

**MARX'S SHORTS AND ANCESTORS' CAVES:  
TRACING CRITICAL MOTIFS IN KEZILAHABI'S PLAY AND  
POEMS\***

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La seule pièce théâtrale de Kezilahabi, "Les shorts de Marx", est une satire politique tellement caustique qu'elle n'a pas encore été publiée, bien que des exemplaires photocopiés sont en circulation depuis 1978. Probablement elle a été écrite tôt après la brochure de Julius Nyerere *Azimio la Arusha baada ya miaka kumi* (1977) qui admet pour la première fois l'échec de sa politique et ouvre la vie aux oeuvres critiques.

Les six actes de la pièce sont situés alternativement dans la cour d'une prison et parmi les plus hauts personnages d'un pays africain. Les prisonniers politiques, lorsqu'ils réussissent à se libérer, prennent part à une insurrection populaire et finalement le plus sage d'entre eux deviendra le nouveau chef d'Etat. Sur ces entrefaites le chef actuel, le Président Kapera, met un short trop grand de Marx, un manteau de Ho Chi Minh et, suivi par ses ministres, part à la recherche du pays nommé *Usawa* ("Egalité"), mais après une longue marche pénible ils retournent au point de départ sans avoir réussi dans leur quête.

Dix ans après, en 1988, Kezilahabi a publié son deuxième recueil de poésie, *Karibu ndani*, où il est aussi très critique envers la politique de l'*Ujamaa*. Il y a beaucoup de motifs identiques dans les deux oeuvres; certains vers ne peuvent pas être bien compris si on ne connaît pas sa pièce, et vice versa.

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The only play by Kezilahabi, *Marx's shorts*, is a political satire, so pungent that it has not yet been published, although its photocopied manuscript has been in circulation for almost twenty years (it is dated 1978). Probably it was written soon after Julius Nyerere's pamphlet *Azimio la Arusha baada ya Miaka Kumi* (1977), where he overtly admitted for the first time the failure of his policy, clearing the way for critical literary works.

The six acts of this play are situated in turn in a prison and among the leaders of an unnamed African country, easily recognizable as Tanzania. Political prisoners comment upon the bad situation in the country; later on they manage to free themselves, take part in a popular revolt and at last the wisest of them, Mwangaza Africanus, becomes the new President.

In the meantime the old President, Rais Kapera, puts on Marx's shorts which are too large for him and Mao's shirt which is too heavy, and, followed by all the ministers, sets off in search for the country called *Usawa*. They are shown the way by a giant (*Beberu*) whose name is Korchnoi Brown. After long and painful wandering the company, in a sorry state, returns to the starting-point. Later Rais Kapera tries without success to referee a football match between

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his ministers and the members of parliament, in which the players are blindfolded. Ultimately the only woman in the government (whom Rais Kapera was on the point of marrying) takes part in the revolt which sweeps away the corrupt ministers and Kapera himself.

Another Kezilahabi's political satire published in the same year (1978) is his short story *Mayai - Waziri wa maradhi* (printed in the newspaper *Mzalendo*). In a highly symbolic manner it accuses the managerial class that enriched itself during ten years of *Uhuru* which are symbolized by ten very thin phantom children.

Ten years later, in 1988, Kezilahabi published his second collection of poetry, *Karibu ndani*, where he insists on his right to use free verse, and is very critical of *ujamaa* policy. This collection contains twenty-two poems. As in his first volume *Kichomi* (1974), where free verse was used for the first time in Swahili poetry, there are personal and socio-political themes. But there is one major difference: In the first collection Kezilahabi supported the *ujamaa* policy against its external and internal enemies; Nyerere was a good father preparing *ugali* for his children (see the poem *Tunatazamana*):

- [1] Mama alikuwa ameuawa na wazungu  
 Sufuria lilikuwa juu ya mafiga  
 Baba akaleta moto wa matumaini  
 Akayawasha majani makavu [ ]  
 Halafu Baba akachukua unga wa uganga  
 Akaumimina kwa uangalifu majini [ ]  
 Akakoroga! Akakoroga! Tena na tena  
 Dawa tuliyokuwa mda mrefu tukiisubiri.  
 Kitu kama muujiza kikaanza kutokea.  
 Baada ya mda mfupi akatoa  
 Kitu kimoja kiitwacho ugali.  
 Akaleta mboga tuliyolima sisi wenyewe.  
 Tukazunguka kula pamoja. [ ]

Some years later Nyerere has become, for Kezilahabi, Rais Kapera, the lonely dreamer who drags his ministers and blindfolded peasants on an impossible quest, though his intentions are good:

- [2] RAIS KAPERERA: [ ] Ninapotazama hali ya watu wangu, (akitikisa kichwa kwa huzuni) moyo unaniuma! (Akiweka mkono wa kulia kifiani) Moyo unaniuma! (Kimya. Anahamisha mkono na kuuweka kwenye paji la uso kiwiko juu ya meza) Nimekuwa nikifikiriii, tena kwa muda mrefu sana. (Akionyesha hadhira kwa mkono wa kushoto.) Watu! Nimekuwa nikifikiria njia ya kuwaondoa katika hali hii ya dhiki. (Akimtazama waziri) Ili kutafuta suluhisho nikaanza kuwa na tabia ya kusomasoma vitabu sana katika maktaba. Siku moja nikaona mwonzi ulionionyesha vitabu vya Marx kwenye shubaka. Mara nikasikia sauti moyoni na mawazoni, "Rais Kapera! Amka! Vaa kaputula hilo kwa uaminifu! Waongoze watu hadi kufikia ushindi! Waondoe watu wako katika unyonge na umaskini!"

The critique of *Ujamaa* in the play is rather outspoken. See, for instance, the following excerpt:

- [3] RAIS KAPERERA: Nitazameni! (*Kwa sauti ya juu kidogo.*) Mimi ninafanana na nani? (*Kimya. Kwa sauti ya juu zaidi*) Nitazameni!  
 WAZIRI WA ELIMU: Nionavyo mimii, unafanana na Marx vile.  
 RAIS KAPERERA: (*anatikisa kichwa*) Umekaribia, lakini bado. (*Anamtazama waziri wake wa kike.*)  
 WAZIRI WA KIKE: Mimi nafikiri unafanana na Ho Chi Minh.  
 RAIS KAPERERA: Wewe pia umekaribia, lakini bado. (*Anamtazama waziri mpya wa utamaduni*)  
 WAZIRI MPYA WA UTAMADUNI: Unafanana na marehemu Mao.  
 RAIS KAPERERA: (*anatikisa kichwa*) Umekaribia, bado! (*Kwa sauti ya juu kidogo.*) Watu mmaniona kila siku! Mnapaswa kunielewa vema kuliko mtu mwingine ye yote! (*Anamtazama waziri wa mambo ya nchi za nje.*)  
 WAZIRI WA MAMBO YA NCHI ZA NJE: Jinsi ninavyokutazama! Ho Chi Minh si Ho Chi Minh, Marx si Marx! Na Mao si Mao!  
 RAIS KAPERERA: (*anadakia*) Umepata! Hiyo ndiyo siasa ya nchi hii! Siasa ya Ujamaa wa Kiafrika! Hatufungamani na nchi yo yote!

Kezilahabi criticizes, besides the eclecticism of Nyerere's policy, the bombastic rhetoric and self-complacency, typical for any anti-democratic regime.

- [4] RAIS KAPERERA: (*Anapumua kwa uchovu. Kimya. Akishikashika shingoni*) Haya magwanda mazito mno! Tena yananikaba shingo! Yanahitaji marekebisho!  
 WAZIRI WA MAMBO YA NCHI ZA NJE: Mimi nimo tayari kukupelekea Moscow, Peking au Havana yakafanyiwe marekebisho (*Kimya*)  
 RAIS KAPERERA: Hapana. Huko mbali mno. Zaidi ya hayo vyerehani vyao haviwezi kushona nguo kuukuu kama hizi. (*Kimya.*) Hivi ndivyo tunavyojenga Historia! Historia ya nchi yetu. Wajukuu wetu watasoma, watajua matatizo tuliyoyapitia. (*Anaita*) Waziri wa Elimu!  
 WAZIRI WA ELIMU: Nipo Mtukufu Rais!  
 RAIS KAPERERA: Nataka mti huu tuliopumzika uwe katika Historia!  
 WAZIRI WA ELIMU: Historia hiyo tutaiweka katika muhtasari wa shule za Sekondari! Na Vyuo Vikuu!  
 RAIS KAPERERA: (*akimtazama waziri mpya wa utamaduni*) Waziri wetu mpya wa utamaduni!  
 WAZIRI MPYA WA UTAMADUNI: Nipo Mtukufu Rais!  
 RAIS KAPERERA: Nataka hapa tulipopumzika pajengwe mnara mkubwa kuliko Piramidi za Misri, na baada ya kila maili mia moja pajengwe jumba la makumbusho!

The playwright also criticizes disaccords among the leftist intellectuals, tribalism and repression; the university, for instance, is full of police informants.

- [5] *Waziri wa mambo ya ndani anaingia Rais anamsalimu kwa lugha ya kabila lao*) Chilooba Chimwenye!  
 WAZIRI WA MAMBO YA NDANI: (*kwa furaha*) Chilooba Chimwenye Raisi!  
 (*anakaa*)  
 RAIS KAPERERA: Najua kinywaji chako. Ebu mletee wiski. (*Tarishi analeta haraka.*) Vipi! Kuna usalama?  
 WAZIRI WA MAMBO YA NDANI: [...] Usalama upo! (*Anachukua karatasi nyeupe kutoka mfukoni mwake.*) Kwa muda wa miezi mitatu iliyopita

<sup>1</sup> Probably in Kisanaki, Nyerere's ethnic language

kulikuwa na hatari ya kupinduliwa. Lakini vijana wetu wanaotambaa waligundua mpango huu mapema. Hatari ingine ilikuwa katika Chuo chetu Kikuu (*anakunywa wiski*) Vibaraka wa ubeberu wakishirikiana na hawala zao wa nje wanatumia mbinu mpya ili kuangusha utawala wako! (*Anakunywa wiski*) Walimu sasa wamegawanyika. Wapo wanaojiita "Pure Marxists". Wapo pia wanaojiita wajamaa; na wapo ambao mazungumzo yao yote yanahusu "Class struggle". Na mwisho wapo ambao mwamko wao wa kisiasa ni wa chini kabisa na hawana msimamo! (*Anakunywa wiski*) Ili kuhakikisha kuwa pana usalama tumeongeza idadi ya vijana wetu wanaotambaa hapo chuoni. Katika kila mhadhara patakuwa na vijana wanaotambaa wasiopungua kumi; na katika kila semina, vijana wanaotambaa wawili; na wahazili karibu wote wanatambaa. (*Anakunywa wiski*) Huko bara hakuna matatizo. Vijana wanaotambaa wanawachunga vyema watalii Ni hayo tu kwa kifupi. (*Anamalizia wiski. Tarishi anamwongeza.*)

RAIS KAPER: (*akitingisha kichwa*) Kazi nzuri, kazi nzuri. [ . . . ] Unaweza kwenda. (*Anamwaga kwa lugha ya kikabila.*) Masimwene ga lelo!

WAZIRI WA MAMBO YA NDANI: (*anaitikia*) E e e e, Masimwene ga Raisi!

Fourteen years passed between the first and the second collection of poetry, so it is probable that many poems inserted in the second volume were composed much earlier, in the second half of the seventies. In fact, there are many identical motifs in these poems and in his play, so it seems that they were written at the same time. One such is the motif of a painful quest which turns out to be a senseless wandering in the wilderness.

In the fourth act of the play, we see the group of ministers guided by Rais Kapera; they drag themselves along, all dressed like the President, carrying heavy loads and exhausted after a long march. The last one of the group is a peasant, who carries the heaviest load and a hoe.

- [6] RAIS KAPER: (*kwa uchovu*) Hapa tulipo tumefika mbali Hatuwezi kurudi nyuma. Tumepita katika misitu, majangwa na milima Hatuwezi kurudi nyuma.

They meet a frightening giant, Korchnoi Brown, who shows them the way to the country Usawa:

- [7] KORCHNOI BROWN: (*anafikiri, anaanza kueleza kwa mkono*) Mtakwenda! Halafu mtapinda, mtapinda tena, halafu tena mtapinda, mwishowe mtapindapinda hadi mtakapofika mabonde yenye matope. Mtapita katikati ya matope Halafu milima, halafu misitu yenye miiba hadi mtakapofika jangwani. Kutoka jangwani mtaingia tena bondeni chini kwa chini hadi baharini. Hakuna mitumbwi wala ngalawa Mtaogelea, ingawa kuna papa wengi Mkishavuka mtafika nchi iitwayo Svoboda<sup>2</sup>. Kabla ya kuondoka katika nchi hii itawabidi kupambana na majitu yanayofanana na mimi. Mkitoka hapo mtafika kwenye njia nyembamba (*akiwaonyesha mawaziri*) Hawa hawatapita hawa! Njia hiyo itawafikisha katika nchi iitwayo *Fraternité*<sup>3</sup> Kutoka *Fraternité* mtafika nchi iitwayo *Egalité*<sup>4</sup>. Mkitoka hapo

<sup>2</sup> Neno la Kirusi, maana yake "Uhuru"

<sup>3</sup> Neno la Kifaransa, maana yake "Undugu"

<sup>4</sup> Neno la Kifaransa, maana yake "Usawa"

mtakuwa mmefika Usawa. Ulizeni tu watu watawaonyesha! Mkifika Usawa mtawakuta Waswahili wenzenu wameketi nje ya Ikulu ndogo ya *Ravenstvo*<sup>5</sup>.

Even if the way seems to be very difficult, they decide to follow it, blindfolding the grumbling peasant with a red band. But it starts raining and they decide to shelter under the only tree - in fact it is a flag.

- [8] RAIS KAPER: [...] Lo! Mvua inaanza kunyesha! (Akionyesha bendera) Twendeni tukajikinge chini ya mti ulee! (Wanajikokota kwa haraka kidogo. Wanaifikia bendera. Wanakaa chini Yaelekea wamechoka sana. Wanahema kwa nguvu Kimya )  
 MKULIMA: (akiitazama bendera) **Mti huu una jani moja tu! Hauwezi kutukinga sote!** (Kimya. Hakuna anayemuunga mkono. Waziri wa elimu anamfunga kitambaa vizuri ili asione tena ) [...]  
 WAZIRI OFISI YA RAIS: Naona bado kuna manyunyu. Tuung'oe huu mti twende nao tujikinge. (Anaing'oa bendera kutoka kwenye debe. Wanaanza tena kujikokota )

In the poem *Sisi kwa Sisi* a painful journey is depicted, in the desert (*jangwani*), in the treeless wilderness (*nyikani*) and in the forest or bush (*msituni*). The situation is nearly like that described in the play, and the peasant's words (*Mti huu una jani moja tu! Hauwezi kutukinga sote!*) from the previous excerpt are repeated almost verbatim in the poem.

- (*Nyikani:* )  
 [9] Wakati huo umepita. Safari inaendelea.  
 Tumepumzika chini ya mti mkavu. Inanyesha.  
 Hatutasimama hapa kusubiri tone la mwisho!  
**Mti huu wenye jani moja lipepealo**  
**Hauwezi kutukinga sote. Jani linavuja,**  
 Na mvua inazidi kunyesha

- (*Jangwani:*...)  
 Na nyuma yetu jitu lenye jicho moja latuchapa viboko  
**Miti hii yenye jani moja yaanza kuwa mizito**  
 Kote barani! O! O! O! Maraisi!  
 Kama safari yenyewe ndiyo hii  
 Kamwe baharini jua lichomozapo hatutafika!

The tree with one leaf (*mtu wenye jani moja*) means, of course, the one-party political system, Chama cha Mapinduzi, which cannot be suited to all the people.

The symbols of desert (*jangwa*), mountain (*mlima*) and forest (*msitu*), all with a negative connotation, occur again and again in Kezilahabi's writings. Xavier Garnier in his paper *L'impact du choix de la langue sur la fiction romanesque: la révolte Mau Mau et les romans kenyans* says: "Derrière le mot swahili *msitu*, il y a ce milieu contre lequel se construisent les villages et où l'homme civilisé ne peut vivre."

In fact, in the poem *Hatumwoni* the author invites the people to cut the forests in order to make sticks and children's toys:

<sup>5</sup> Neno la Kirusi, maana yake "Usawa".

- [10] Kateni yote misitu, fimbo tuenee  
Na vinyago tuwachonge watoto wachezee. [...]  
Kamwe hapatakuwa na kilio wala matanga  
Bali hoi hoi za ushindi na madaraka kwa umma.

In *Kaputula* there are also several religious motifs from the New Testament, hence Rais Kapera is (mockingly) compared to Jesus and his quest to the Passion of Christ:

- [11] MKULIMA: Na mimi unikumbuke kwenye ufalme wako wa Usawa  
(The good thief to Jesus on the cross.)

- [12] RAIS KAPERA: Utakaa daima kulia kwangu.  
(It might be a paraphrase of Jesus' reply to the thief; Rais Kapera, however, says it to his faithful minister.)

- [13] RAIS KAPERA: Heri yao watakaoamini siasa yangu bila kuniona!  
(Reminiscence of what Jesus said to the apostle Thomas.)

- [14] Sauti za watu waliao zinasikika nje ya jukwaa. Wanasimama kusikiliza  
RAIS KAPERA: (kwa sauti) Mnaolia huko, msitulilie sisi. Walilieni wajukuu wenu!  
(Jesus carrying the cross said to the crying women: "Don't cry for me, cry for yourselves and for your children.")

- [15] RAIS KAPERA: Wenye imani na siasa ya chama wanifuata!  
The failure of the *ujamaa* policy is expressed in the play very clearly:

- [16] RAIS KAPERA: (Wanajikokota hadi Rais anapofika kwenye kiti cha meza yake. Anakaa kwa haraka na kwa uchovu. Waziri wa mambo ya nchi za nje anasafisha meza ambayo imeenea vumbi) Aaah! Mwishowe tumerudi tena tulipoanzia. (Anatikisa kichwa kwa huzuni.) Safari yote bure! Hakuna hata mmoja kati yenu aliyeweza kupita katika njia ile nyembamba! Isipokuwa mimi na mkulima. Zaidi ya hayo tumepoteza wenzetu katika nchi ya Svoboda (Akimwonyesha waziri mpya wa utamaduni) Mtazameni waziri wetu mpya wa utamaduni! Kapoteza mguu! (Akimtazama waziri wa elimu.) Poleni sana! Nataka washairi wetu waandike utenzi wa kimapinduzi juu ya mguu wako! (Anatikisa kichwa kwa huzuni.) Aaah! Tena nchi ya Egalité nilishaanza kuiona kwa mbali katika ukungu!

Still more outspoken is the following poem:

**Azimio**

- [17] Azimio sasa ni mabaki ya chakula  
 Kwenye sharubu za bepari  
 Kalamu inayovuja  
 Katika mfuko wa mwanafunzi  
 Vumbi zito  
 Baada ya ng'ombe kupita  
 Hakunyolewa  
 Hakupewa kalamu mpya  
 Na njia haikuzibwa  
 Kilichosalia sasa  
 Ni punje za ulezi  
 Zilizosambazwa jangwani  
 Na mpandaji kipofu<sup>6</sup>

A frequent motif of Kezilahabi's poems from the volume *Karibu ndani* is the derision of traditional poets. In this case, too, a poem often casts light upon a detail in the play which otherwise would remain unnoticed, or vice versa, a passage in the play explains an obscure symbol in a poem.

Thus in the second act of *Kaputula*, Rais Kapera summons his ministers to receive a report of their activity. The minister of culture reports:

- [18] Kuhusu mambo ya kale tumetoa pesa kutengeneza upya mapango ya watu wa kale, na wataalamu wetu wanaendelea kuchimbua mafuvu (*anakunywa soda*) [...] Kuhusu lugha, wananchi wameonyesha kuwa na mwamko mkubwa kisiasa. Wanaimba ngonjera na mashairi juu ya ujamaa, tena yale yenye vina.

The irony in mentioning rhymed *ngonjera* and *mashairi* is quite evident, but not so obvious is the meaning of arranging anew the ancient caves. There is, however, a poem, *Moshi Ukizidi Pangoni*, in which Kezilahabi compares the traditional poets to obstinate people (*wakaidi*) crowded in a dark cave. When a tear gas cannister explodes and the cave fills with smoke, they try in vain to protect themselves with the old rhymes. This failure is also expressed formally; whereas the first strophe has a rigid metre of 18 syllables (*mizani*) divided in two hemistichs (which, anyway, is innovative in respect of the "normal" 16-syllable *shairi*), in the second strophe the rhythm is not so regular and towards the end the rhyme disappears and the whole metric system collapses.

**Moshi Ukizidi Pangoni**

- [19] Moshi ukizidi pangoni, wakaidi hujujumuka  
 Wakabanana mlangoni, nyoyo zikawapapatika  
 Moshi ukizidi pangoni, wakaidi nje hutoka  
 Wakaona ya mwanga fani, wakakubali kufunzika

<sup>6</sup> This is an example of *vers rapportés* — a sophisticated form of parallelism, where the lines n 7, 8 and 9 are linked, respectively, with the lines 1/2, 3/4 and 5/6

Wakakubali kubaini, mambo yanayowazunguka  
Lakini

Wenzetu wali pangoni, giza likiwagubika  
Kweli wali hawaioni, kasumba iliyowasuka  
Ndipo likapigwa kundini, la machozi likapasuka  
Wakaidi wakabana kutani, wapate salimika  
Na vina wakaweka nyusoni, aibu yao kuficha,  
Walipoona uzito, wa fani ilovunja  
Urari wa mizani, na vina vilochujuka.

In another poem, *Kisima*, the traditionalists are compared to frogs in the valley of knowledge (*bonde la taaluma*) - this latter is a symbol largely used in Kezilahabi's allegoric novella *Nagona*. In this poem Liongo Fumo's legend is questioned. Liongo's corpse has been always disturbing: in the legend the dead hero prevented people from taking water from the well, at present he prevents the new generation of poets from writing (*kalamu zetu zimekauka wino*) and a false hero (*shujaa wa uwongo*) is awaited to push the dead body with a pen, without getting the promised reward; this is an allusion to Liongo's son who killed his father, stabbing him in the navel with a copper dagger, hoping to get the king's daughter as a reward, but instead he was chased away from the town. This action in the poem opens the door which leads to the midst of wisdom and a new consciousness.

### Kisima

[20] Kisima cha maji ya uzima ki wazi  
Na vyura katika bonde la taaluma watuita  
Tujongee kwa mahadhi yao  
Yaongozayo pandikizi la mtu  
Kwa hatua ndefu litembealo  
Na sindano ya shaba kitovuni  
Upinde na mishale mkononi  
Kisha likapiga goti kisimani  
Tayari kumfuma akaribiaye  
Maana shujaa hafi miongoni mwa wezi  
Bali kama simba mawindoni.

Hatuwezi tena kuteka maji  
Na kalamu zetu zimekauka wino  
Nani atamsukuma kwa kalamu  
Aitwe shujaa wa uwongo!  
Aliyeitia kitovuni kwa hofu  
Ingawa tegemeo hakulipata  
Alifungua mlango uelekeo  
Katikati ya ujuzi na **urazini** mpya  
Mwanzo wa kizazi tukionacho

In the long poem *Karibu ndani*, the poet presents the traditionalists (*washairi wa mapokeo*) in the weak light at sunset:



[21] Na mahadhi yagaagaa, juu ya bahari ya utenzi  
Yameshindwa chini kuzama, kwenye kina cha urazini<sup>7</sup> [...]

At nightfall, the poet penetrates into the bush,

Kwenye kiza cha karne, pasipo vichocho mkato  
Nikiwa na nanga yangu, nyimbo mpya tatongoa  
'Tatumia *silika ya uzawa*<sup>8</sup>, kuupata mwelekeo  
Maana ushanga wa shingoni, bado sijautupa.

Thus the poet claims to go back to the traditional values. He enters the ancestors' hut,

Naye mbwa ghafla, amuka akibweka  
Meno mdomoni hana, lakini povu lamfura [...]  
Mbwa abweka tena, kama kwamba kushambulia  
We Mavina! Lala chini! ajuza amuasa

The toothless dog that tries to attack him is called Mavina - a joking name for verses with regular rhyme and rhythm (*mashairi ya mapokeo yenye urari wa vina na mizani, neno la utani*, Kezilahabi explains; the word is formed on the term *Masivina* - free verse). The poet is welcomed by the ancestors who know and like his poetry:

Hiyo ala ulonayo, tenzi zake twazikumbuka  
Sifa zako zimetufikia, na huo wenu mgogoro  
Nyimbo za wanamapokeo, ni nzuri si utani  
Zina mahadhi na mdundo, pia zatia hamasa  
Lakini zilitulaza, usingizi mapema mno  
Ikawa kama kwamba, Mungu alitusahau  
Lakini nyimbo zako, zimezindua taaluma  
Mlango sasa u wazi, wajao wafuate nyayo.<sup>9</sup>

The poet delights the ancestors with his songs the whole night; at daybreak they disappear and he returns from the bush with the last cutting remark:

Mbali nilimwona Mavina, akitangatanga msituni.

Some poems were obviously written in a later period, when the author was already preparing the postmodern novellas *Nagona* and *Mzingile*; there are the same motifs, such as entering the circle, the search of knowledge, and others. But this would be the theme of another paper.

<sup>7</sup> "And the melody turns restlessly on the sea [or in the verse-form] of *utenzi*. It failed to sink down into the depth [or rhyme] of consciousness"

<sup>8</sup> "inborn instinct"

<sup>9</sup> "Knowledge" and "opened doors" are motifs recurrent in other Kezilahabi's poems, too

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