

IKISIRI

Tendi za Kiswahili zimekuwepo katika maeneo ya Pwani ya Afrika Mashariki tangia karne ya 17 na zimekuwa zikienziwa, kudhaminiwa na kusawiri tamaduni na asasi za wakazi hawa. Uwepo wa tendi katika maeneo ya Kiafrika uliwahi kuzua mjadala mkubwa kutoka kwa wasomi wa Kimagharibi waliodai kuwa Afrika hakuna tendi ila kinachodaiwa kuitwa tendi ni masimulizi ya kisifo tu. Wengine wamezifutulia mbali tendi hizi kwa kudai kuwa maudhui yake ni ya kichawi na sihiri. Ukweli ni kwamba, utafiti uliofanywa na watafiti hawa uliegemea mitazamo ya Kimagharibi. Licha ya kuwa kuliibuka watafiti waliodai kuwa hakuna tofauti kati ya tendi za maeneo haya mawili, hakujafanywa utafiti linganishi wa kutathmini ujitokezaji wa vipengele vya kimaumbo na motifu katika tendi za Kiswahili za Kiafrika na zile za Kimagharibi zilizotafsiriwa kwa lugha ya Kiswahili. Madhumuni makuu yalikuwa ni kuhakiki maumbo yanayobainika baina ya tendi za Kiafrika na zile za Kimagharibi. Mtafiti alinua kuchunguza tendi mbili zinazopatikana katika maeneo ya Kiafrika na Kimagharibi. Tendi hizi ni *Utendi wa Mikidadi na Mayasa* unaopatikana Afrika na *Utendi wa Kalevala* unaopatikana Finland katika maeneo ya Kimagharibi. Mtafiti alichunguza tendi hizi mbili kutoka eneo la Afrika na Kimagharibi kwa sababu zina upekee katika mitindo na fani, zinabeba historia ya kipekee katika maeneo yao, zinaibua motifu mbalimbali na zinafungamana na madhumuni ya utafiti huu. Utafiti huu uliongozwa na nadharia mbili kuu ambazo ni Nadharia ya Umtindo iliyoasisiwa na Barry na Nadharia ya Ruwaza ya Shujaa iliyoasisiwa na mwanafalsafa Joseph Campbell. Mihimili ya nadharia hizi ilitumiwa na mtafiti kueleza upeo na mipaka ya utafiti huu na pia ilisaidia kuchanganua data. Utafiti huu ulihusisha kusoma makala na kutumiwa kama data ya utafiti huu ambayo baadaye ilichanganuliwa na mwishowe kuelezea matokeo kwa kutumia mbinu ya kimaelezo. Utafiti huu pia ulihusisha ukusanyaji wa data moja kwa moja kutoka maktabani. Mahali pa utafiti palikuwa ni maktaba na sampuli ya utafiti huu ilikuwa *Utendi wa Mikidadi na Mayasa* unaopatikana Afrika na *Utendi wa Kalevala* unaopatikana maeneo ya Kimagharibi uliotafsiriwa katika lugha ya Kiswahili. Matokeo ya utafiti yalibaini kuwa vipengele vya kimaumbo, motifu na changamoto zinazowakumba majagina zilizobainika katika tendi za Kiafrika zilidhihirika pia katika tendi za Kimagharibi. Inatarajiwa kuwa utafiti huu utakuwa na mchango mkubwa kwa jamii ya wasomi hasa wanaoshughulikia fasihi linganishi na utajaribu kutatua ubishi ulioko kuhusu tendi za maeneo mbalimbali. Utafiti huu pia utasaidia kuhifadhi tendi za Kiswahili.

ABSTRACT

Kiswahili poetry is one of the oldest and most revered genres in the coastal peoples' literary traditions. The poetry has been used to disseminate a variety of values among the people. This is especially evident in the Kiswahili epic which has been regarded as the people's prodigy since the 17th century. Nonetheless, the existence of epics in the African cultural milieu is a matter that has received contestation especially from the Western world scholars. The scholars have staked a claim that epics have never existed in Africa and the compositions of what some African writers purport to be epics are long narrations that praise individuals, and whose thematic concerns are based on witchcraft. However, the methodology used to classify epics by the Western scholars in question was regionally parochialised. This notwithstanding, there are parameters that have been used to identify epics. Generally, the parameters in question tend to be universal but there is little evidence that studies have been made to compare the African epic with the Western epic. This research was a comparative study of the African epic and the Western epic on the basis of form and motif. The research focused on two Swahili epics thus, *Utendi wa Mikidadi na Mayasa* from the East African coast and *Utendi wa Kalevala* from the Scandinavia. *Utendi wa Kalevala* is a Swahili translation of the *Kalevala Epic*. The two epics were identified for the comparative investigation as a result of their reputation in each tradition. The objective of the research was to carry out a comparative study of form and motif in the two epics. The research was guided by two theories: The Stylistics Theory as espoused by Barry and the Archetypal Heroic Theory as propagated by Joseph Campbell. The Stylistics Theory guides in the analysis of a literary piece while the Archetypal Theory is hinged on the lives of heroes, their character traits inclusive. The theories guided the researcher in collecting and analyzing data in regard to the research objectives. Data was collected through the studying of the epics and identifying material that was in line with the research objectives and the theories of the research. The data was analyzed qualitatively by subjecting it to content analysis in view of the research objectives. The results revealed that the parameters that are immanent in the Western epic are also prevalent in the African epic. This demonstrated that the postulation that Africa has no epics is untenable. It is hoped that the study will be useful to scholars of Swahili literature, especially in comparative literature.