Abstract
Persian literature has influenced the development of Kiswahili literature thematically and stylistically. This is demonstrated in the works of Shaaban Robert, one of the most famous and celebrated Kiswahili writers. This paper seeks to identify, describe and analyze some of these influences with a view to showing parallels that exist between Persian and Kiswahili literature. The paper briefly discusses the early contacts between the Middle East and the East African Coast through trade in ivory and slaves. This interaction brought about cultural influences including the inculcation of the Islamic religion as well as language and literature. This pre-twentieth century Islamic cultural influence is evident in Shaaban Robert’s works. The paper discusses how the historical aspects influenced the literatures from these two parts of the world. This it does by bringing out the interconnectedness between literature and history and also showing that literature and social learning reinforce each other. The relationship between Kiswahili literature and Persian literature in areas such as style, plot, characterization and symbolism brought about by historical realities have been delineated.

Introduction
Writing on “Modern African Literature and cultural identity”, Tanure Ojaide (1992:43-44) states that “Language is not the prime focus in (the) definition of literature, whose ‘essential force’ is ‘its reference to the historical and experiential’. African writers create works “which are peculiarly African and yet set in the modern world” (Mbiti 1969:228).

Ojaide goes on to discuss the ethical and moral nature of African civilization emphasizing the didactic nature of literature with its writers emerging as “the conscience of society reminding readers and society of the high cultural ethos that must be upheld.”

This paper will seek to draw examples from the “historical and experiential” aspects pertaining to the influences and parallels between selected Persian and Kiswahili literatures with a view to demonstrate their appropriateness as well as the similarities and differences between the two.

The contact between the Middle East and the East African Coast existed since the 1st Century AD (Gerard 1981:93). This was largely through the growth of the Arab/Persian trade mainly in ivory and slaves. This contact led to intermarriage between the foreigners and the local Swahili peoples. Over thirty (30) towns were established along the Coast from Mogadishu in the North to Kilwa in the South. These became the basis for the formation of the Zenj Empire. Islam was the predominant religion that united these people.

The emergence of the Muslim culture promoted the appearance of creative works...
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composed in Kiswahili in the Arabic script. These writings drew from oral sources (Steere 1870) and were mainly on legends about the Waswahili. According to Knappert (1967: 3) the oldest poem in Swahili language is the *Hamziya* by Sayyid Aidarus Bin Athumani whose earliest manuscript is dated 1749. The *Hamziya* was a translation of a 13th Century Egyptian poem. However the earliest surviving manuscript in Kiswahili is *Utendi wa Tambuka* written in 1728 by Mwengo Bin Athmani. Both works therefore show that the earliest recorded poems were in the early 18th Century (Gerard 1981:96).

Later Kiswahili writers included poets such as Sayid Abdallah bin Nassir (1720-1820) who wrote *Takhimisa ya Lioyongo* that borrowed from the Arabic five line stanza scheme and also *Utenzi wa Al-Inkishafi*.

The ethos of the Liyongo story according to Gerard (op cit: 95) reflected “attitudes which are undoubtedly characteristic of a heroic, pre-Islamic society.” The *Al-Inkishafi* (soul’s awakening) focuses on the 18th Century decline of Pate Sultanate. It expresses the futility of vanity, a regular theme in Islamic poetry which was also a common theme in Christian Literature in medieval Europe. The *Al-Inkishafi* is compared with *The Divan* which was composed by Hafidh of Persia in the 14th Century.

This then was the legacy that nurtured Shaaban Robert (1909-1962). He was born in Tanga in the then Northern Tanganyika. Shaaban Robert was influenced to a great extent by the Islamic religion and culture throughout his life. He emphasized humility and espoused the teachings of Islam in his writings. The influence and parallels between literature of Persian and Kiswahili origins may be best understood by interpreting correctly the following observations made by Abdolali Lahsaeizadeh (2001:59).

According to Lahsaeizadeh, the migration of the Persians (Shirazi) to East Africa brought with it four categories of Islamic heritage. These were:

a) Economic aspects (trade).
b) Political influence (Example: kings and arms).
c) Social classes (traders and political e’lites).
d) Cultural heritage (religion, language and literature, architecture and intermarriage among other traditions).

These influences are in a way illustrated in the borrowing of words into the Kiswahili language. The following examples from King’ei and Musau (2001:86-90) attest to this:

a) **Commerce:**
   - Tajiri-Rich person
   - Bakshishi-Gratuity, gift, tip, discount.

b) **Bureaucratic titles:**
   - Waziri-Minister
   - Serikali-Government
c) **Maritime vocabulary:**
Bandari - A harbour, port
Nanga - Anchor.

d) **Botanical vocabulary:**
Dengu - A plant which bears a small edible bean or pea, lentils.
Maharagwe - Bean plant.
e) **Tools or machinery:**
Cherehani - Sewing machines.
Gurudumu - Wheel.
f) **Architecture:**
Dari - Upper floor/storey
Ghala - Storeroom, storehouse, granary, godown.

These words reflect the various elements of culture that characterized some aspects of the Persian way of life.

**Shaaban Robert and the Western Influence**

Lahsaeizadeh's four categories are reflected in broad terms within the contexts of written literature as well. Gibbe (op cit: 69) notes that Shaaban Robert translated Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* into Kiswahili in the 1950's.

Shaaban Robert distinguished himself as a leading Swahili Scholar through his poetry, prose and general writings. He has to his credit twenty - two known published titles; nine works of prose, eleven of poetry and three works of mixed genres (see addendum). Gerard (op cit: 137) states that Wilfred Whiteley identified Shaaban Robert as "the most notable literary figure to have appeared on the Swahili scene in the 20th century" earning him the title of "the Shakespeare of Africa."

As Gerard notes (p.140), "The traditional quality of Shaaban's work is perhaps best exemplified in his prose narratives, which seem to have much in common with Hausa novelas. While the medium itself is of Western descent, these tales exhibit a taste for the marvelous which is partly of African origin, but was also no doubt influenced by the Arabian night's tradition." One of the most significant contributions to Kiswahili literature was the translation of the Persian and other foreign literatures into Kiswahili. The translations were as a result of the formation of the Inter-Territorial Language Committee of East Africa in 1930. These works were expected to measure up to the committee's objective of disseminating literature as well as be models for literary writing and reading. These included Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1932) and Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1929). The oriental connection of Kiswahili literature was manifested in the translation of *One Thousand and One Nights* (Alfu-lela-ulela) by Brenn in 1928.

Let us now examine some of these issues in selected texts. The analysis will focus mainly
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on Alfu-Lela-Ulela and some of Shaaban Robert’s texts.

Parallels in the Stories

a) Adili na Nduguze (Adili (Good/Virtuous) and his two Brothers) and Mzee wa Pili na Mbwa wawili weusi (The Second Old Man and Two Black Dogs)

The story of Adili na Nduguze (Shaaban Robert) is similar in many ways to the story of Mzee wa Pili na Mbwa wawili Weusi In Alfu-Lela-Ulela Book One. The two stories are identical in characterization, setting and theme.

In both stories, three brothers are involved. The settings are about wealth inheritance. In Mzee wa Pili na Mbwa wawili Weusi, the moral of sharing and concern for others is demonstrated by the key character (Mzee wa Pili) who sympathises with his brothers after they make losses in their business endeavours abroad. He shares his wealth with them. The latter part of the story which is the climax shows how the two beneficiaries turn wild and throw their benefactor brother and his newly found bride into the sea out of envy. Unknown to them, the bride was a genie and she cursed the evil brothers turning them into dogs. They were to remain that way for ten years (pp 10-12) as retribution.

In similar fashion Adili na Nduguze is about Adili and his two brothers. The trio inherit wealth from their father after his death. Adili’s brothers are evil minded. Even after salvaging them after they made losses in their business escapades abroad, they turn against him during a business trip abroad. Like the brothers in the earlier story, Adili’s brothers throw him and his beautiful bride into the sea. The bride too is a genie and she is able to rescue her lover and punishes the evil duo by turning them into apes and ordering that they be whipped by Adili until they faint.

The two narratives highlight the themes of selflessness and love and the antithetical hate, envy and selfishness that characterise society in general. Good prevails over evil in this case. Shaaban Robert has therefore borrowed from the Alfu-Lela-Ulela narrative structure. However, the moral behind the story is identical to the teachings consistently espoused in the local oral traditions which have been extended in contemporary fiction. The mystical power and the supernatural prowess of the genie are in tandem with African folklore where such powers were utilized to bring order in society. Herein lies the aspect of universality of human values. Man's quest for grandeur is often clothed in hate and mischief. The society condemns such manipulation and destruction. The genies are used here to demonstrate that society can never lose its quest for justice.

(b) Adili na Nduguze (SR) and Kisa cha Mawalli Watatu Wana Wa Mfalme na Wanawake watano wa Baghdad (The story of the Three Monk-Princes and Five women from Baghdad) “Alfu lela ulela”.
In *Kisa cha mawalii watatu Wana Wa Mfalme na Wanawake watano* wa Baghdad, Zubeda who is a genie whips two dogs until they faint. Zubeda sympathises with the first dog as she whips it and she and the dog weep together. She wipes off its tears with her cloth. In a like manner, Adili pities the apes after whipping them and he actually confesses that he was not doing so out of his wish. He treats them well by feeding them and tethering them at the waist, just like Zubeda does to the dogs.

This is an illustration of sincere feelings, empathy and desire to achieve positive results in correcting wrong behaviour. The moralizing aspect is consistent in all the stories. In *Adili na Nduguze*, the story of *Mrithi wa Mji wa Mawe* (The inheritor of The Stone Town) compares well with *Kisa Cha Mfalme Kijana wa Visiwa Vyeusi* (The Story of the young King and Black Seas). In the former, the King transgressed against the warning by the genie against his worshipping idols. Through her magical powers, the city of Fahari and its residents are turned into stone. Other cities were submerged in water. This story resembles the one on *Kisa cha Mfalme Kijana wa Visiwa Vyeusi* in *Alfu lela ulela* where the wife to the King’s son turned to be a genie. She disagreed with her husband and cast her spell on him turning him into half-human, half stone. She turned the entire city partly into a sea and partly into a desert. People became fish in the sea.

These parallels here draw from the supernatural and mythical powers characterizing many traditions. The legendary might and other forms of superhuman abilities were employed to instill good moral judgement, respect for human dignity and societal norms. Contemporary literature has in diverse ways continued to espouse these values.

**Kusadikika and Alfu - lela - ulela**

Shaaban Roberts’ novel *Kusadikika* is set in an imaginary country. The set up is similar to that of *Alfu-lela-ulela*. The role played by Dinarzade and Shaharzade in *Alfu-Lela-Ulela* is identical to that of Karama in *Kusadikika*. The use of narration to buy time and ultimately bring out the issues that have led to the conflicts is the main resemblance in the stories. Justice is sought through a wise cautious non-violent approach. The success of such endeavours may be debatable depending on circumstances but the moral lessons and the indictment function are well executed.

**Some Key Thematic Concerns**

Mulokozi (2002) outlines some of the major issues that demonstrated Shaaban Robert’s concerns in life as reflected in the letters he wrote to his step brother, Yusuf Ulenge. These concerns included: relationship (family, kinship), love, friendship, education, life challenges, events, upbringing, religion, respect, women’s rights, skills, publishing and identity.

Even though Mulokozi’s listing is derived from a limited kinship focus, Shaaban Robert’s works demonstrated these issues in a broader perspective relating to society. Shaaban Robert exhibits unparalleled humility in his correspondence to his brother. His desire for unity within his family and the strong bonds between him and his half-brother are
symbolic of his quest for oneness of his larger society and that of mankind as a whole. Some of these concerns are portrayed as well in *Alfu-leta-ulela*. Examples include *Kisa cha mawalii watatu wana wa Mfalme na wanawake watano* and also in *Kisa cha Mfalme Kijana wa Visiwa Vyeusi*.

Shaaban Robert also demonstrates the “historical and experiential” through the incorporation of themes pertaining to colonial rule and the effects of the 1st and 2nd World Wars. His autobiography, *Maisha Yangu na Baada ya Miaka Hamsini* as well as the prose works *Kufikirika* and *Kusadikika* and the poems in *Utenzi wa Vita vya Uhuru* attest to this. *Kufikirika* and *Kusadikika* are critical of totalitarianism. *Kufikirika* is a sequel to *Kusadikika*. The imaginary settings that Shaaban Robert uses demonstrate the writer's rich stylistic prowess and also provokes our thinking as readers. We are able to interrogate issues such as injustice, misrule, greed, governance, freedom, justice from a micro set up in our mindsets and relate it to the wider society that we are familiar with.

(i) **Justice and retribution**

This theme teaches that good is paid through good and that evil is met by evil. This has a bearing to the religious inclinations espoused by Islam and also Christianity that evil is punishable by retribution. *Alfu-Lela-Ulela* like the works of Shaaban Robert was also premised on the religious doctrine reminiscent of “an eye for an eye” and “a tooth for a tooth”. The emphasis on the moral deeds is also extolled across as manifested in Oral Literature that writers including Shaaban Robert have drawn from. The story of Adili and his brother and Mzee wa Pili in *Alfu lela ulela* attest to this truth. Good is extolled as demonstrated through the success of good characters such as Mfalme Rai, Adili, Mzee wa Pili and Ikibali. On discovering that the apes are indeed Adili’s brothers, and when the meaning of the episode dawns on him, he offers to reconcile Adili and his brothers and Huria the genie. Adili’s brothers are punished due to their cruelty, evil, hypocrisy and murder. Adili too is reprimanded by Huria when he fails to punish his evil brothers as expected.

On the contrary, owing to their good deeds, characters such as King Rai, Adili, Mzee wa Pili (2nd old man) and Ikibali are met by good deeds. The genie obey King Rai and Adili is saved from his detractors.

In *Kusadikika*, Karama’s virtues are upheld whereas the crafty Prime Minister Majivuno is vanquished.

(ii) **Superstition**

Superstition is used to demonstrate the superhuman powers and the role these powers play in shaping people's thought and behaviour. Shaaban Robert's works are similar to *Alfu-lela-ulela* in this regard. The episode of “*Mzee wa Kwanza na Mbuzi* (1st old man and the goat)” in *Alfu-lela-ulela* demonstrates how the old man’s wife used witchcraft to turn the servant and her child into a cow and a calf. In *Adili na N duguze* the king and his throne worshipped the spirits. He did not heed the warning by genie and he was cursed and turned into stone.

The punishment meted out to Adili’s brothers is a strong lesson meant to underscore
how much society cherishes good and condemns evil. This can also be premised on the experiential. Shaaban Robert must have experienced practices of superstition and witchcraft in his community, a phenomenon found in many other communities as well especially in those days. His own personal life experiences could have had something to do with his thematic choices. He too must have read *Alfu-lela-ulela* and so he used this literature to write his stories hence the great similarities.

(iii) Love
This theme of love is stressed in Shaaban Robert's prose and poetry. It is found in good measure in *Adili na Nduguze Mapenzi Bora* (True, esteemed Love)and *Siku ya Watenzi Wote* (A Day for All poets). The same theme was underlined in Shaaban Robert's letters to his brother Yusuf Ulenge.

This theme is manifested in *Alfu- lela- ulela* where Mzee wa Pili assists his distraught brothers to regain stability by sharing with them his money. Mzee wa Kwanza also demonstrates love by sticking with his wife despite her misdemeanors which led to her being turned into a goat. Love is the unifying mortar in these contexts. It is derived from a deep ethical core founded on long standing values built over time. The historical and experiential facets are manifest across the two cultural contexts through these works.

(iv) Life challenges, virtue and wisdom.
Life's challenges are a predominant theme in Shaaban Robert's works. In his *Maisha yangu na Baada ya miaka Hamsini* (My life and after fifty years), *Utubora Mkulima* (Utubora the farmer), *Siku ya watenzi wote* and *Wasifu wa siti Binti Saad* (Siti's biography), Shaaban Robert highlights various issues that challenge people in life and also how to confront them. In his autobiography *Maisha yangu na Baada ya Miaka Hamsini*, Shaaban Robert points out that it is always dignifying to admit mistakes when we go wrong since human beings are not always perfect. He stresses the need to be respectable and dignified and to avoid greed. The writer states that we should be prepared to face bereavement and other forms of suffering as they are a part of life. In *Utubora Mkulima*, the writer espouses the attributes of humility, hard work and perseverance even when we are misunderstood despite our good intentions. Indeed “Utubora” means the ideal humanness. In *Siti Binti Saad*, Shaaban Robert underscores the virtues of bravery, hard work, humility and self-reliance. His philosophy is that we should stand firm even in adversity. Virtue is extolled in all instances. The writer teaches that the challenges are but a way of life that needs to be handled with decorum and wisdom.

In *Adili na Nduguze*, Adili is seen conducting his business with decorum unlike his brothers who lack wisdom and end up in big losses. Rai the King in *Alfu-lela-ulela* also employs wisdom in his governance. He detects mischief in tax collection in the city of Janibu and conducts an investigation. He too was able to resolve the differences between Adili and his brothers.

In *Alfu-lela-ulela*, Dinarzade and Shaharzade use wisdom to end the murders against
the girls that were occurring every day by King Shaharia. Dinarzade and Shaharzade used narratives to warn the King against his excesses and the consequences likely to affect him.

In Kusadikika, Karama uses the same narrative technique to delay judgement against him. The narratives about the six delegates to various parts of the world serve as the indictment of the harsh governance and they bring out the positive attributes of a changed society that respects the rule of law. Karama is saved by his wisdom.

**Style**

Shaaban Robert has, as noted earlier, been influenced to a large extent by the style in the Arabian Nights tradition and specifically as demonstrated in Alfu - lela - ulela. These influences include:

1. Plot
2. Narrative style
3. Characterisation
4. Symbolism

**a) Plot**

The collection of stories in Adili na Nduguze corresponds to the collection in Alfu - lela ulela. In each book, each story is a build-up to the next. The division of the stories into chapters in Adili na Nduguze portray them as one story yet they are different though interdependent. They are thematically related and stylistically interwoven.

**b) Narrative style**

The Alfu - lela - ulela stories have used the oral narrative techniques. The main narrator is Shaharzade and the audience is involved with King Shaharia being brought on board. In Alfu - lela - ulela (2) Sindbad narrates the stories to Hindbad. Audience participation is utilized in the stories.

Similarly in Adili na Nduguze apart from the first three chapters and the last two, the rest of the chapters are narratives by Adili in front of King Rai and his (Adili's) brothers now turned into apes. Adili's narration is interpolated with audience involvement where for instance the apes try to ascertain the truth of the narratives. Shaaban Robert's style is therefore similar to that of Alfu - lela - ulela. The stories in both texts adopt the familiar formula in oral narratology which is also a common feature in African literatures. Sindbad's audiences are told to return the next day for a continuation of the narration. The same is done with Adili's audience. The oral narrative repetitive style is also evident in these stories.

**c) Characterisation**

The Alfu - lela - ulela community is governed by kings. The aristocracy is a phenomenon unfamiliar in Shaaban's background but he copies this in his stories. This is seen in Adili na Nduguze and also in Kusadikika among other texts. For Shaaban Robert, this
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characterization allegorically reflects the colonial governance that was in place in Tanganyika and other parts of the colonized world. Indeed the appropriateness of similar allegorical features in characterization in literature today is evident in the undemocratic rule that characterizes many countries today. The human and animal characters as well as the mythical and supernatural are all aimed at inculcating order and justice in society.

Male characters also dominate events in these narratives. Kings, sailors and businessmen are the main players. Women are largely portrayed as genie, witches or characters who have been reprimanded for one reason or another. Shaaban Robert adopts this alien mode in his stories. This compares well with the negative portrayal of women in African Oral Literature. In many instances women are seen as lesser mortals – wanting in intellect, childlike and untrustworthy among other despicable vices, as Ndungo (1998:2-3) notes. In many societies, it has been observed that women occupy lower status as compared to their male counterparts (Millet 1969), (Emechet 1977), (Figes 1986), (Beavior 1949). These, it is argued, have been perpetuated through oral art forms. The cultural images associated with women reflect and promote the social ideologies and beliefs from society. Polemics against women are common in many societies. These include being accused from the time of Eve; seen as crooked because she was made from a man's rib, and bestial, greedy and crafty by nature, (Badawi 1991).

This however does not mean that Shaaban Robert view of women is disdainful or stereotyped. Rather he was only being consistent and truthful to the dominant images in oral literature as shaped by the social structure at that time. Due to the feminist wave of change that was sweeping the world at the time he has portrayed women in his other works as people deserving respect and recognition as total human beings. His biographical work Wasifu wa Siti Binti Saad focuses on women's rights and their liberation. Siku ya Watenzi Wote also depicts the portrayal of the suffering of the woman character and her efforts to liberate herself.

Shaaban Robert's perception about women must have evolved with time from the skewed image characteristic of the oral literature mode to a more realistic portrayal in keeping with the cultural, political and economic transformation of the society.

d) Symbolism

Many similar symbols emerge in both Adili na Nduguze and Alfu - lela- ulela. For example the destruction of cities due to superstitions, people being turned into stone or animals, the animals being punished and the retribution meted out on criminals. All these symbols carry the same messages of ridiculing evil and upholding moral uprightness in both texts.

The six delegates in Kusadikika also undergo life threatening circumstances. These two are symbolic illustrations of how serious and involving societal transformations can be. The liberation of society from oppression demands sacrifice and dedication. Karama and the delegates are the heroes in the story for their selfless and fearless commitment.
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to that noble course which leads to Karama's democratic start for the society. The two texts underscore the essence of honest leadership. They also demonstrate that there must emerge a few people to bring about liberation in an oppressed society. This they do at a price which may mean loss of life.

The significant use of allegory by Shaaban Robert

Shaaban Robert's use of allegorical characterization facilitates the intertextual discourse among the texts and also within the public spaces surrounding each text.

Wafula (2007.55) identifies four levels of allegory that characterize Shaaban Robert's works. These are personification, the narrative, the extended metaphor and the fabulous levels. These levels facilitate communication among the texts. This is the essence of intertextuality.

Personification is the use of names to describe something or someone qualitatively. Shaaban Robert's characters and place names are defined as such. They are mainly good or evil. The good include such names as Adili (moral attributes), Utubora (perfect human being), Buruhani (charisma), and Kusadikika (acceptance of one's prayer) among others. Examples of the evil ones are Majivuno (pride), Mji wa Mawe (City of Stone), Mjeledi (whip), Hasidi (jealous) and Wivu (envy).

The narrative or discursive allegory refers to the disguised representation of meanings other than the obvious surface meaning. Kusadikika and Kufikirika are types of quests or search. The narrative structure sustains the logic in the novels. The “journeys” in Adili na Nduguze and Kusadikika bring out experiences. These journeys may be intellectual introspective moments in the character's lives which help develop the author's theme.

The extended metaphor is an allegory upon allegory. The works are removed from the ordinary world. The alienation effect helps the reader contemplate issues that actually refer to his immediate environment. This is so in Adili na Nduguze, Kusadikika and Kufikirika.

The fabulous elements are largely non-realistic. They deflect our attention from particular actions to general lessons. They are part of a belief system. The genie and their ability to transform themselves into many varied physical forms is normal. Amini in Kusadikika goes to earth by the help of a bird called Mangera. This mode of transport is impossible in a realistic sense yet the author uses this context to dramatize and to bring out the moral message that is the focus of his story. This technique blends well with the elements of magical realism that are used in some contemporary literary texts such as Binadamu (Wamitila) and Babu Alipofufuka (Said Ahmed Mohamed).

Conclusion

This paper has endeavoured to identify influences and parallels between the Persian (specifically Alfu-Lela-Ulela) and Kiswahili literature with special focus on some works.
by Shaaban Robert. It has been evident that the Persian influence on the East African coast where Shaaban Robert was born and where he lived dates back to the 1st century AD. There are parallels in the oral traditions that formed the basis for the Alfu - lela -ulela stories and Shaaban Robert's works. Shaaban Robert copied some of the alien stylistic aspects in his composition while at the same time borrowing from his social environment. Shaaban Robert wrote in the first half of the 20th century. This was a period marked by the transformation of the community owing to the entrenchment of the British rule in East Africa. Prior to this, the East African Coast had experienced a vibrant Islamic culture as well as Christian intervention during the 15th and 16th centuries through the arrival of the Portuguese. The German and British rule brought the Roman script which was entrenched through the establishment of publishing houses.

Shaaban Robert was therefore responding to a changing society through appropriate and effective means. His initial writings had a lot of influence from oral literature. Alfu - lela -ulela and the texts of Shaaban Roberts helped to demonstrate the parallels that mark the universality of themes that characterized human life. One of the core values in this literature was the entrenchment of moral values. Shaaban Robert was consistent in this regard in all his works. These themes are also evident in most of the contemporary literary works.

Human interactions therefore have indelible marks that deserve serious attention in order to fully understand and describe who we are. This paper has attempted to do just that.

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**Addendum**

List of the known publications by Shaaban Robert:

**Prose**


**Poetry**


**Mixed genres**


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