

Relevance of the Portrayal of Masculinity in Ebrahim Hussein's Plays to the Tanzanian and Kenyan Societies

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Abstract

This paper examines the relevance of the portrayal of masculinity in Ebrahim Hussein's *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim*, in response to the scholarly need to establish the relevance of the literary portrayal of masculinity in the plays to the Tanzanian and Kenyan societies. The study is qualitative and adopts Butler's (1990) Gender Performativity Theory and Connell's (1995) Gender Order Theory that were both used as a framework for reading, analyzing and interpreting characters' expressions and performances of masculinity in the selected readings. A Constructivist Paradigm was employed, and it comprised of a number of stages, namely identification of the plays as the primary texts, a close reading of the plays and a review of literature on the gendered portrayals in Hussein's plays. The researcher finally found that the dramatic portrayal of masculinity in Hussein's *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* is realistic and relevant to the Tanzanian and Kenyan societies. Therefore, the present study is very significant since it gives significant knowledge of the reality and relevance of the two dramatic works of art to the Tanzanian and Kenyan societies with regard to the dramatic portrayal of masculinity in them. The study fills the knowledge gap of the relevance of the literary portrayal of the master-servant relationship between Tanganyikans and the Germans from 1890 to 1904 and the famous 1987 Kenyan 'Otieno case', and how masculinity was represented both positively and negatively in both cases.

1.0 Introduction

Gender studies can be traced as far back to the founding of the Gender Identity Theory (GIT) by Robert J. Stoller in 1964. The GIT is said to be the earliest theory of masculinity which was built on personality and psychoanalytic theories that related gender mainly to natural, biological creation (Bonatti *et al.*, 2019). From this foundation of the GIT, gender was perceived to have an alternative meaning to sex. In the course of maintaining the then universal perception of gender, GIT latter came with an argument that a person's gender is a manifestation of their sex

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(Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2019). As a result of maintaining the arguments of the GIT, until recently, in Asia, North America, South America, Antarctica, Europe, Australia and Africa, one's masculinity is in most cases regarded to be a manifestation of their manhood or manliness and is usually directly associated with their sex (Mlambo-Ngcuka, *ibid.*).

In opposition to the above described gender notion, and as a result of continued research on issues of gender, Judith Pamela Butler came up with Gender Performativity Theory in 1990, which advocated that gender is just a bodily or linguistic performance which has nothing to do with one's sex, and is culturally constructed. Later in 1995, Raewyn Connell came up with his theory named Gender Order Theory which was in agreement with Butler's idea in holding the view that masculinity is socially constructed through performances that are not sex-linked, and there are many ways of performing masculinity that vary across time, place, culture and individuals.

Depending on people's cultural, regional and individual differences in a given period of time, the predicted characteristics of males and females have many different connotations. In Asia, Europe, America and Africa for example, males are mostly conventionally pre-conceived to be masculine and have the potentials comprising being autonomous, self-assured, sturdy, courageous, physically strong, having leadership qualities, being assertive, independent and belligerent (Olali, 2015). Zajdow (2011) states that the opposite of masculinity is femininity. Hence, traits that are in opposition to masculinity such as nurturance, sensitivity, sweetness, supportiveness, gentleness, warmth, passivity, cooperativeness, expressiveness, modesty, humility, empathy, affection, tenderness, and being emotional, kind, helpful, devoted, and understanding have for a long time been cited as conventionally and stereotypically feminine.

Tanzanian literary writers as other literary writers worldwide, raise concern about the definition of gender as they see it contradicting the conventional and stereotypical traits of men and women. To cite a few examples, Euphrase Kezilahabi's *Rosa Mistika* (1971) portrays a man performing negative masculinity by mistreating his wife and the rest of the family members while not fulfilling his expected masculine roles like providing for the basic needs of his family. Other Tanzanian literary works which portrayed the issue of masculinity include Gabriel Ruhumbika's *Village in Uhuru* (1969), Ibrahim Ngozi's *Machizi ya Mwanamke* (1977), Emmanuel Mbogo's *Tone la Mwisho* (1981), Elieshi Lema's *Parched Earth* (2001), Penina Muhando's *Heshima Yangu* (1974) and *Nguzo Mama* (1982), S. N. Ndunguru's *The Lion of Yola* (2004), Said Mohamed's *Babu Alipofufuka* (2001), *Dunia Yao* (2006) and *Nyuso za Mwanamke* (2010). Most of these works seem to have a traditional, conventional and stereotypical approach of portraying men as usually domineering and aggressive to women while women are on the contrary usually passive, and married women tend to wait on their husbands that are working in order to provide for the families. In most of the above listed works,

most of the female characters are recipients while most of the male characters are providers. On the contrary, Hussein's *Kinjeketile* (1969a) and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* (1988) add a portrayal of men and women's masculinity in a modern perception by which both men and women are portrayed to perform masculinity and women resist men's predominance. With the scholarly need to establish the relevance of the literary portrayal of masculinity in Hussein's *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* (both published by Oxford University Press in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 1969 and 1988 respectively) to the Tanzanian and Kenyan societies as revealed by the existing literature, this study fills the knowledge gap.

2.0 Research Methodology

Ebrahim Hussein has authored ten plays which are: *Kinjeketile* (1969a), *Alikiona* (1969b), *Wakati Ukuta* (1969c), *Michezo ya Kuigiza* (1970), *Mashetani* (1971), *Arusi* (1980), *Jambo la Maana* (1982), *Jogoo Kijijini; Ngao ya Jadi* (1987), *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* (1988) and *Ujamaa* (unpublished). The researcher purposively chose the two plays because he wanted specific information from specific resource personnel in the study of gender. In this case, Hussein was the selected resource personnel due to his remarkable contribution of knowledge on issues of gender through literary compositions and presentations. The researcher also needed to cross-examine Cyprian's (2017) ideas that in the two selected plays, the masculine gender is better represented in different life aspects; politically, socially and economically in comparison to the rest of Hussein's plays, and many critics and scholars have not yet paid attention to the two plays with regard to the relevance of the portrayal of masculinity in them to the Tanzanian and Kenyan societies.

This study employed a descriptive case study design on selected Hussein's plays from whose primary data was collected. The design was selected on the basis of the nature of this study on the field of literature as it needs detailed descriptions, elaborations, explanations and definitions of the performances and traits of characters. The findings of this study are, hence, given through definitions, explanations, descriptions and elaborations. The target population for this study was the ten Hussein's plays already listed in the previous paragraph. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, as backed up by Leedy and Ormrod (2010) who state that purposeful sampling is preferred when the researcher(s) want(s) specific information from specific sources of data. Therefore, two Hussein's plays, namely *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* were purposively selected for this study because the researcher wanted specific information from these two specific sources from the same author. From each play, all words, phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs that describe characters' appearances, themes, actions, images, symbols used in the plays, or interpretations related to masculinity were collected and descriptively analysed. A close reading method was employed to collect data from the two plays, and the

selected tenets of both Connell's Gender Order Theory and Butler's Gender Performativity Theory were jointly used in the data analysis process because the two theories are closely related and complement each other. Explanations, elaborations and descriptions were used to analyse and interpret the themes, actions of characters, symbols, images, pictorial illustrations, speeches or words and interpretations related to gender and masculinity in particular that were obtained in the data collected from Hussein's *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim*.

3.0 Relevance of the Portrayal of Masculinity in Hussein's *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* to the Tanzanian and Kenyan Societies

In order to make a systematic and coherent presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of the data with regard to the relevance of the portrayal of masculinity in the two plays to the Tanzanian and Kenyan societies, the researcher finds it better to start with presenting brief historical backgrounds of Tanzania and Kenya.

The United Republic of Tanzania is an East African country that borders the Indian Ocean. Its neighbouring countries are Kenya and Uganda to the North, Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the West, and Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique to the South. There are more than 100 distinct ethnic groups and tribes in Tanzania, with exclusion of ethnic groups that live in Tanzania as refugees (Gentili, 2005). These ethnic groups are essentially of Bantu origin, with small Nilotic-speaking and non-African minorities. The country lacks a clear dominant ethnic majority. The largest ethnic group in Tanzania, the Sukuma, comprises only about 16 percent of the country's total population, followed by the Chagga and the Nyamwezi. Unlike its neighbouring countries, Tanzania has not experienced large-scale ethnic conflicts, a fact ascribed mainly to the unifying influence of the Swahili language. Due to intermarriages, the cultural traditions of Tanzanians have few remarkable differences and many similarities (Gentili, *ibid.*). Hussein's *Kinjeketile* dramatizes the life of the people in the Southern part of Tanzania: the Wazaramo, Wakichi, Wamatumbi, Wangindo, and Warufiji as influenced by the existing cultural traditions, masculinity being an important aspect of their social performances.

The United Republic of Kenya is also an East African country whose geography is diverse, varying among its 47 counties. Kenya has a coastline on the Indian Ocean, which contains swamps of East African mangroves. Inland are broad plains and numerous hills. Kenya borders South Sudan to the Northwest, Uganda to the West, Somalia to the East, Tanzania to the South, and Ethiopia to the North. Most Kenyans live in the highlands, where Nairobi, the capital, sits at an altitude of 1,700 meters. Just like Tanzania, Kenya's population also consists of ethnic groups of Bantu origin, Nilotic-speaking and non-African minorities. While no ethnic group constitutes a majority of Kenya's citizens, the largest ethnic group,

the Kikuyu, makes up only 20 per cent of the nation's total population. The five largest - Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Kamba and Kalenjin account for 70 per cent. About 97.58 per cent of Kenya's citizens are affiliated with its 32 major indigenous groups (Republic of Kenya, 1979-1983). Hussein's *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* dramatizes the life of the people in Kenya as influenced by the existing cultural traditions, masculinity being an important aspect of their social performances. The play also clearly portrays the hardships Martha and Herbert undergo as a result of the differences of ethnic values between the Luo and the Kikuyu. Martha and Herbert portray a true relationship between the Luo and the Kikuyu since they come from the two tribes.

In agreement with the portrayal of masculinity in *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim*, both Connell's 1995 Gender Order Theory and Butler's 1990 Theory of Performativity hold the view that gendered attitudes and behaviours, such as femininity and masculinity, are context-dependent, circumstantial and not permanent. In this section, therefore, the researcher uses different contexts and circumstances as portrayed in *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* to examine the relevance of the portrayal of masculinity in the two plays to what real takes place in Tanzania and Kenya with consideration to the fact that drama, as one of the core genres of literature, is the mirror of any society because it documents what is happening and throws it back at the same society.

On the one hand, Hussein's *Kinjeketile* dramatizes the life of the people in the Southern part of Tanzania in the early 1900s. The play draws from the historical records to tell the story of Kinjeketile Ngwale, a diviner whose prophecies helped to inspire the 1905-1907 Maji Maji War against German colonialism in what was then called Tanganyika. The highest point of the rebellion came at Mahenge in the month of August, 1905 where several thousand Maji Maji fighting men attacked but did not succeed to penetrate a German stronghold (Hussein, 1969a).

On the other hand, *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim*, translated in English as 'At the Edge of No Man's Land' is Hussein's play based on the 'Otieno case' that took place in Western Kenya in the year 1987. The case involved the death of a well-known Luo lawyer and divided Kenya public opinion at the time and led to ethnic conflict. The controversy in the case took place between the widow, a Kikuyu woman, and the relatives of the deceased husband as to where his body should be buried. Patriarchal norms and values and ethnicity as opposed to modernity were attributed to the controversy. The play portrays a Kenyan society that is divided in two main groups; the elders who are mainly traditionalists and the young generation of modernists. Hussein uses *Chira*, a word from the Luo language which means 'misfortune'; a misfortune that strikes a man or a woman because of (a) bad deed(s) he/she did before. Hussein uses *Chira* as a concept and as colour in order to portray local content (Hussein, 1988). *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* is therefore relevant to a real Kenyan case. It reflects the performance of different

forms of masculinity as influenced by patriarchal norms and values, ethnicity and modernity. Although almost everything dramatized by the play is relevant to what real takes place in Kenya and other parts of Africa as far as masculinity performance is concerned, the researcher takes some of the major incidents to show the relevance through a scientific study. Under this section, the data findings obtained from both *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* are analysed and interpreted in line with Connell's Gender Order Theory and the insights from Butler's Gender Performativity Theory.

In connection to what happened during the Maji Maji War as portrayed in *Kinjeketile*, David (2017) in contextualizing war masculinities as stated by Connell's 1995 Gender Order Theory and Butler's 1990 Theory of Gender Performativity, states that war is so closely associated with men as a social and political role. It is not an expression of male nature as it has been widely misunderstood; it is a product of culture that emanates from social specialization and division of labour. A sex-based division of labour leads to socially defined men's work, which fosters masculine personalities. Masculinity is therefore, culturally pre-existing to war but is exapted for combat when war is present, and then powerfully shapes and is shaped by war. War is therefore, a relatively recent development in our human species while masculinity is as old as human.

In *Kinjeketile*, Hussein portrays men as the only fighters of the Maji Maji War. Under the attitude of war masculinities, war involves mainly physical fighting which befits men; thus, women are perceived to be unfitted for physical fights. They have to remain at home taking care of children and the elderly while men are on the battle ground. Kitunda narrates how the war began and that only men were involved in the physical fights, as follows:

Sikujua nini kilitokea. Sote tulikuwa mala moja tunataka damu, tunataka kuua, tunataka kubomoa. Fikla zetu zililala, na kisasi cha miaka mingi kilituvaa kwa mala moja. Tukataka malipizo. Na sisi tupige kama tulivyopigwa, tuuwe kama tuulivyokuwa tunauliwa. Katika nchenko huu wa damu tukaanza vita. Sikumbuki kutoa amlilakini vijana wawili, Ngulumbalyo Mandai na Lindimyo Machela, waliingia shamba la Bwana Kinoo wakavulugavuluga. Walikata miti ya pamba kwa hasila ile ile. Njelumani alivulumisha kiboko katika ngozi nyeusi. Katika kila pigo vijana wetu walikuwa hawakati miti ya pamba bali miili ya Wajelumani. Chuki na gazabu iliyotujaa! Vita vikaanza.... (Hussein, 1969a: 40).

Translation:

I don't know what happened. All at once, we wanted blood, we wanted to kill, we wanted to destroy. We did not think, but we were suddenly seized by vengeance. We wanted payment-to harm as we had been harmed, to kill as we had been killed. In this tumult of blood, we started the war. I don't remember giving any orders to attack, but two

young men, Ngulumbalyo Mandai and Lindimyo Machela, descended on Bwana Kinoo's plantation, and destroyed it completely. They cut down the trees with the same force the Germans had used to flog a black skin. And each blow they dealt; it wasn't the cotton they slashed but the body of the Germans. The anger and hatred that flooded us! So, the war began.... (Hussein, 1969a: 40).

The above Kitunda's speech reveals the evils of German colonialism to be the circumstances that necessitated men to perform war masculinities- instigating violence and revenge to the German colonialists; to harm as they had been harmed, to kill as they had been killed. This revelation affirms both Connell and Butler's idea that masculinity is circumstantial. It also agrees with Cyprian (2017) who holds the view that all human beings irrespective of their sex, have warrior instincts that, when provoked, may cause the individual to necessarily react violently. In Hussein's *Kinjeketile*, two young men- Ngulumbalyo Mandai and Lindimyo Machela represent all the people who have decided to wage war for a bright future. They descend on the famous German settler's (Bwana Kinoo's) plantation and destroy it completely, leading to the beginning of the war. The consequences of the Maji Maji uprising were social, political and economic in nature. Some of them were positive but generally many of them were negative. The Maji Maji War led to heavy depopulation of Southern Tanganyika (the Wamatumbi, Wazaramo, Wangido, Warufiji, Wakichi and the Wamakonde). Many people lost their lives during and after the war while others were permanently crippled. Kitunda's speech shows the effects of the Maji Maji War as follows:

Tulipoteza katika kikundi chetu watu zaidi ya elfu moja na mia mbili. Tuliobaki tulikuwa wendawazimu, wengine walipigwa bumbuazi, wengine walikuwa wanapiga kelele, "Kinjeketile ametudanganya!" huku wanalia, lakini machozi yalikuwa taabu kutoka. Wengi katika sisi tuliona kupigana hakuna maana tena. Tukakamatwa, wengine wakakimbia... (Hussein, 1969a: 48).

Translation:

We lost more than one thousand two hundred people. Those of us who survived stumbled about like raving lunatics, some screaming, "Kinjeketile has cheated us!" crying but they could hardly shed tears. Most of us saw that fighting has no meaning anymore. We were caught, some of us run away ... (Hussein, 1969a: 48).

The above stated circumstances and effects of war masculinities are relevant to the real life of Tanzanians before and after the Maji Maji War. Mabati (2017) is in line with the findings of this study as he affirms that Hussein succeeds to reflect the real life of Tanganyikans before and after the Maji Maji War through the dramatization of *Kinjeketile*.

Through *Kinjeketile*, Hussein also portrays the performance of messianic masculinity in Tanzania through Kinjeketile Ngwale, a character who is historically real with reference to the Maji Maji War. According to Hussein (1969a: v-viii), Kinjeketile Ngwale was a prophet who arose in the year 1904. Near his home at Ngarambe there was a pool in a tributary of the River Rufiji. Kinjeketile was possessed by the spirit Hongo who dwelt in the pool. He taught the people the meaning of unity and encouraged them to unite by symbolically using water as a medicine against divisive forces. Hundreds of people who heard of his name through *nywinywila*; the whispering campaign, came to join forces with him. Before Kinjeketile's performance of messianic masculinity as a way of saving his people, the dramatization demonstrates three important things. The first is the portrayal of how the Wamatumbi felt about the cruel invasion by the Germans, especially to show the master-servant relationship then pertaining. The second is a brief portrayal of the political climate of that period (1890-1904), and the third is a portrayal of the theme of economic exploitation of the Africans by the Germans, when Tanganyika was being deprived of her produce and manpower, and yet her people were being made to pay taxes, without being given any chance of earning an income (Hussein, 1969a: vi-vii). These problems provide the background to the Maji Maji War, for it is the reaction to these intolerable conditions that bred hatred in the hearts of the Africans for the German, and was the cause of so much bloodshed.

Given Butler and Connell's idea that masculinity is a performance that is determined by given contexts and circumstances, Kinjeketile necessarily performs messianic masculinity as an attempt to save his fellow Tanganyikans from the exploitation, oppression, humiliation and restlessness caused by the Germans. As defined by David (2017) that messianic masculinity is the powerful performances of miracles and wonders like those that were said to be performed by the Christian Messiah as documented in the Christian Holy Book, and those that are performed by powerful medicinemen, witchdoctors, prophets and sorcerers, Kinjeketile performs it not because he is a man, but because he is connected to Hongo-the spirit of water, who gives him magical and healing powers, and spiritual message to tell the people. Kinjeketile is the mediator between men and women on the one side, and *Hongo*, the *mizimu*, the *miungu*, and *Mungu* (God) on the other. This is common in Tanzania and in most parts of Africa to have traditional seers (prophets) and traditional medicine men who claim to be empowered in a traditional religious network of *Mungu*, the *miungu*, the *mizimu*, the spirits like *Hongo*, seers and the people as arranged in descending order of superiority. Such traditional seers (prophets) and traditional medicine men can perform various miracles and wonders like those that were performed by Kinjeketile, have power over other people in their societies, and such power gives them an attribute of masculinity. This idea that messianic masculinity is performed by both men and women is also in agreement with Abdalla (2015) and David (2017) who state that

the African traditional and religious seers and prophets/prophetesses include both men and women. Therefore, both Abdalla's and the researcher's findings affirm Connell's tenet of his Gender Order Theory which states that masculinity is socially constructed through performances that are not sex-linked.

To dramatize how Kinjeketile performs messianic masculinity, Hussein portrays a congregation of many men where four men come forward. Kinjeketile takes some maize flour from his bag, mixes it with the water and gives it to the young men. One by one, they kneel before him as he offers each a nibble of the mixture and blesses them. He then applies on each man's head some of the mixture, and blesses them with the whisk (Hussein, 1969a: 17). His actions are accompanied by words of blessings to the men followed by sacrifices to appease the ancestors. He says to them:

*Nendeni kama upepo - kusini, kaskazini, mashariki na magharibi...
Haya yote yanawezekana kwa sababu ya nguvu ya haya maji (Hussein,
1969a: 17).*

... Sasa twendeni mtoni kutoa shukrani na kuabudu. Tuwashukuru wazee. Tushukuru mizimu. Tumshukuru Hongo (Hussein, 1969a: 19).

Translation:

Go like the wind-to the South, North, West and East...All this is possible because of the power of the water (Hussein, 1969a: 17).

... Let's now go to the river and worship. Let's appease the ancestors, the spirits. Let's offer our thanks to Hongo (Hussein, 1969a: 19).

The above portrayal perfectly reflects the reality of how messianic masculinity is performed by seers (traditional prophets and witch doctors) in Tanzania and in most of the other African countries. Hussein's *Kinjeketile* is, therefore, relevant to what real takes place in Tanzania and in most of the other African countries. However, the position of seers like Kinjeketile has been currently replaced by witchdoctors. The term 'witch-doctor' is both broad and controversial, colloquially used to identify traditional African healers, of which there are over 75,000 in Tanzania alone (WHO, 2019). For starters, the term does not originate from Swahili. Its roots are colonial and have historically enforced the stereotype of African exoticism in recent years. According to WHO (2019), Prof. Dr. Musa is the most famous witch doctor in Tanzania. He is also currently said to be the most talented, the most successful and possibly the most visited traditional, spiritual and herbal healer in the whole of Tanzania. He has worked for over 18 years helping people from all walks of life lead a fulfilling life. The healing secrets have been in his family for centuries going back to his great great grandfather who was one of the most trusted and respected herbalists in Africa. He has healing powers and

performs miracles and wonders just like many of the religious prophets and healers in Tanzania (africantraditionalspiritualhealer.com/best-witch-doctor-in-tanzania/). All of these traditional, spiritual and herbal healers perform messianic masculinity in the likes of Kinjeketile Ngwale.

However, Hussein's *Kinjeketile* dramatizes the presence of two main groups of people in Tanzania namely those who do not believe in traditional beliefs and superstitions (those who do not believe in the power of messianic masculinity and its accompanying taboos) and those who believe in them. Kitunda is portrayed to represent the first group that constitutes the minority. The majority fall under the group of those who believe in the power of traditional messianic masculinity. Kitunda confirms that many people died, and all those who died had drunk the water (Hussein, 1969a:45). Although Ngulumbalyo does not agree with Kitunda because he believes that those who died drank the water but violated the taboos through plundering, looting and raping people's wives, Kitunda further speaks showing that those were just silly beliefs and superstitions. According to him, the war is to be led by God. The following dialogues between Kitunda and Ngulumbalyo portray the representation:

Kitunda: (*pole pole lakini kwa msisitizo*) *Watu wengi wamekufa, na watu wale walikunywa maji.*

Ngulumbalyo: *Hawakunywa, waongo. Wengine katika wao walikunywa lakini hawakufuata miiko. Baada ya vita walikuwa wanachukua mali za watu, bibi za watu na mengineyo; na haya yote yalikuwa miiko.*

Kitunda: *Haya tumeyaongea, sio mala moja au mbili. Sasa sio wakati wa kuyaongea tena. Kuna vita mbele yetu na sitaki watu wafe kwa ajili ya ujinga wetu.*

Ngulumbalyo: *Ujinga? Maji ujinga?! (Hussein, 1969a: 45-46).*

Translation:

Kitunda: (*Quietly but empathetically*). Many people died. And all those who died had drunk the water.

Ngulumbalyo: They didn't, the liars! Some of them drank the water but violated the taboos. After the battles they plundered and took the loot. They raped people's wives. And we were forbidden to do all these things.

Kitunda: We have talked about these, not once or twice, but many times. And this is not the time to talk about the matter again. There is a war ahead of us and, by God, I don't want people to die because of some silly beliefs and superstitions.

Ngulumbalyo: Silly? Water-silly?! (Hussein, 1969a: 45-46).

The above data is in agreement with Flint and Hewitt (2015) and Flint (2015) who also identify two main groups of people in the world with regard to beliefs in the power of traditional and religious healers and seers. The first group constitutes

those who do not believe in the power of traditional and religious healers and seers like Kinjeketile. The above Kitunda's speech shows that he belongs to this group and refers to such beliefs as silly beliefs and superstitions. People like Kitunda do not believe in the power of messianic masculinity because it cannot be scientifically justified. The other group constitutes those who believe in the power of traditional and religious healers and seers like Kinjeketile and the modern prophets all over the world who perform miracles and wonders. Ngulumbalyo represents such people who keep on believing and relying on magic, wonders and superstitions even if they fail them. Flint (2015) remarks that there is always a conflict between the two groups as it is the case above between Ngulumbalyo and Kitunda. This agreement of data is a justification that Hussein's portrayal of messianic masculinity in *Kinjeketile* is relevant to the Tanzanian society. In addition to this relevance, Hussein uses the belief controversy between Kitunda who believes in the Supreme God and Ngulumbalyo who believes in the traditional gods to critique the effectiveness of the belief in traditional gods through portrayal of failure of Kinjeketile's belief. Hussein uses Kitunda who calls the traditional beliefs "silly and superstitious".

The researcher, therefore, looks at Ebrahim Hussein as a literary artist who expertly uses *Kinjeketile* to critique the practice of believing in the performance of magic, wonders and superstitions and the effects of relying on such beliefs. He also uses *Kinjeketile* to show clearly the detrimental effects of overtrusting Kinjeketile's performance of messianic masculinity, thus deciding to wage war without good preparation. The effects included massive death followed by extreme scarcity of food (Hussein, 1969a).

Similar to Hussein's *Kinjeketile* but in different contexts, *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* portrays Martha, a modern woman who is educated, earning a salary and hires Stella as her housegirl whom she pays a wage. Sticking to the insights from Butler's Conceptual Model of Gender Performativity, Butler argues that rather than being something one is, gender is something one does or performs. Therefore, women and men's performances or actions that indicate economic power and economic independence have a connotation of their masculinity. Morgenroth and Ryan (2018) extend Butler's insight in their view that in the world's culture, wealth equals success. It is also connected to a man or a woman's sense of his or her masculinity to the extent that women and men are often judged and measured by their wealth; what they possess or their income. The fact that Martha is a paid employee and she possesses wealth is revealed in the following Pastor's speech:

Unakumbuka ulipata nishani. Mfanyakazi bora! Mwanamke!...
Unakumbuka uliponunua nyumba hii, bustani hizi, ... (Hussein, 1988: 31).

Translation:

Do you remember when you got a memento. The best worker! A woman!... Do you remember when you bought this house, these gardens.... (Hussein, 1988: 31).

Martha is a Kenyan woman who is portrayed to be performing positive masculinity through working hard as an employee to the extent of being awarded as the best worker. From that work she earns a good salary that enables her to buy a house and gardens which make her wealthy. She also manages to hire a housegirl and commands her to do domestic activities to her satisfaction. The following dialogue between Martha and her housegirl (Stella) portray Martha's masculinity as a result of being wealthy:

Martha: *Saa ngapi? (Stella anatoka haraka.... Stella anarudi).*

Stella: *Saa kumi na moja....*

Martha: *Na leo asubuhi umechelewa tena.*

Stella: *(Hajibu. Anatazama chini)*

Martha: *Bunduki hii hapa inafanya nini? Nilikuambia uitafutie mahali pengine.*

Stella: *Ndiyo. Nitaitafutia.*

Martha: *Umetengeneza chumba cha wageni?... (Hussein, 1988:1-2).*

Translation:

Martha: What time is it? (*Stella moves away quickly....Stella comes back*).

Stella: Five o'clock....

Martha: And you're late again today morning.

Stella: (*She doesn't reply. She looks down.*)

Martha: What's this gun doing here? I told you to find another place for it.

Stella: Yes. I'll find.

Martha: Have you prepared the visitors' room?... (Hussein, 1988:1-2).

The above dialogue between Martha and Stella clearly portray Martha's financial ability and her ability to hire a house girl and commandingly direct her to perform domestic activities. In this context, therefore, Martha bullies Stella and Stella is forced to be gentle, polite, caring, tolerant, submissive, respectful and supportive as it is normally expected of African women (Morgenroth and Ryan, 2018). On the contrary, Martha is assertive, strong, independent and confident which are masculine traits as identified by Morgenroth and Ryan (*ibid.*). The researcher, therefore, regards this Hussein's portrayal of two women as intra-gender masculinity which is a result of Martha's wealthy condition as opposed to Stella's economically inferior status.

According to the World Bank collection of development indicators, the percentage of total female labour force in Kenya was reported at 49.03 % in 2020, as compiled from officially recognized sources. Kenya labour force, female - actual values, historical data, forecasts and projections were sourced from the

World Bank on August of 2021 (data.worldbank.org). Female labour force as a percentage of the total shows the extent to which women are active in the labour force in Kenya. This data, in relation to what is portrayed in Hussein's *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim*, shows that Kenyan women's economic power is on the rise, threatening men's economic power. The researcher, therefore, considers Hussein as a philosophical literary expert who uses *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* to encourage men all over the world to renegotiate gender with women, as suggested by Butler (1990), and not to be conservative to the patriarchal norms and values, otherwise men will be very stressful and restless as they see their masculinity threatened by the increasing number of economically well-off women. Hussein's *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* gives us Herbert as a role model of how men can renegotiate gender with women. Herbert is portrayed to represent a group of men in Kenya who have a positive attitude towards their wives' possession of wealth. He is relaxed and does not get disturbed by the fact that his wife wants to buy a plot in Mombasa. He even goes to Mombasa to see the plot his wife wants to buy. Herbert says:

...Martha anataka kununua kiwanja Mombasa. Itabidi nikakiangalie....
(Hussein, 1988: 4).

Translation:

...Martha wants to buy a plot in Mombasa. I'll have to see it...
(Hussein, 1988: 4).

The above portrayed Herbert's attitude towards his wife's possession of wealth is a challenge to both the patriarchal norms and values and to patriarchal masculinity. When men enjoyed negative patriarchal masculinity, they did not want their wives to possess wealth. On the contrary, men are nowadays portrayed to have realized the advantages of their wives' possession of wealth and are very comfortable. They have come to a realization that even when they fall sick, get fired from employment or die, their wealthy women may keep on providing for the families. What is nowadays taking place in Kenya as a result of men's change of attitude and as a challenge to negative patriarchal masculinity, is the fact that rich men are marrying rich women, creating doubly rich families and most employed men are seeking for employed women in order to easily excel economically (Puthenpurakal, 2005). It is in opposition to what men used to do in about five decades before; marrying poor women so that they could easily be submissive to their wealthy husbands and husbands could easily perform negative patriarchal masculinity over their wives. Marriage of convenience is the neutral term for somebody who pursues a relationship for economically win-win situation (Puthenpurakal, *ibid.*).

4.0 Conclusion

In a nutshell, the examination of the portrayal of masculinity in *Kinjeketile* and *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* reveals how the plays are relevant to the real life in the current Tanzanian and Kenyan societies respectively, and to the 1905-1907 Maji Maji War in Tanzania, and the famous 1987 Otieno case in Kenya. The analysis, interpretation and discussion of the data findings obtained in the plays show how Hussein, specifically through *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim*, intends to reflect to the Kenyan society the 'Otieno case' that took place in Western Kenya in the year 1987 and its effects to the society. In a similar way but different contexts, Hussein uses *Kinjeketile* to reflect to the Tanzanian society the historical incident of the 1905-1907 Maji Maji War and its long-lasting effects to the Tanganyikan society, which is nowadays the Tanzanian society. Through Hussein's reflective portrayal we see how patriarchal masculinity and other forms of masculinity are performed by Kenyan and Tanzanian men and women both positively and negatively. We also see how both the Kenyan and Tanzanian societies are divided into two groups: the first group of those who faithfully follow the traditional patriarchal norms and values and the second one of modernists who do not follow some of the traditional patriarchal norms and values. The two groups are portrayed to be in conflict like the one between Martha and the Umma Klan in *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* or the other between the 'Kinjeketiles' (traditionalists) and the 'Kitundas' (modernists) in *Kinjeketile*. The traditionalists hold the view that women are to be controlled by men, and when a man dies, his wife has no right to inherit her dead husband's property but male relatives of the dead have full control of the widow and they can decide on the property. On the other hand, the modernists challenge some of the traditional patriarchal masculinity performances like dominance of men over women and controlling widows' families and property. Martha in *Kwenye Ukingo wa Thim* and Bibi Kitunda in *Kinjeketile* represent a small group of modern women who have championed the resistance against such negative patriarchal masculinity performances; Martha firmly tells George that he has no authority in her (Martha's) house and she orders him to leave regardless the fact that he is the brother of her dead husband. The dramatization also portrays women complaining to be less free in marriage compared to their husbands who are very free. They say that when things are not pleasing in homes, men may go to night clubs; they may go out of their homes and share ideas with friends or take younger wives. Women cannot do the same or they will be given bad names. Some of the patriarchal norms and values are said to lead to the superiority of men over women, hence subordination of women by men. Sticking to Butler and Connell's ideas and insights, the researcher calls for men and women to renegotiate gender in order to get rid of gender inequality in Tanzania, Kenya and other parts of the world. The researcher is of the opinion that this work significantly contributes to scholarly work on masculinity and forms the basis of future research on gender in general and masculinity in particular.

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