

Paukwa

Zanzibar tales



Poukwa

...is the way that a storyteller greets the audience.

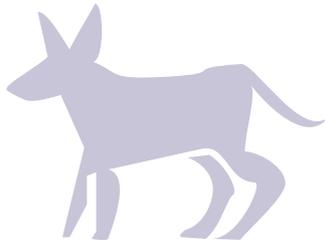
Pakawa

...is the way the audience answers loudly
and clearly to show that they are eager for him
or her to start.



Paukwa

Zanzibar tales



For the men and women
from Bambi, Chukwani, Fukuchani, Mikunguni,
Uroa and Uzini who told us their tales.

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Read and let read

A project organised by RAA Brandenburg with teachers, students and storytellers from Bambi, Uzini, Fukuchani, Chukwani, Uroa and Mikunguni

Hundreds of stories are out there just waiting to be passed on – this is the experience that a group of young adults from Zanzibar and Brandenburg made as they travelled around five different villages and Mikunguni (a suburb of Zanzibar town) collecting tales that older men and women had heard when they were children. The elderly villagers were proud to be given the opportunity to retell these stories and to once again be more important than television, videos, computers and football. The result is a book full of tales. Stories that the villagers in Bambi, Uzini, Fukuchani, Chukwani, Uroa and Mikunguni could remember. These stories have been written down by their children and grandchildren for the very first time so that they do not get lost and so that they can find their place in the local libraries.

Books are not yet a self-evident part of every day life on Zanzibar. We, however, have noticed that when they are available they are certainly read. The author Ali Rashid is convinced that the value of books must first be established before people are willing to spend money on them. He asks himself ‘How can people afford to spend millions of shillings¹ on a wedding, but haven’t even got 10,000 shillings² for books? Why is there enough money for the 92nd khanga³, but not sufficient means for even one book? It isn’t a question of there not being enough money for books but rather that their value has not yet been recognised.’

Apart from this underdeveloped awareness, there is also a lack of governmental financing for libraries and books. In 2005 we supported the schools in Bambi, Uzini, Fukuchani, Chukwani, Uroa and Mikunguni in their endeavour to set up and improve their libraries. Bookshelves were built, books bought, tables and chairs were provided. These six libraries received good basic equipment for 14,000 Euros. Young people from Brandenburg and teachers from Zanzibar cooperated to promote books and to offer activities to improve reading competence. Reading clubs were founded to create a long-term impetus to encourage reading.

This project is just a continuation of a series of projects that have taken place over the past 17 years. The RAA with its ‘Encounter’ projects has supported local village initiatives and has built 67 classrooms in total along with countless school desks. It was finally time to invest in the quality of the education.

Books and bookshelves alone do not constitute a reading culture. So the project encompassed a further step. Each school allocated one named teacher to be responsible for the library. These colleagues consequently attended in-service training courses to learn how a library works. Additionally it was also extremely interesting for the participants to meet and talk to local authors who live and publish their works in Zanzibar. Currently they experience great difficulty in getting their works published on the islands. Even when they do manage to get their books printed it is still a very long way to their readers.



RAA Brandenburg is a department of the German non-governmental Organization Demokratie und Integration Brandenburg e.V. Brandenburg is a region in East Germany and this association was founded in 1992 with the aim of counteracting racism and hostility towards foreigners as well as making intercultural encounters possible. Since 1994 the association has cooperated with various partners. From that time on people from Brandenburg and Zanzibar have worked and learnt with and from each other in a variety of different projects.

¹ 1 Euro = 1.819 Tanzanian Shilling (4/2009)

1 million Tanzanian Shilling = 550 Euro.

² 10.000 Tanzanian Shilling = 5,50 Euro.

³ Kanga = traditional dress for woman consist of two pieces of cloth

Read and let read

The main reasons for this is a very limited sales network and the largely undeveloped interest in books and the written word.

Another reason could be that the Zanzibari culture has an oral tradition; that people prefer listening to stories rather than reading them themselves. Of course, books and reading should not oust these oral traditions but rather supplement them. Books are not competitors. The elderly and their tales are important and that is why they have been the main focus of our project.

German – Tanzanian teams were active in following historical tracks. Numerous tales have been retold.

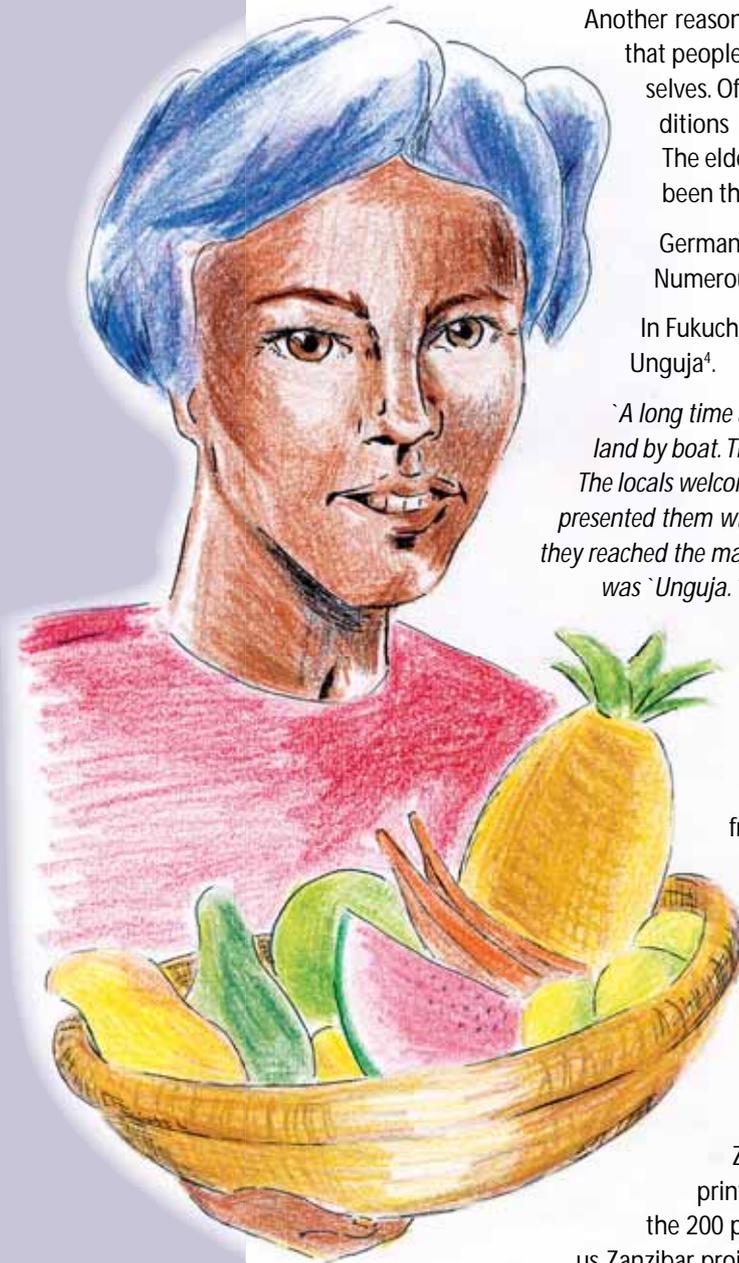
In Fukuchani, for example, we found out how the island got its name Unguja⁴.

‘A long time ago, inhabitants of the East African mainland came to the island by boat. They arrived empty-handed, without having brought any gifts. The locals welcomed these travellers with open arms, gave them lodgings and presented them with presents before they set off on their journey home. When they reached the mainland they were asked ‘What’s the island like?’ The answer was ‘Unguja.’

In Swahili the word ungo means a round flat basket used for sifting grain. *Ungo ni jaa* can be translated as ‘the basket is full’ and that it lacks for nothing. This name is then an indication of the island’s natural wealth.

We have found a basketful of stories, a wealth of knowledge from long-forgotten times that we had been searching for. We have collected these and many other tales and hope that lots of people in Tanzania, Germany and the rest of the world will be able to read them.

Initially we copied the books ourselves and sold them in Germany. In 2006 a software company from the small German town of Hasselfelde gave all their clients a copy as a Christmas present. One hundred and thirty German customers found out something about Zanzibar and we had sufficient funds to have 1000 copies printed. Modern technology made it possible to contact all of the 200 people from Brandenburg who had taken part in the various Zanzibar projects that had taken place between 1992 and 2006. Within



a few weeks 300 copies had been sold so that we could print the Swahili edition in 2007. The Swahili version was distributed to the storytellers and to the village libraries as well.

The stories have made a detour via Germany to their home villages where grandchildren can read them to their grandparents. These grandparents can, in their turn, tell further tales which hopefully readers will be able to find in a further collection.

When you read this book today, it will be thanks to the involvement of a large number of people in Germany and on Zanzibar. We have sold enough books to print the English version. With your donation you support the village libraries in nine villages on the island.

We invite everyone to read and enjoy these island stories.

Birgit Mitawi
Project Coordinator
Berlin and Zanzibar 2009



⁴ Zanzibar is the name of the small archipelago off the coast of mainland Tanzania which comprises Unguja, Pemba and a few smaller islands. Unguja is often called Zanzibar and is at the same time the name of the main town on Unguja, Zanzibar Town.



How Chukwani got its name

narrated by Suleiman Khamis Faraji

A long time ago only a few people lived in this village and the number of houses could be counted on one hand. Unfortunately this village did not have a name. One of the first people to live in this village was an old woman who loved her grandchildren more than anything else and she fulfilled all their wishes. One day, however, the grandchildren saw something inside her house which the old woman really needed. The children tried to wheedle it out of her and, being used to getting everything that they asked for, shouted 'Give it to us Grandma, give to us Grandma.' Their Grandmother begged for her grandchildren to be patient as in the well-known saying 'Patience brings happiness.' But the children kept on pressing their grandmother so much that in the end she lost her patience and she shouted angrily. But they did not give up so that in the end the old woman shouted 'Chukuwani' which means 'Take it then.'

Well, there was a path that went close by the grandmother's house and just at that moment some passers-by heard her shouting. What they had heard soon passed around and people would shout 'Is Bibi Chukuwani at home today?' as a greeting. This way of greeting went on for many years until the old woman passed away. The name of the place was shortened to Chukwani. And this village is called Chukwani to this very day.

Subiri ni Sali

narrated by Khalfan Mwita.

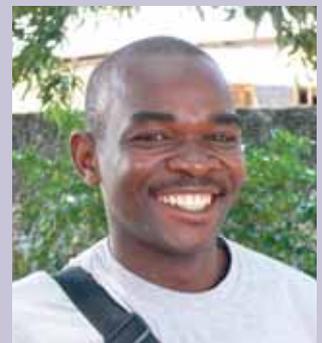
A long time ago there was a merchant who was respected as if he were the chief of the town and he was able to employ all sorts of workers.

One day he had to go to a country far away because of his trading and so he called his seven sons and said to them. 'My sons I have to travel far away for a while to continue my business and I expect you all to behave devoutly and act respectfully towards your mother and that you will not trouble others during my absence.' Then he placed a mirror in each of his son's rooms which would reveal whether each of them had behaved according to their father's wishes or not. So the father set off on his journey with many workers, soothsayers and local doctors. After his departure the sons forgot their promises to their father about their behaviour and did not do what they were told. They became mischievous, one played truant from school, another lost huge sums of money through gambling, a third drank too much and a fourth frequented women. Only the youngest remembered his father's words and led a godly life.



Suleiman Khamis Faraji

from Chukwani is 80 years old. Since he gave up his position as village mayor a year ago, he has had plenty of time to pass on the oral traditions to the youngsters of his village.



Khalfan Mwita

from Chukwani is 34 years old. Khalfan is a teacher and enjoys retelling the stories, his father told him as a child, to his pupils.

Tales from Chukwani

Some time later the news of their father's return reached the village and the sons' mirrors were so faded and scratched that the self-willed sons began to get worried as their reflection could hardly be seen in their mirrors.

On the day of his return, cannons were fired by way of greeting and to show respect. Following his return the father proceeded to his sons' rooms to examine the mirrors. The other brothers planned to deceive their father and so they exchanged the youngest son's mirror with their own.

When he entered the room of his first-born son, the chief saw that the mirror was shining brightly and he was really pleased that his son had been behaving well. He continued to the rooms to look at the mirrors of the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth sons. Again the father was overjoyed to see that the mirrors were not faded or scratched. But then he got to the mirror of the youngest son; and lo and behold, the surface of the mirror was so damaged that nothing could be seen. The father was livid with anger so he called his servants and ordered them to take the youngest son into the forest and to kill him. Following that they should immediately bring him his son's blood as proof of the son's death.

The servants led the youngest son into the forest as they had been told but when they got deep into the forest they felt sorry for the son because they knew that he was very dutiful. So they contrived a plan. They built a shelter for the boy and took him some food. Then they decided to kill a small gazelle, collect its blood in a coconut shell and take it to their master as proof of his son's death.

It was time for the merchant to set out on another journey and this time before he departed he declared to his sons. 'Seeing as you behaved in such an exemplary manner while I was away last time, I would like to bring each of you a present as a reward from this journey. I beseech you to inform me of your wishes and I shall only return when I have fulfilled all of your wishes.' After the six brothers had expressed their wishes of gold, silver and precious stones the old merchant set off on his way. The journey proceeded successfully and the old merchant had acquired the presents for his six sons. But one day, in the middle of the ocean, the sails slackened all of a sudden as if by magic and he realised that his ship was no longer moving. The crew tried their very best but whatever they did nothing could get the ship into motion. As a result the merchant called his soothsayers to him who then took the omens and said that he had asked six of his sons what present they would like but he had not even asked his seventh son. Exasperated the trader shouted 'How could I have asked this disobedient son what he wants when I had him killed?' His advisors replied 'Your son is not dead; he's in the land of the living and you will only be able to continue your journey when you have asked him.'

The trader was angry but agreed to these conditions and did what his advisors demanded of him. He returned home and once he had arrived he asked his servants about the whereabouts of his last-born. They admitted to not having killed him and divulged his hiding place. The trader sent his wife into the forest to find out what his sons wish was as quickly as possible. His wife was very excited and went as fast as she could into the hiding place in the forest with her servants. As she arrived the son was about to pray so he called out to her 'Subiri ni Sali' (which means *Just a moment I'm praying*). His mother thought that 'Subiri ni Sali' was the present that he wanted so she hurried back to inform her husband.

The old man shook his head when he heard this as he could not imagine what 'Subiri ni Sali' was but nevertheless set sail to continue his journey into far distant lands. He asked in every port, by every oasis and in every shop about Subiri ni Sali. But no one could give him an answer as to what it was or where he could find it. One day, however, when he was walking behind a house calling out 'Subiri ni Sali', a young maiden came out and said 'Take this feather and give it to your son; when he sets fire to it after having prayed 'Subiri ni Sali' will appear.

On his return, the merchant sent his wife into the forest again where she explained what he should do. The son was very surprised as he was not expecting to get a present but he did as he was told. After having prayed, he sets fire to the feather. A wondrous maiden emerged, more beautiful than any girl he had ever seen. They greeted each other and they talked to each other and she explained that she would appear for his pleasure whenever he burnt a bit of the wing after praying. And so it came to pass; day after day the youngest son summoned the beautiful maid with his fire until one day the other six brothers came to hear of this marvellous damsel. They, of course, were envious of their brother and sought a way to spoil his fun. The six young men made their way to the woods and spoke to their brother. 'We have come to apologise and we are really sorry for any wrong we have done you; we beg your forgiveness. We would like to do something to help you; we want to protect this beautiful young woman from misfortune. But if we want to protect her we need to know what is dangerous for her.' The younger brother, pleased about his brothers' change of heart, asked the beauty what could cause her danger. At first she was unwilling to reveal her secret, but seeing as she loved the young man, she said to him, 'There is only one thing which is dangerous for me and that is glass splinters; if I touch one, then I will suffer badly.'

When the six brothers heard this they went into the forest at night with a basketful of splinters which they threw all over the ground around the lovers' hut. As he saw them the next morning the youngest brother realised that his brothers had deceived him and that they wished the girl's death. He immediately started to clear the shards away with a broom looking very carefully so as not to miss any. Unfortunately he had overlooked one tiny splinter. After he had prayed he called his lover to him as usual. Scarcely had Subiri ni Sali' arrived, when her face grimaced in pain. 'Why do you want to kill me my beloved master? What evil have I done to you that I deserve this vengeance so that you deliberately make me tread on a splinter? Now you have lost me forever.' And before he could explain she disappeared.

The desolate young man was all alone and went searching for his lover. He wandered deep into the forest and rested under a tree. There he heard two wondrous birds talking in the branches and was just about to fall asleep when he heard one say 'Isn't it a tragedy that 'Subiri ni Sali', the Sultan's beautiful daughter, is about to die. It's also a tragedy that human beings do not know that the leaves of this very tree could heal her from one day to the next.'

The youngest son had heard enough and he stuffed his pockets full with as many leaves as he could and made his way to the main city of the kingdom. On his arrival he went straight to the Sultan and begged an audience. 'My Lord and Master I have come to heal your daughter and save her from a certain death.' The Sultan replied, 'I will welcome you as my son-in-law if you can save her life. But beware, just look at the executed heads of the charlatans who failed to cure her.'



Tales from Chukwani

The young man went directly to the princess's chambers, rubbed the leaves between his fingers and blew the medicine into her face. She was healed immediately. When she opened her eyes and recognised her saviour, she shouted out loudly, 'Father, father this is the awful man who wanted to kill me.'

Without giving the young man a chance to defend himself the Sultan called his guards and wanted to put the young man to death immediately. But the young man cried 'Stop, my lord, you are doing me a great injustice. It wasn't me but my brothers who were responsible for your daughter's injuries. Would I have come here with the medicine if I desired her death?'

His words convinced the Sultan and his daughter. Soldiers were then sent to kill the six brothers. The youngest celebrated his wedding with 'Subiri ni Sali' and later he inherited the Sultan's treasure and ruled over the land.

And they all lived happily ever after.



The stolen goat

narrated by Zubeda Abdalla Omar

Once upon a time there was a man who had three wives one of which was a thief. This man kept goats. One day, whilst the man was on a journey, one of the wives secretly stole a goat, killed it, cooked it and ate it all up by herself.

On his return the man noticed that one goat was missing so he asked his wives who had slaughtered it. They all denied doing it. So he decided to use a magic spell to discover the truth.

He sent his first wife to the creek where she stepped into the deep water. While she was doing this he sang this song:

Kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri,
Mani nenga kachiri,
Depala, dipolokachiri,
Dipolo, dambo kachiriri
Kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri.

As soon as he had finished the song the first wife emerged untroubled from the depths. Following that he sent his second wife into the deep water and again he sang:

Kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri,
Mani nenga kachiri,
Depala, dipolokachiri,
Dipolo, dambo kachiriri,
Kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri.

His second wife also came out of the water as soon as he had finished singing. Finally he sent his third wife into the water. He sang as she entered the water:

Kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri,
Mani nenga kachiri,
Depala, dipolokachiri,
Dipolo, dambo kachiriri,
Kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri, kachiriri.

But this time the wife did not return from the water and instead sunk to the riverbed. The man then knew that the third wife was the thief. He then prepared another magic spell to bring her up from the riverbed. When she came out of the water, she started crying and begged forgiveness and promised that she would never steal or lie again.

The man forgave her and the man and his three wives lived happily ever after.



Zubeda Abdalla Omar

from Chukwani is 47 years old. She works in her home and has two sons. This story was told to her by an old ngoni who was her neighbour in Dar es Salaam.

Tales from Chukwani



How Fukuchani got its name

narrated by Pandu Mkoba Faki

The village of Fukuchani on the north-west coast of Unguja (Zanzibar) has been there for quite some time but only a very few know how it got its name.

The site of the village was on a place where there was a lot of sand and all those who wanted to pass through the village found it difficult to do so because of the sand. One day, some of the travellers decided to make a detour through the village Bonde Uyongo. Although the distance was further the travellers arrived more quickly than if they had gone through Fukuchani.

The villagers of Bonde Uyongo were very surprised about the increase of travellers through their village so they asked 'Why have you taken this path when there's a much shorter way?' The answer they received was 'There's so much sand (fukucha) in that place that we can only proceed very slowly and get delayed.'

And so right up to today the village is called Fukuchani – „sandy place“.

Married twice over

narrated by Ngwali Makasha

Once upon a time there was a very rich man called Hassan Saira. There was only one thing that Hassan was very concerned about. He had only one son called Maulid who had been born very weak and unfortunately remained very sickly. As a result Hassan was extremely concerned about the future of his dynasty.

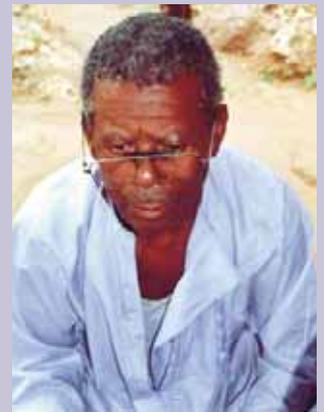
At the same time there was a very poor man named Bwana Vuai Pandu from the same village. He had numerous offspring who were all healthy, hardworking and helped their father as well as they could. Even so, the family had scarcely enough to live on and often went hungry.

Hassan was so concerned that his son would not be able to present him with an heir that he made his way to the poor Bwana Vuai with the hope of adopting one of his sons, Yunus. His plan was to marry Yunus, in place of his own son Maulid, to an Arab princess and thus ensure Hassan's family dynasty and wealth.

Vuai was very unsure of this plan and what to do so he went to his wife Khaija to ask her advice. Initially there were unwilling to let their son go but were concerned that the rich man would get furious if they refused his wish. They spoke to Hassan 'How can our son marry a woman from such a rich family? We do



Pandu Mkoba Faki
from Fukuchani is a 73 year old fisherman.



Ngwali Makasha
from Fukuchani is a 77 year old local medicine man. He is a very popular storyteller.

Tales from Fukuchani

not have the means to finance a fitting celebration. Hassan assured them that they need not worry as he would take care of everything. The parents eventually agreed but told Yunus to return home immediately after the wedding ceremony as they needed his help.

So Yunus sailed to Muscat and canons signalled his arrival and welcomed him to the Sultan's palace. There he met the beautiful princess and they celebrated a wonderful marriage with delicious food, drink and lively music. The pair liked each very much and everyone was pleased that the princess had such a handsome husband.

After the ceremony the pair returned to Yunus's home village. After a while Yunus left his wife to work for his father as he had promised before the marriage. The princess was very unhappy and wept bitterly. She was so disappointed that her tears and cries woke the whole of Hassan's household. That was how Hassan discovered that Yunus had left the desolate princess alone. Not knowing what else to do, he sent his son Maulid to the princess; but she screamed even more loudly. She wanted Yunus and no other.

When the princess's father found out that the princess was desolate and that her husband was merely a poor young man from the village he became more than furious. He went to take his daughter back to Muscat but his daughter cried and wept day after day. She only wanted Yunus back; Yunus and no other. In the end the Sultan realised that she was so much in love with Yunus that she would not accept anyone else. So the Sultan sent a messenger to get Yunus.

The messengers found out where Yunus lived and went to talk to the family. But Bwana Vuai refused to release his son just like that. His condition was that the Sultan should come in person. So the Sultan was forced to travel all the way across the sea for an audience with Bwana Vuai.

On his arrival he declared 'My daughter can neither eat, drink nor sleep. She can only think of Yunus. I beseech you to let your son marry my daughter a second time. Otherwise I have great concerns about her health and am worried that she will not recover.'

The crafty Vuai countered 'How on earth can my son take your fine daughter as a bride? We are poor, we have no fine clothes and cannot offer her a suitable home.' But the Sultan appeased him. 'Do not worry. I shall take care of everything. My single wish is that my daughter recovers.' So the Sultan of Muscat and Hassan negotiated; Hassan should give Vuai and his son a large plot of land to build on as well as a large piece of fertile farmland. In addition Hassan should recompense his deceitful behaviour by giving the Vuai family a great sum of money and a large amount of fine garments.

Shortly after this there was a great celebration. It was the beautiful princess's and Yunus's second wedding ceremony, the costs of which Hassan had to bear.

From that day on the couple lived happily and Vuai's family was never hungry again.



How Uroa got its name

narrated by Haji Abdullah

Once upon a time there was a fisherman and his wife who had two children; a son and a daughter. When he was old enough the boy went to the beach where a lot of strangers had assembled. They asked what the name of the place was and he said he didn't know its name. The boy was afraid to go home and tell his mother about the meeting but she told him that people here don't know its name. On the second day a similar thing happened and on the third day as well.



Haji Abdullah

from Uroa is 70 years old and he heard this story from his grandparents.



On the fourth day he went to the beach again and some strangers said to him 'We'll come tomorrow to do business and you will tell us the name of the place. How can it be that you don't know the name of the place where you live?'

As announced, an Arab ship with traders who wanted to trade with the local inhabitants set anchor just off the coast. The fishermen welcomed this trading suggestion and the Arabs announced that they would have to return to their country to obtain more wares. Before leaving a formal contract was written and the traders needed to know the name of the place. But as the story has already told us, the boy and the other inhabitants didn't know the name of the place. Instead they pacified the Arabs. 'Do not have any concerns, you will certainly be able to sell all your wares here.' The Arab traders left the coast and the friendly Zanzibaris, and sailed back to their home country. They soon returned laden with trading goods.

Unfortunately, in the meantime a monsoon set in creating huge waves. The Arabs had scarcely arrived when their ships sank. All of their goods got soaked in the sea and the tide subsequently washed them ashore. Since that time the village has had a name; it is called the 'place of the wet goods.'



Hassan Mambo Kombo
from Uroa is 70 years old and was
told this story by his father.

The greedy snake

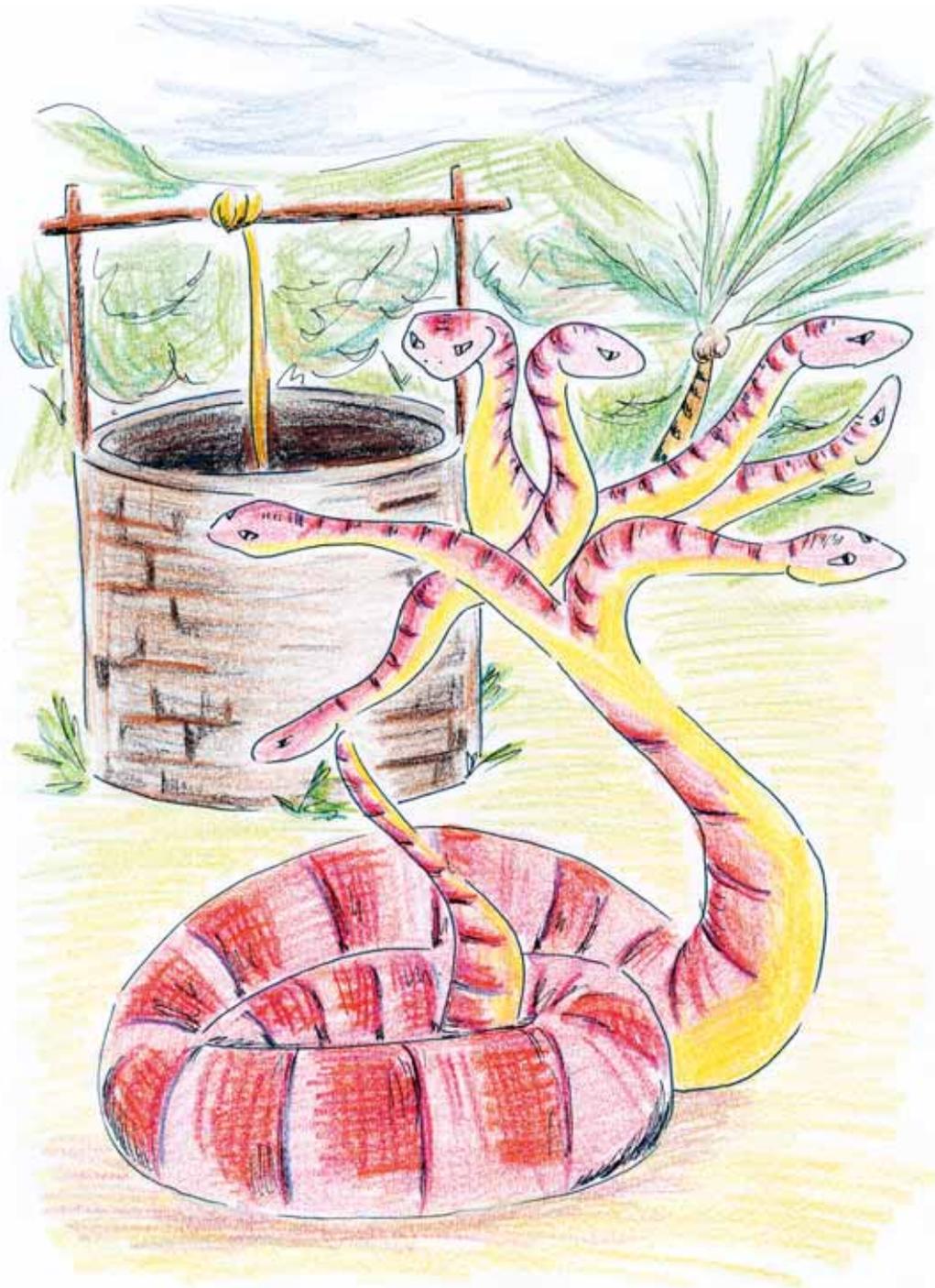
narrated by Hassan Mambo Kombo

Once upon a time there was a village that had so many wells that there was plenty of water for all of the people and animals who lived there. One day there came such a terrible drought that all the wells dried up except for one. Legend maintained that this well was protected by a seven-headed snake.

The inhabitants thus became so desperate they decided to send a messenger to the snake. Shortly afterwards the messenger returned and explained that the snake would be willing to let the villagers use the well under one condition; as a reward they would have to give him a beautiful young woman.

Naturally, none of the villagers wanted to die of thirst but neither was anyone prepared to give one of their daughters to such a dreadful monster. So the farmers thought up a cunning ruse. They made it look as if they were going to carry out the deal but the night before the marriage of the beautiful maiden to the seven-headed snake the farmers did not get any sleep. They had been busy digging a pit near the well. They then threw burning firewood into the pit until it was almost full and then covered it over with a mat. The most beautiful girl in the village then sat herself down nearby.

When the awful snake arrived to collect his bride, he sat himself down on the mat provided by the people of the village. As soon as he had sat down the beautiful young woman started singing in an irresistible voice.



'Poor Bwana, give me some money and I'll show you my legs.'

The snake replied: *'Take this money and show me your legs.'*

So the young woman uncovered her wonderful legs and continued to sing: *'Poor Bwana, give me some money and I'll show you my arms.'*

The snake hissed: *'Take this money and show me your arms.'*

So the young woman uncovered her wonderful arms and continued to sing: *'Poor Bwana, give me some money and I'll show you my hair.'*

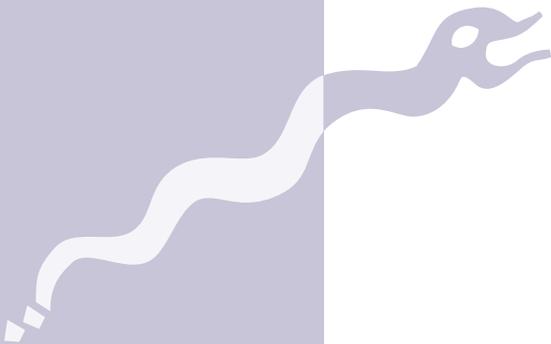
Again the snake replied: *'Take this money and show me your hair.'*

So the young woman took off her scarf and let down her long, silken hair which fell onto her shoulders. After the lovely woman had also revealed her ears, all the wood in the pit was on fire. The snake started to sweat so much that he begged for some water. But the young bride ignored the snake and continued to sing:

'Poor Bwana, give me some money and I'll show you my face.'

The snake commanded her: *'Take this money and show me your face.'*

In the meantime the fire was ablaze and just as the young woman was about to reveal her face the mat gave way and the snake was plunged into the depths of the pit. All of the villagers ran to the pit and quickly filled in the hole with soil. From then on they could use the well in safety and were never thirsty again.



The brave son

narrated by Subira Abassi

Once upon a time there was a man called Makame wa Makame who built himself a house, found a wife and had one son as well as a cat. Over time, the cat got larger and larger and greedier and greedier until it started to eat people. One day, the cat was so greedy he even gobbled up Makame wa Makame and all of the people in the village. His wife was able to avoid being eaten since she was on her way back from a journey with her son who had grown up in a distant place.

When they arrived in the village and found it deserted they knew what must have happened. The brave youth promised not to rest until he had found and killed the greedy cat. His mother blessed him and sent him on the dangerous hunt with seven rice loaves, seven little calabashes full of water, his father's knife and an arrow.

The son made his way into the forest and searched the first day, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth and finally on the seventh day he came across a monkey; and as he had never seen a cat before he thought that the monkey was the monster and so he killed him and made his way home. As he reached the village he sang: *'I have killed the creature who has eaten all the people, mama.'*

But his mother could only shake her head when he lay the monkey at her feet and said. *'Oh my son this is not the creature that has killed them all.'*

But the son did not give up. He rested for two days before returning to the forest with seven more rice loaves and seven more calabashes of water. There he saw a small gazelle; again he thought that this was the monster so he killed it and made his way home.

As he reached the village he sang: *'I have killed the creature who has eaten all the people, mama.'* But his mother could only shake her head when he lay the gazelle at her feet and said. *'Oh my son this is not the creature that has killed them all.'*

The son decided to go into the forest for a third time and spent several days wandering in the forest until the food and water had almost run out. But in the end, tired and exhausted, he spied a huge creature and he killed him with his last arrow. Very proud of himself, he ran back to the village with the creature on his back singing: *'I have killed the creature who has eaten all the people, mama.'*

This time his mother welcomed him with: *'Yes, my son indeed this is the creature that has killed them all.'*

After this good deed the son fell into a deep sleep. The next morning he awoke refreshed and took his father's knife and slit open the cat's belly to free his beloved father and the other villagers. Unfortunately the knife went in too deep and he scratched Makame's eye.

After his escape the father couldn't understand why he had been hurt; but the other villagers, in their joy at being rescued, persuaded Makame to forgive his son.



Subira Abassi

from Uroa is 60 years old and was told this story by her father when she was a child.

Tales from Mikunguni



Murshid Rashid

from Mikunguni is 65 years old and is often at home with his grandchildren.



Akama Pandu Saleh

from Mikunguni is 63 years old. She has given birth 17 children of whom 11 have survived.

How Mikunguni got its name

narrated by Murshid Rashid

The story of the name Mikunguni goes back a long way. The place is marked by a cemetery on which there is a large almond tree (mkungu) which shaded the people who visited the graves. The exact site of where the tree used to stand is where the walls of the school are today. That is why this village was called Mkunguni.

Luckily, many almond trees like this were planted in the settlement; in the valley and along the roads and that is why the name of the village was changed to Mikunguni.

A big fish

narrated by Akama Pandu Saleh

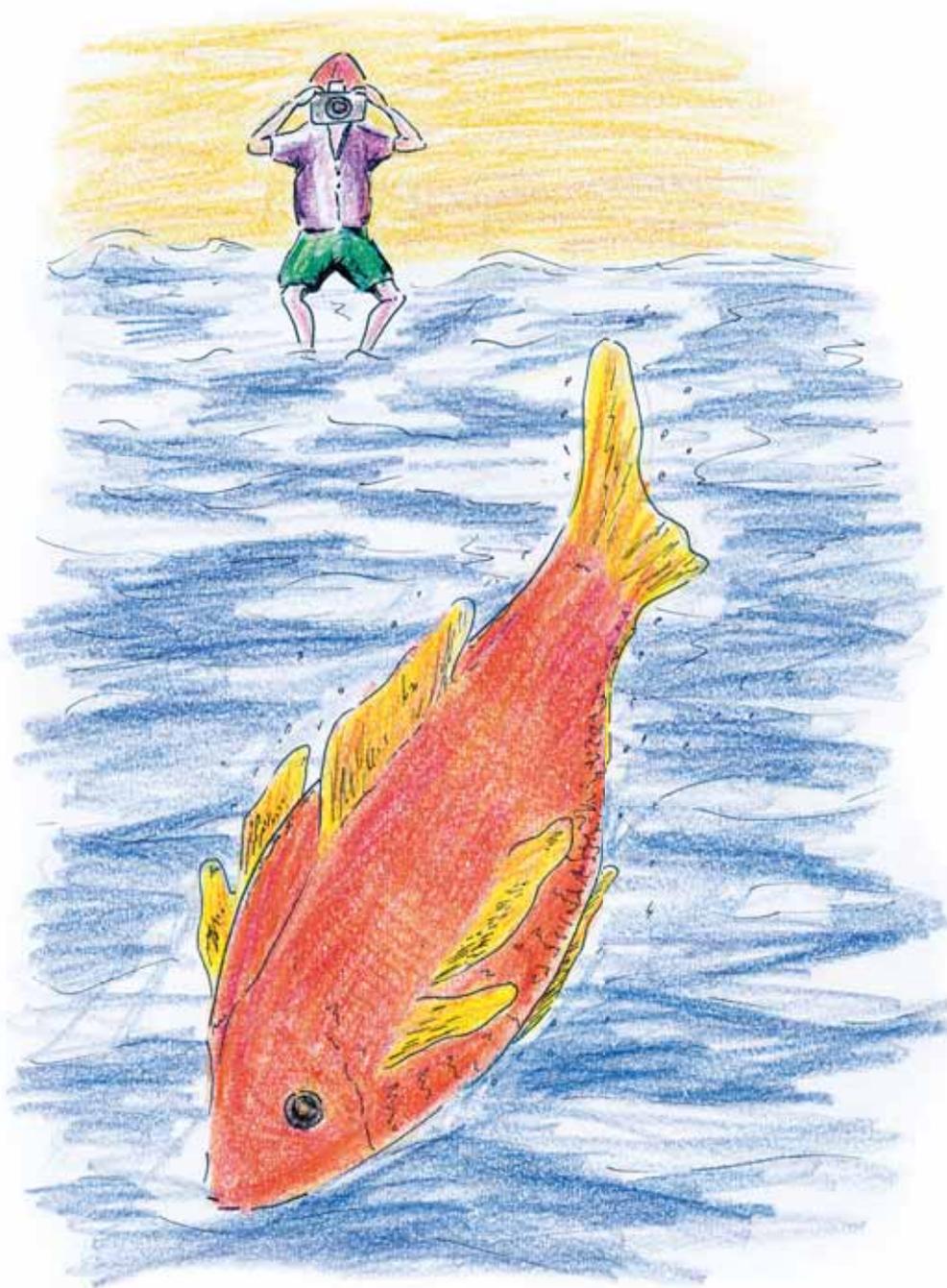
Once upon a time there was a village close to the coast and all of the men earned their living by fishing. They went fishing every day but unfortunately the fish that they caught were all very small.

One day one of the fishermen, a young man, was very lucky because he caught a large fish. He was astounded when he saw the size of the fish. The other fishermen who knew the waters very well asked themselves how he had managed to catch such a large fish. They too, were astounded at its size.

The young man was so pleased with his catch that he took it to his father who was also very surprised; he had never seen such a large fish before. The father suggested that the large fish should be shown to the village chief.

When the fish was shown to the chief, he could not believe his eyes and thought it would be a good idea to show it to the Sultan and offer it for sale. It was generally agreed that that was an excellent idea so they all went to the Sultan's palace to present him with the fish.

The Sultan, however, said 'My goodness, this is indeed an amazing fish. Let's show it to our guest from Europe so that he can take a photo of it.' The European was no less impressed than all the others, but insisted that he take the photo in the fish's natural habitat. The fish was returned to the sea and, as luck would have it, it swiftly swam away. And the poor Zanzibari fishermen were left empty-handed.



Tales from Mikunguni



Farasha Saidi Kombo

from Mikunguni is 80 years of age. She has four children. Her grandchildren love their grandmother's stories.

The strange husband

narrated by Farasha Saidi Kombo

Once upon a time there was a man called Makame wa Makame who lived with his wife Mize wa Mize and their many children. One of their daughters lived in distant village and was married with two children and a husband. Nobody knew that he was really a demon in the shape of a human being.

One day the man told his wife to return to her parents' house and bring one of her younger sisters to help her with the housework. The woman agreed since she could scarcely manage all the work in the house and in the fields working along. So she did as she was asked and brought her sister to live with them. From that point onwards the sister remained on her own in the house with the children while the wife worked in the fields.

One day, the man came home unexpectedly and told his sister-in-law that he was going to pray and he asked her to grind the millet. The man did not really leave the house but hid himself so that he could listen to her pounding the millet. This demon liked nothing better than to listen to the sound of pounding. When his sister-in-law noticed that he hadn't left the house, he explained that this sound has something magical and that his listening was a holy activity and that she should not tell anyone else anything about it. He also insisted on her singing this song, which revealed that he did not in fact do any work, while pounding.

Go on pounding the millet, go on. Go on,
I myself have no work of my own,
But I work with my friends.

He loved hearing his sister-in-law singing this song so much that he came every afternoon to listen to her singing and pound the millet. He remained in an adjacent room where he would begin a demonic dance.

One day his sister-in-law discovered him immersed in his devilish gyrations and decided to inform her sister. Unfortunately her sister did not believe her and threatened to punish her by sending her back to their parents' house. She even forbade her sister to tell anyone else this story. The wife did, however, promise to return home earlier from the fields to see if there was any truth in the story.

The very same evening the wife told her husband about the accusations her sister had made. Of course, he denied everything and called his sister-in-law's credibility into question. But the very next day he begged his sister-in-law to pound the millet again and to sing at the same time so that he could indulge in his devilish dance. She was so desperate that she told a neighbour the whole story. This same neighbour was so appalled that she hurried to the fields where the wife was working to reveal to her the truth about her husband. The neighbour insisted that the wife to return home at prayer time, to hide herself

and to see for herself. The woman eventually started to become suspicious and decided to follow her neighbour's advice and hid herself in the house.

When her husband came home as usual at prayer time and started his devilish ritual, she jumped from her hiding place and confronted her husband. Her husband, who in reality was a lazy devil, was transformed into a bird and flew up and away and deserted his family.



Tales from Uzini



Mwalim Ramathani Ali

from Uzini is 58 years old, married and has got four children.

How Uzini got its name

narrated by Mwalim Ramathani Ali

The name of the village refers to an earlier settlement which lay on the westerly part of today's village. Long ago there was a fortress which the early settlers surrounded with a ditch. They had also put a magic thread all around this ditch and around the whole settlement which only let friends into the interior of the village and at the same time prevented enemies from entering. This is where the word Uzini comes from, from the Swahili 'Nakwenda sehemu yenye uzi' – I'm going to the place of that thread. This got shortened in time to 'Nakwenda Uzini' – I'm going to where the thread is. This refers to what was special about the place. This is often the case in place names as in other parts of the village, for example, Michenzani means *Where the mandarin oranges are*. Mfenesitope means *The muddy place where there is a jackfruit tree*. And since the time of the ditch and magic thread the whole of the village has been called Uzini.



The happy hunter

narrated by Ali Rihani Ali

There was once a Sultan who was befriended by his First Minister. They had made a habit of going hunting in the forest for three days every month. One day the Minister went on a journey abroad and when he returned he brought the Sultan a wonderful golden sword as a present. But when the Sultan wanted to test the sharpness of the blade of this beautiful sword, he cut off one finger from his left hand. The Sultan was so angry that he ordered his Minister to be sent to prison for a whole year.

A while later the Sultan decided to go hunting in the forest again, but this time alone. It should be known that in the forest where he went hunting there lived a tribe who served the devil and who were constantly on the look-out for humans to sacrifice.

Unfortunately the Sultan was captured by them and when they were about to throw him into the deepest dungeons of their god one of them noticed the Sultan's missing finger. He exclaimed `Look! This creature is no good to us, a finger on his left hand is missing`. They then threw him to aside and let him go home as their Lord was only satisfied with perfect bodies.

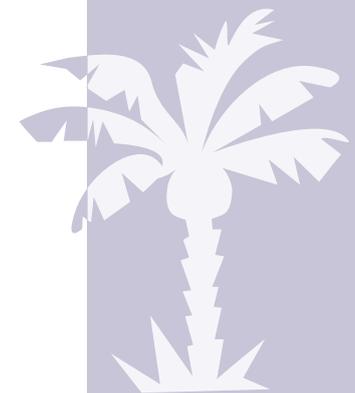
The Sultan who had had a happy escape returned to his palace and visited the imprisoned Minister immediately. Even while he was still in his cell the Sultan apologised to his friend for the injustice he had done him. He got down onto his knees and thanked him for saving his life in such a wondrous way.

After having been freed the Minister could not accept the Sultan's gratitude, he for his part had to thank the Sultan. The Sultan really could not understand why until the Minister explained. `If you hadn't thrown me into the dungeon, we would have gone hunting together; in which case I would have been caught and sacrificed.` The Sultan accepted this explanation and from that time on they were connected by a wonderful friendship.



Ali Rihani Ali

from Uzini is 51 years old and father of six children. He is the mayor in his part of Uzini.





Makame wa Makame's wares

narrated by Ali Rihani Ali

There was once a merchant called Makame wa Makame who lived in Zanzibar. His trading took him to many places. He sold his wares in other countries of East Africa and even as far as Asia.

On one of his voyages he met a man in Asia who wanted to know why he had come there. He told him all about his business and that he was looking for goods that he could take to East Africa to do business there. This man offered him three particularly valuable things that he could buy for one rupee each. Makame, who hoped that they would be profitable, agreed, and paid him the asking price. How disappointed he then was to find that he only received three bits of advice:

Value each gift, however small it might be.

If you want people to believe in you, you must first believe in yourself.

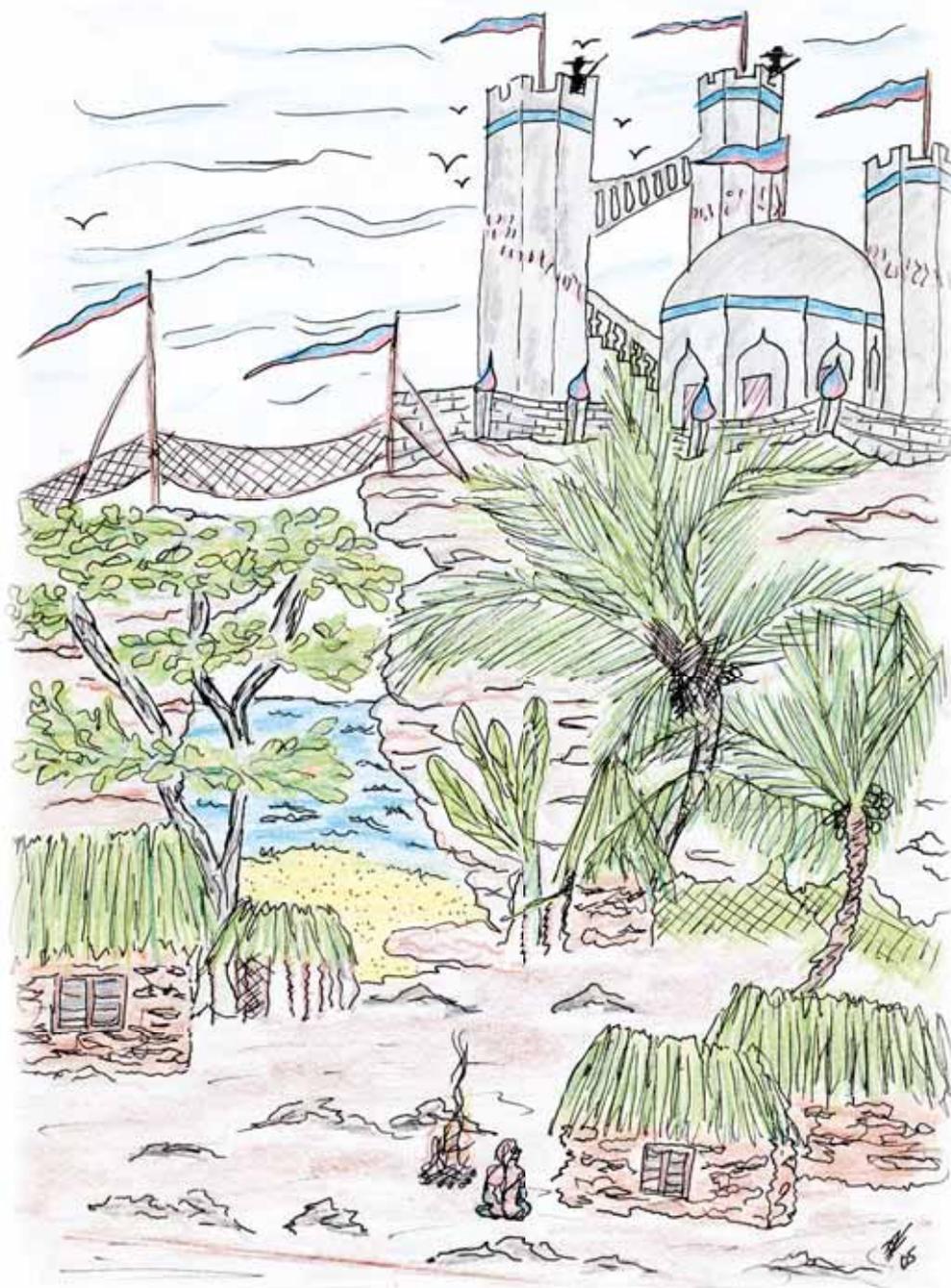
Never turn down an invitation.

Following this, Makame had no other choice but to look for a way of earning some money as he was left without any means to survive.

As he travelled, he met an old woman who begged a favour of him. Although he had more important things to do, he agreed and accompanied the woman to her run-down hut where he wrote a begging letter to the Sultan on her behalf. The old woman offered Makame three one cent coins in gratitude. At first Makame thought that was a very small reward for the work that he had done, but then he remembered the first piece of advice that he had been given: 'Value each gift, however small it might be.' So he accepted the three coins.

When the Sultan read the letter he spoke to his servants saying 'There is no wiser man than the one who wrote this astute letter. Find out where he lives and bring him to me.' The servants quickly made their way to the old woman's house and enquired about the author and his whereabouts. The old woman, who was very grateful to Makame for his help, showed them the way to his abode. When he heard that the Sultan was calling for him, he was afraid but he remembered the second piece of advice that he had been given, 'If you want people to believe in you, you must first believe in yourself' and so made his way to the Sultan.

When he arrived the Sultan asked him if he was the scribe and Makame answered that he was. The Sultan then asked him to repeat the contents of the letter. Remembering the second piece of advice again, Makame was able to report the contents of the letter in such detail that the Sultan was convinced that he had found the man he was looking for. He then took Makame into his arms and appointed him as his First Minister.



Makame did not disappoint his lord and he was trusted like a brother. The Sultan even sent him as his envoy to countries all around the world.

Eventually, the power and responsibility of being First Minister went to Makame's head and he became greedy. As the Sultan returned from a long journey he was informed by the other ministers that Makame had had an affair with the Sultan's wife. The Sultan believed this accusation and was so furious that he decided to secretly kill Makame.

He ordered his soldiers to go to a particular place where they should dig a grave. Furthermore he ordered the soldiers to kill the first man who asked them how their work was proceeding and then to bury him in the grave.

The very next morning the Sultan sent Makame to enquire about the soldiers' progress. The zealous minister hurried to fulfil this duty and rode the whole way without taking a rest. Even when he was invited to a wedding along the way, he declined excusing himself saying that he had to fulfil his master's orders as soon as possible. He was only two miles away from the place that had been prepared for his execution when he remembered the third piece of advice that he had been given: 'Never turn down an invitation.' So he turned about and returned to the wedding ceremony where he was welcomed by the crowd.

By the end of the day the Sultan had not received any news of the success of his plan to kill the minister. He then called his son and heir and ordered him, 'Go and see whether my servants have followed my commands and have completed their task.'

The young Prince set out and reached the place without any mishap. 'Have you finished your task yet?' asked the Prince impatiently. 'Not quite' replied one of the Sultan's servants, who then killed the Sultan's son before he could flee. They then buried him in the grave that they had prepared.

After having reached the scene of the crime, Makame returned to the palace with the Sultan's servant. The Sultan was on the roof of his house and when he saw both of them returning without his son he had a heart attack and died. After his death Makame took over his position and led the land with fairness for the rest of his days.



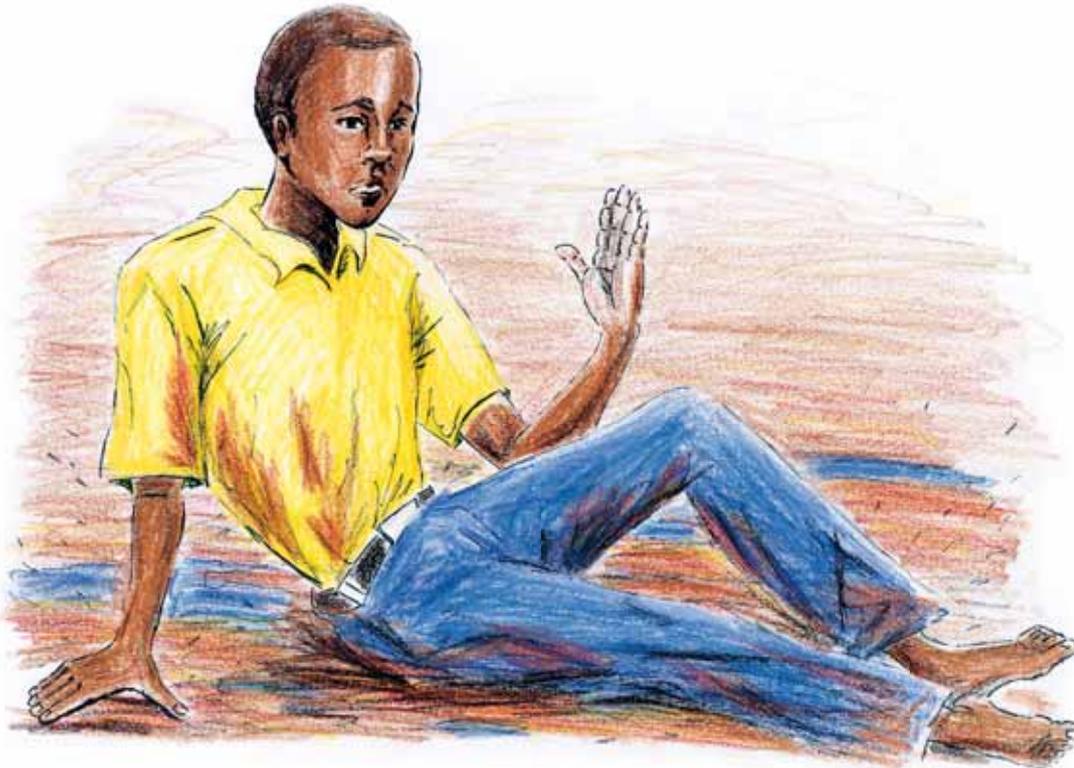
How Bambi got its name

narrated by Omar Abdalla

A long time ago the majority of the inhabitants of Zanzibar lived near the coast. They earned their living through fishing because the land was stony and the earth was sandy so that hardly anything grew.

For a long time they did not even bother to go into the wooded interior to find out whether vegetables and cereals would grow better there. They recalled that one Arab had not had anything positive to report about the interior. He spoke of Bambi as 'the place with a double misfortune'. 'When it rains,' he said, 'it's so slippery that you can easily slip and fall down. But when the sun shines, the dust from the red earth makes your clothes dirty.'

Despite these warnings the Swahili settled in this area at a later point in time. The coast dwellers found trees there named Bambi. The leaves of these trees fell to the ground and made the earth fertile. These trees are no longer there as they have been felled. What remains is the fertile soil, the name Bambi and the coast dwellers who have been living there for generations as farmers.



Omar Abdalla

from Bambi is 54 years old.

He works as a technician for the local television channel in Zanzibar town.

He helped to put the stories from his village to paper and to investigate the different tales about where his village got its name.

Tales from Bambi



Hussein Ali Vuai

from Bambi is 59 years old and has 15 children altogether. He is a farmer, a Koran teacher and has been a government employee since 1975.



Tatu Juma

from Bambi is 60 years old has got six children and is a housewife. She was told this story by her father.

Subira and Pandu

narrated by Hussein Ali Vuai

There were once two men who were friends and lived close to each other. They were, however, very different in character. Subira was more easy-going whereas Pandu was often envious and dissatisfied.

One day Pandu had a dream in which the location of buried treasure was revealed to him. He wondered whether he should tell his friend about this dream but in the end decided to go there alone. He looked for as many bags as possible to take with him and secretly borrowed his friend Subira's donkey.

He found the place that had been revealed to him in his dream as well as the money and many different kinds of riches which he packed into the bags and tied onto the donkey's back. On his way home such a tremendous wind arose that it took Pandu with it. The faithful donkey, however, knew his way home and returned alone.

When he arrived at his master's house he started to neigh, 'Ee –aw, Ee – aw'. Subira was extremely surprised to hear the donkey and at first only opened his window to find out what was going on. When he recognised his donkey, he went out and discovered the bags full of money and treasures on the donkey's back. He was overjoyed and he then called all the villagers together and told them the story of the donkey and that Pandu had completely disappeared. They then used local spells and soothsaying in the sand to reveal what had happened to Pandu. They showed Subira that Pandu had been taken away by the wind and had met a sorry end.

The cow and the chameleon

narrated by Tatu Juma

A long time ago a Sultan and his wife had a daughter who was so wonderful that everyone was enraptured by her beauty. Two friends, a cow and a chameleon, had heard about her beauty and each of them wondered how they could win her as a bride. Each of them, independently of the other and without the other's knowledge, went to the Sultan to beg his daughter's hand. The Sultan thought it was strange the each of the friends had come alone and decided that this matter should be discussed at a meeting.

He then called all the villagers together to the common and informed them that both of the friends had asked for his daughter's hand in marriage. Everyone there was more than surprised that the two otherwise inseparable friends were fighting over her hand.

Because he did not know which of the two he should let his daughter marry, the Sultan decided that



Tales from Bambi

they should run a race. He set the date for the wedding ceremony and promised his daughter to the winner. The cow started laughing when he heard this as he saw himself as the certain winner because he was much bigger and stronger than his friend. He started making preparations for the wedding celebrations while the poor chameleon was dejected. But then he had a very good idea. He crept as fast as he could to the common where the race would end. There he waited on the branch of a tree which was on the edge of the path where the race would be run. He had just got there when he heard the cow's puffing and panting as he was rushing towards the common. As the cow approached the tree that the clever animal was sitting on, the chameleon let himself fall and held himself fast on his friend's tail without the cow noticing anything at all.

And so nobody noticed the chameleon when the cow arrived at the common. There was a huge crowd there and the cow was already starting celebrating his success because he, of course, believed that he had won the race. He sat down triumphantly on the mat that was in front of the hut in which the Sultan's daughter was waiting, prepared for her marriage.

At that very moment the chameleon cried out loud because he was hidden under the cow's tail `My dear friend, why are you sitting on top of me?` When the cow heard the chameleon he started to cry and to low because it was so surprised and disappointed that the chameleon had beaten him. He kept on moaning `Oh, the world has treated me so badly.`

So it came about that the Sultan gave his daughter's hand to the crafty chameleon. The chameleon was ecstatic. He received so many different coloured clothes as a wedding present that he could put on something else every day. From that day on the cow started lowing mournfully and still does until this very day.





On the tracks of the tales

German-Tanzanian teams visited the storytellers in the villages, wrote down their stories in Swahili and then worked on the German versions.

The following teams were picking up the traces

Gabriele Gollnick, Daniela Hesse and Khamis Yussuf spoke to Ngwali Mashaka and Pandu Mkoba Faki in Fukuchani.

Madeleine Kreutzmann, Kersten Kühne, Riziki Vuai Mohammed and Swaghir Mwadin spoke to Tatu Juma, Omar Abdalla and Hussein Ali Vuai in Bambi.

Matthias Mnich, Christian Kopp, Kersten Kühne, Michael Nischik, Khalfan Mwita and Chande Omar spoke to Suleman Khamis Faraje and Zubeda Abdalla Omar in Chukwani.

Matthias Mnich, Christian Kopp, Michael Nischik, Jabir and Abeid Abeid spoke to Mwalim Ramathani Ali and Ali Rihani Ali in Uzini .

Christian Kopp, Madeleine Kreutzmann, Michael Nischik, Jabir and Kheir Mohammed spoke to Akama Pandu Saleh, Murshid Rashid and Farasha Saidi Kombo in Mikunguni .

Madeleine Kreutzmann and Matthias Mnich spoke to Hassan Mambo Kombo, Haji Abdallah and Subira Abassi in Uroa.

Hassan A. Mitawi and Chande Omar helped greatly with the translations.

Helen Paul translated the English version. Asanteni sana.

Photo:
Birgit Mitawi, Gabriele Gollnick,
Michael Nischik, Daniela Hesse,
Matthias Mnich, Christian Kopp,
Madeleine Kreutzmann
(back row from left to right),
Subira Abassi (middle row
standing 3rd from the right),
Haji Abdallah (middle row
standing 2nd from the left),
Hassan Mambo Kombo
(front rows quattting 3rd
from the left) and
teachers from Uroa



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Not to forget all those who have supported this project in any way albeit by donating money, helping with organisation or who have given assistance and advice in their spare time.

2006-2008

Learn better and teach better – Further books through further donations

In August 2006 it was possible to purchase some more new books for six school libraries on Zanzibar from the donation by the RR Software GmbH from Hasselfelde and the `Kula` Association.

2008 we managed to assisted two more schools in Dimani and Kibuteni to open their school library. Six schools were equipped with laboratory equipment for natural science subjects.

Thank you very much indeed for your support!

Perhaps you too, will also be amongst those who will support us over the coming years so that the newest scientific knowledge can reach the villages on Zanzibar quickly; because through your donations it will be possible to supply them with the newest publications. In partnership with you and our Zanzibari colleagues we want to prevent the information gap from increasing. Even the smallest amount will help to improve the teaching and learning conditions.

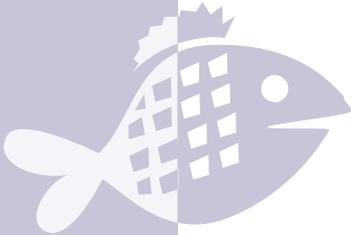


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AFRICA

TANZANIA

ZANZIBAR

ZANZIBAR

Fukuchani

Uzini

Bambi

Mikunguni

Uroa

Chukwani



Regionale Arbeitsstellen
für Ausländertragen,
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