
The intertextuality of Themes in the Plays of Kinjeketile and Majira ya Utasa

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Abstract

This study examines the intertextuality in the plays of *Kinjeketile* (1969) by Ibrahim Hussein and *Majira ya Utasa* (2015) by Timothy Arege. Although the two plays have a great difference in the historical periods of their writings, they depict similarity in the creation of themes and to a certain extent, the echo of Hussein's work is seen in Arege's play. Hussein is a great East African playwright whose works have been read in Tanzania and East Africa at large. Most East African literature focuses on protests against colonialism and neo-colonialism and advocates for education and development as the best they can fight vices such as tribalism and corruption. Intertextuality is the concept of the interdependence of texts. The common themes in both plays are examined with a view to explaining the cultural, economic, historical and social factors that give rise to the situations inherent in both plays. Further, an attempt is made to explain the relevance of the content of the themes in Arege's *Majira ya Utasa* to the historical environment obtains in Hussein's *Kinjeketile*. All texts are intertexts because they refer to, recycle and draw from the pre-existing texts. According to Kristeva (1986), any work of art is an intertext which interacts with other texts and rewrites, transforms or parodies them. This article explores some of the themes in the two plays guided by the theory of intertextuality.

Keywords: co-operation, freedom, intertextuality, leadership, oppression

