the text. Most character indicators are largely universal. The only impact is the lack of luxury to describe character appearance in detail as poetry thrives on compression. The nature of epic - focus on the action - is also a factor as to why character description is minimal in the poem. The actions in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli*, as is the case with other epic compositions, are the subject of concern and not detailed figural depictions.

The poetic nature of the text also explains why there are both overt and covert narratees addressed by the main narrator.

6.4 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This research has studied narration in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'IGhuli* using narrative theory. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first attempt in Swahili literary studies to analyze narrative strategies in Swahili literature and in narrative poetry in particular. This study will, therefore, provide an understanding of how narratives are structured. In particular, analysis of narrative aspects of time, characterization, narrative levels and voices provide insights on the nature of Swahili narrative poetry.

The theory used, narratology or narrative theory, has not been used by Swahili literary critics to do a comprehensive study of the structure of narrative. By using this theory to dissect narrative aspects in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli*, the study provides impetus to the neglected field of poetic theory as well as methodology.

The study brings into fore various narrative aspects hitherto unattended to in narrative studies. These are pseudo-analepsis, a term coined in this study to refer to a form of anachrony, and an expansion of narrator functions to include narratee direction, an aspect that has not caught the attention of narratologists. The other new aspects raised on narrative are the terms and concepts of micro anachronies and macro anachronies.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research recommends that further research on narration in *Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli* should be carried out. This study has concerned itself with characterization, narrative time as well as narrative levels and voices. The narrative aspects of point of view and speech representation have not been studied and they would make an interesting case for a research.

The study also recommends studies in narration in other literary narrative compositions. These include short poems, short stories, novels and the plays. Since narration is the key element in any narrative composition, studies in narration will help understand key narrative elements and how they impact on the works of art.

Utenzi wa Rasi 'lGhuli exhibits oral tendencies throughout the text-continuum. A study of the oral traces in this narrative and other Swahili narrative poems would help understand their role in the texts as well as enrich Swahili literary studies.

Finally, narration being an integral part of narratives, we recommend that it gets more attention from literary critics and scholars so as to enable students and enthusiasts of literary studies understand and appreciate the nature and function of narrative structure.

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