

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

KISWAHILI

(Commonly Known As Swahili)

By Gwen Walker

Swahili is spoken across more of Africa than any other language. It is the language of about 45 million people in eastern Africa, in all or parts of the countries of Kenya, Uganda, the People's Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), Zaire, Somalia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, and the Malagasy Republic.

Swahili varies in dialect from one area to another; in the same way the Spanish language differs in the various provinces of Spain and in South America and in the Caribbean Isles.

The "Ki" prefix denotes the actual language as opposed to the people who speak it. There are no Q or X sounds in Swahili, therefore there are only twenty-four letters in the alphabet. The sound of the letter G is hard as in give and the R is like the Spanish R, made by rolling the tongue.

A Swahili proverb states: "Haba na hujuzi kibaba," meaning - "little by little fills



GWEN WALKER

the measure." I hope that people of African ancestry will learn Swahili little by little with this article and by visiting Native Son Book Store to purchase books on Swahili. African Americans are the only group of people who do not speak the language of their ancestors. Let's all begin learning and using words of our people "little by little."

Keep reading future articles for words to add to your vocabulary.

JAMBO (jahm-bow) - hello
AARUSI (ah-roo-see) - a wedding
BABA (bah-bah) - father
CHAKULA (cha-koo-lah) - food
DAWA (dah-wah) - medicine
EMBE (ehm-bay) - mango

FAGIO (fah-gee-oh) - broom
HESHIMA (heh-shee-mah) - respect
IBABA (ee-bah-bah) - worship
HODI - may I come in?
KARIBU (kah-ree-boo) - welcome
LIPO (lee-po) - payment
MAMA (mah-mah) - mother
NGOMA (n-go-mah) - drum and dance

RAFIKI (rah-fee-kee) - a friend
SHULE (shoe-lay) - school
UZURI (oo-zoo-ree) - beauty
WATOTO (wah-toe-toe) - children
ZEZE (zay-zay) - a stringed instrument

Other Words:
SALAMA - peace
LALA SALAMA - peace, sleep well
TWIGA - giraffe
MWEWE - hawk
FISI - hyena
NDEGE - birds
NYOKA - snake
SIMBA - lion
NG'OMBE - cattle
BOMA - hut

POET'S CORNER

Heart And Stone (You Can Call Me David)

By Keith A. Brantley (Izulu Poets)

You can call me David
though that's not my name;
For I stood my ground
when Goliath came
and have slain a giant
in this foolish game.

I stood before a giant
with heart and defiance;
With stone and sling
and a righteous swing...
down came the giant.
You can call me David.

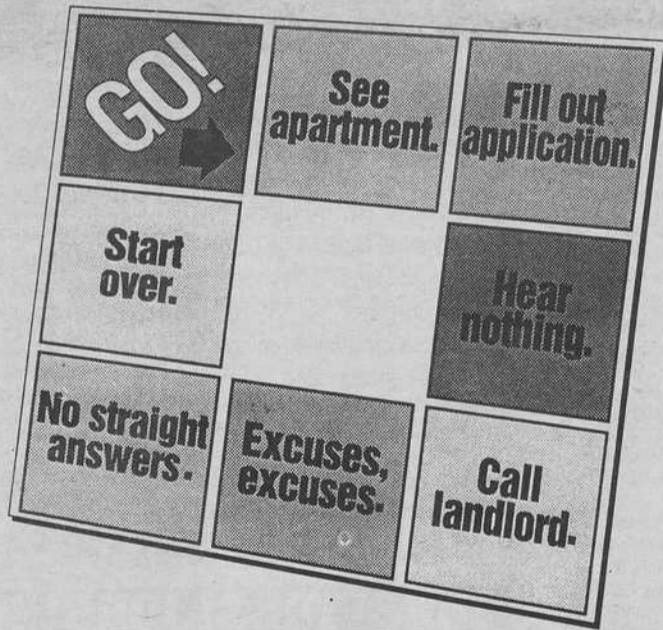
A stone by any name
hurts all the same.
Heart and pain
are common to all flesh
when stone should mesh,
Goliath will tumble.
Giants can be humbled
with heart and stone.
They are flesh and bone.
This I know.
You can call me David.

HILTON

(Continued from Page 21)
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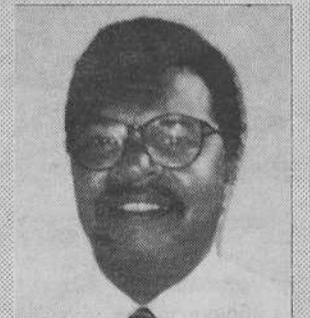
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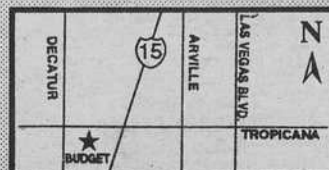
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