Ideology and National Consciousness in Feminist Dramaturgies: A Reading of Four Contemporary Kenyan Plays

Christine Namayi and Felix Orina

Department of English, literature, Journalism and Mass Communication Kibabii University

Abstract: **The purpose of the present paper is to examine the place of ideology in the dramaturgies of feminist drama in 21st century Kenya and the direction it may be taking in its development. We investigate how modern-day Kenya's socio-historical landscape has left its impression on both the selected playwrights' feminist ideological standpoints and the resulting dramaturgies. The focus is on three Kenyan playwrights and some of their works: Denis Kyalo's *The Hunter is Back* (2010), Francis Imbuga's *The Return of Mgofu* (2011) and *The Green Cross of Kafira*(2013), and Njoki Gitumbi's *A New Dawn* (2012). The study sought to not only illustrate the representation of women in the selected plays but also examine the basis and effectiveness of their depictions and portrayals.Since the study is textual in nature, a textual exegesis is conducted through close-reading and with content analysis as the main method of data collection and analysis respectively. Data analysis is supported by secondary sources. The study leans on feminist literary theories, particularly gynocritism and Gayatri Spivak's view on subalternity and how subaltern experiences diminish the position of women in society. Tenets of Postcolonial theories, particularly those articulated by Edward Said and Homi K. Bhabha, were also used to explore issues and challenges of female re-presentation. The study is important because there is the tendency to associate many an author or playwright's artistic choices to certain dominant traditions to the total disregard to minor but effective ones. The study confirms that the utilization of socio-political changes and events within which the texts are set, shape the playwrights' attempt to represent women in various ways.**

Key words: **ideology, dramaturgies, national history, Marxism, social context, tradition**

I. INTRODUCTION

The intersection of history and literary works is often pegged on the fact that the latter attempt to recreate not only the past and the present, but also, at times, an envisaged future, so that a people's history is treated as an "ongoing spectacle in which units of experience can be isolated" (Ganyi, 2014, p. 47). Given this close affinity, and the manner in which history is captured in the selected texts, it is important to examine the extent to which Kenya's national histories, and the so called units of experience, have been reflected on both the playwrights' feminist strategies as well as the thrust of resulting dramaturgies in Kenya today. Brandy (1993) views history as a 'real' past, a belief or a set of beliefs about that past, and claims to report the 'truth' about that real past. Burkeywo (2015) in making sense of Brandy's explication of history in literature, surmises: "history is a construction based on real and collective experiences of the past as understood in the present. Its nature is that it captures what happened in the past according to sources, explains why it happened and attempts to give a rational and realistic interpretation of that occurrence" (p. 1). It may then be argued that history is never self-explanatory. It is experienced at an individual level and reproduced in a manner consistent with the individual's perspective.

The four plays selected for analysis in the present study, all published between 2010 and 2013, represent Kenya's recent socio-historical experiences, only sparingly peering into a more distant past. The main focus is, of course, on historical gender injustices in Kenya but with alternating forays into other related matters such as Kenya's years of experimentation with democracy; corrupt tendencies like tribalism, nepotism and cronyism not to forget deep tribal animosities that mainly come to the surface disguised as election-related violence. Given that women are more the objects rather than the subjects of whatever atrocity perpetuated in society, it should be of interest to examine how contemporary Kenyan theatre deals with the situation of women and what strategies inform their dramaturgy, whether thematicor aesthetic.

II. IDEOLOGY

According to Ngara (1990) ideology refers to that particular aspect of human condition under which people operate as conscious actors (11). Ngara contends that ideology is the medium through which human consciousness works. In other words, what is seen or believed largely depends on one's ideology. Authorial ideology is what determines the writer's perception of reality. Whatever stand the writer takes partly constitutes their authorial ideology. Ngara further describes aesthetic ideology as the literary convention and stylistic stances adopted by the writer. He acknowledges Chinua Achebe as one of the writers who incorporated Igbo cultural elements as an important principle of artistic creation.A cursory look at the texts selected for the present study reveals two broad categories of ideologies that endear themselves to the manner in which the playwrights want to deal with the affairs of women in present-day Kenya. First, there is the

committed socialist ideology and, second, the ideology inspired by the traditions of folk performance.

Dramaturgies Influenced by Committed Socialist Ideology

While talking about the nature and function of committed art, Ganyi (2014) posits that it is a kind of "protest art" created by those who believe in presenting society as it is, exaggerating only when it is a necessary means of achieving anticipated effects of their art. Ganyi avers, while agreeing with Richards (1987): "[they are] more concerned with specific social issues than with universalized themes …and in combining a radical perspective with recognition of the importance of cultural traditions (47). Ganyi further quotes Adeseke (2012) who avows that the producers of such literature are most likely "new breed" of younger Marxist writers "whose aesthetic standpoints evince the alienation between the haves and the have not's in society" (47). Like Garuba (1984) Ganyi believes that "a concern with socio-historical phenomenon is virtually mandatory for any artist who does not intend to blunt his moral conscience and reduce his art to levity and banality (48). It may then be fitting to view this kind of art as a tool for sensitization; a form of activism and a means to an end rather than an end in itself. It is Brecht who further argues that socialist realism reveals itself more perfectly when "a work is made intelligible for the time in which they are written (Mueller 1984).

It may be noted further, and in line with the concerns of the present study, that the committed socialist ideology replicates itself in two main variants that also form the subtopics of discussion herein. They include: a fidelity to socio-historical Milieu and then an ideology of cultural hybridity. As concerns the second broad category of ideology inspired by the traditions of folk performance, two major ideological variants emerge, namely: first, a didactic retributive ideology and, second, an ideology modelled on the universal myth poesy. Each of the mentioned sub ideologies may be discerned as follows.

Dramaturgies of Fidelity to Socio-Historical Milieus

The texts selected for the present study, by virtue of their social themes, qualify as political theatre. Political theatre is by nature committed and always aimed at championing the cause of the proletariat in their battle against the bourgeoisie. A political tool may fundamentally be regarded as social propaganda because no political agenda may be pursued without the deployment of some form of propaganda machine. Tengya (2016) describes political theatre as that which "is appropriated as a weapon to fight against all sorts of social imbalances and exploitation of the weak" (46). It is the nature of political art to want to remain true to the social and historical contexts they depict. This may also be termed as realism or verisimilitude. Watt (1957, 13) describes realism as a desire by artists to "convey the impression of fidelity to human experience as opposed to general human types" (Haricharan 2004, 1). Gitumbi, Imbuga and Kyalo may be described as using the socialist realism ideology to drive their

feminist programs. They all use characters that are exquisitely drawn from an environment with which a contemporary, ordinary, Kenyan reader can relate. Kadesa,in *the Return of Mugofu*, the leader of the exiles from Mindika after the first madness now settled in Nderema, is, for instance, drawn from an impeccably recognizableenvironment of post-multiparty Kenya. Mwodi and Yuda, in *The green Cross of Kafira,* both officials in the government of Kafira,also come from an environment that the readers can visualize. Rita the main character in the *Hunter is Back,* on the other hand, grows up in an environment where she,as a young girl, has to struggle with an ailing mother and an absentee father. Mama Mugei in *the Green Cross of Kafira* who is the wife of Pastor Mugei, and now in charge of the Green Cross Clinic, also matures in a harsh political environment that is reminiscent of the difficultiesmost female politicians encounter. Nuru in *A New Dawn* also faces similar challenges. The characters' background is fully developed and is located to a specific space and time which is clearlypost post-independence Kenya. With such treatment of time, place and character, one appreciates and easily chooses sides on ensuing entanglements.

It is however noteworthy that realism is not homogenous. Lukacs (1960, 93) identifies two variants of realism as "critical realism and socialist realism" with the fundamental difference between them being the use of collective perspective in socialist realism. According to Lukacs "a socialist perspective provides a framework for the psychological make-up of the characters it portrays. Within critical realism, although a character may be striving toward socialism, the portrayal of such a character remains no more than a superficial one" (1956, 96 in Haricharan 2004, 5). This may not be said about the characters who are round and quite developed. Rita, the central character in Kyalo's*the Hunter is Back*, changes a lot and grows increasingly conscious as her story unfolds. She now understands issues more deeply with a better cultivated perspective:

*Rita***:** Let the old man not be troubled. He who punches a wall hurts his own fist. If the people of Chama decide to confer power to somebody else, then I don't understand what this hullabaloo is all about. Power belongs to the people. It is their right to give it to whoever they choose. (54)

As they grow in conscience, women become more sophisticated and gain tremendous influence, such as in the case of Mama Nuru in Githumbi's *A New Dawn:*

Mama Nuru: Honorable citizens. We said at the beginning that we do not come to you to ask for your votes. No, no, this is not election time. We came to chew words with you, and we hope that our words will mark the beginning of a new season, a new harvest. We hope that after we have left, you will ruminate over what we have shared, and that the seed we have planted will find fertile ground in you. MCD needs your support, each and every one of you. We say that many people

can easily lift a mortar and that a single finger cannot kill a louse. *MCD hoiyee*!

Crowd: Hoiyee(43)

In Imbuga's *The Green Cross of Kafira,* Mama Mgei is the archetypal matriarch whose pronouncements and actions personify wisdom, compassion and understanding:

Mama Mgei: very well done. At last the stone that was scoffed at and ignored shall become the cornerstone. Let me assure you now that I have the official invitation, from now you are official guests of the state. You will need to prepare quickly because your transport will be here within an hour. You will be brought back here the day after the swearing-in ceremony. That is when you will be told how each one of you will be compensated for your honesty and courage. Thank you and good luck. *(Wild cheers from the dancers). But remember that humility is the salt that makes success a desired goal. (Mama goes off, escorted by the Choreographer as the Rejects hug one another excitedly).* (52)

Clearly, these female characters are hardly recognizable, given the naivety and powerlessness that defined them earlier. Fischer (1959, 110) clarifies this to mean the presence of "an essential truth". Lukacs further posits that socialist literature starts off where bourgeois literature ends because the "hero's" childhood is negligible. It is the development of the young adult into a conscious leader that is the focus here. The positive hero starts off as a rather naïve person. He is then brought to enlightenment by a "mentor" in his life and his consciousness is subsequently raised. (S)He is someone that is meant to be emulated. This coming of age is a major theme in many socialist realist texts (Haricharan, 2004, p. 8). Indeed, all the four leading female characters in the texts under analysis are not only metamorphosed, but also assumed the role of "mentor". One such character is Rita in Kyalo's *the Hunter is Back*:

Rita: we need not discuss this anymore. In any case we can agree to disagree. (*Drums beat offstage in a frenzy. A moment later a group of dancers enters. Closely behind them, three men carry high the stool of power, the sheathed spear and the chiefdom robes. They assemble the prices before Rita and retreat. The drumbeats stop and Maneno leads the dancers in singing and dancing*).

Soloist: ii aume on nee nakuu

All the men this way

Eeh this way

All the women this way

Come, see our Rita

Eeh our Rita

Eeh our child

Eeh our Rita(64)

It may then be observed that socialist literature has a very close affinity with history; a history that reveals how an individual has developed from a state of naivety and isolation to one of full growth and existence. When this characteristic of socialist literature is available in feminist writing, the product is socialist feminism. In a comprehensive article by Chicago Women's Liberation Union titled *Socialist Feminism: A Strategy for the Women's Movement*, Booth et.al, describe history as an important weapon in women's liberation decrying that "history isn't what happened, but a story of what happened". They explain:

> *Understanding our changing history helps us to avoid stereotyping our opposition or our own notions of what liberation means. The development of a strategy makes it clear that technological advances, legislative advances, legislative changes or educational developments are not good or bad in themselves. When we know the context in which any specific change occurs, we can judge the value of that change for our goals (1972, p. 3).*

Indeed, a clear understanding of history is important if gains made on gender equality and equity are to be safeguarded. One notable feature in the texts selected for the present study is the manner in which playwrights have situated their activism for women's rights within concrete historical contexts. In Kyalo's *The Hunter is Back*, for instance, female characters such as Rita are increasingly appropriate and attain a voice of their own in a manner that not only brings about change and better living conditions for women but everyone else in a society that is not far removed from situations witnessed by the observer.

Imbuga, equally, seems to advance a socialist feminist ideology, especially given the manner he highlights historical gender inequalities, discrimination, oppression, and the need for a more tranquil society. His aim is, largely, to understand the nature of gender inequality and he, therefore, examines women's social roles, experience, interests and situations that lead to gender inequalities.

Dipio (1998) approaches feminism as a realization that there is an unequal power relationship between men and women in the society, and this results into women rebelling against traditional culture and challenging, or, even strongly hating men (p. 209). This is clearly portrayed through the characters of Rita, Mama Mugei, Veronica, Mama Nuru, and Nora Ulivaho. Imbuga creates Mama Mugei and Nora Ulivaho as strong women who resist and outlive the various circumstances in their lives. In *The Return of Mgofu,* Mbuga's support for disfranchised women is evident as overbearing men receive a lot of chastisement and negative publicity.

In the same manner, *The Green Cross of Kafira* lends credence to a feminist interpretation. A good number of Imbuga's male charactersare in such a sorry state, suffering just as much as the females or sometimes even more. Imbuga's portrayal of Honourable Mwodi and Yuda as

gullible in their quest to hoodwink the masses is unmistakable. Their shenanigans and evil plots are uncovered and they become everybody's laughing stock. Thewill of the people prevails as Pastor Mugeiis declared the sole presidential candidate in the newly formed Green Party of Kafira. The writer brings out the frustrations that Hon Mwodi and Yuda face when they can't resist the will of the people, in a situation akin to retributive justice.

Dramaturgies Inspired by Cultural Hybridity

According to Munashe (2014), hybridity, is a key concept for deliberations on culture and identity formation in post-independence as advanced by theorist HomiBhabha. Bhabha defines hybridity as "a problematic of colonial representation that reverses the effect of colonial disavowal, so that the other denied knowledge enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority…to challenge and resist dominant cultural power" (Munashe, 2014, p. 1). Bhabha's argument understandably makes the point that it practically impossible to erase or ignore the consequence of a meeting of two different cultures and that, often time, people may not acknowledge the fact that they have taken up practices that hitherto belonged to a culture widely considered alien.

Ilo (2013) argues that pure indigenous aesthetics were basically decimated from the moment Africa came into contact with western value systems and literary methods. whatever came into being after that colonial experience whether aesthetic or polemical is, in his view, "post-indiginist" aesthetics or realism, and it represents a departure from a celebrated method in which African dramatists privileged their culture or indigenous traditions in foreign language plays in the spirit of nationalism. Ilo (2013) strongly feels that "the changing context of African literature demands corresponding alteration in the current critical and literary aesthetic practices". He further says:

> An alternative paradigm is desirable because it is unsuitable to continue to apply the literary standards of anticolonial literature to writings of a different era. There has now arisen a new generation of African writers who cannot apply the same aesthetics as the older generation that had closer contact with the African linguistic and oral traditions and faced an obligation to tackle colonialism (p. 87).

The point then is that each context gives birth to its own literature and even technique or, in the case of drama, dramaturgies. Ilo (2016) further quotes Ojaide (2008) who seems to agree with him in as far as the concept of context begetting technique is concerned: "[today's writers] have become part of the worldwide phenomena of migration and globalization with the attendant physical, sociocultural, psychic, and other forms of dislocation" (p. 88). Ilo declares:

I have coined the term 'techno-text' to refer to post-indiginist work of African literature arising from the aesthetic ambiance of modern urban, global, technological culture, in contrast to *creative writing mirroring the animist, the agrarian environment of Africa's past echoed in folk tales, myths, praise songs, epic poetry, riddles and chants. (89)*

The 'techno-text' may as well be referred to as the hybrid text that has adapted a number of modern dramaturgies. Much as the content in the texts under analysis is local, it may be observed that a number of formal and structural considerations made are hardly indigenous or traditional in character. A predominant non-indigenous strategy used to deliver the local content is the use women agency which is crucial in the construction of female identities. In most of the texts, women agency is gradual and incremental. They are therefore bildungsroman. In Githumbi'sA New Dawn women grow from strength to strength. Mama Nuru, for instance, grows from the position of a supportive housewife to that of an ideologue that is at the centre of change.

In Kyalo's *The Hunter is Back,* all the women characters from Naomi, Rita to Maneno grow from positions of disadvantage to that of great influence. Maneno seems to have finally outgrown her stereotyped characterization as the village's idler and rumour-monger to one who actually ushers in a new era of women leadership:

Maneno: Behold! We have a new chief!

Sivu: (*Rising*). What? Did I hear right? As far as I am concerned, I am the chief of Chama, and I am not new to power.

Maneno: I didn't proclaim your newness.

Sivu: What did you mean then "new chief"? Or do you simply want to play hide and seek?

Maneno: You are too senior to play such a game. (*Facing the crowd*) Rita has arrived from town. (*There is clapping and ululation. The crowd goes amok; two men grip the seat of power. Another grabs the spear and a handful more descend upon the chief. They strip him of the kingly robes and the hat. They then exit, singing and clapping*).

In *The Return of Mgofu* Nora U is presented as standing shoulder to shoulder with her great father and even poised to take over from him:

Nora U: People of our motherland, I greet you and greet you again. (*There is wild clapping and ululation*) Thank you for the opportunity to address you. Last night, my father and I were asked to consider coming back here for another visit in the near future. It's not difficult to see why that request was made. From our short stay here, it has become obvious that your current leaders wish to break clean from the past. (*Crowd claps*).Most of your leaders want Mundika to return to oneness and to wholeness. My father is still strong, but quite old. I cannot, therefore, guarantee his return. However, I promise that I shall return to honour the invitation on behalf of my father. (*There is wild clapping and ululation*). Thank you. Thank you very much. (*There is more clapping. Nora takes*

her seat as Mgofu stands to address the gathering. He surveys the audience in silence for some time before he speaks).

It may, finally, be observed that Hybridity is mainly about conveying local concerns with the help of western literary traditions and approaches. In the section that follows, ideologies born of traditional thought systems are expounded.

III. IDEOLOGY INSPIRED BY THE TRADITIONS OF FOLK PERFORMANCE

In this section, the traditional dramatic strategies that have found place in the dramaturgies employed by playwrights in question are examined. The use of elements drawn from the traditional folk performance have evidently been put to use by the playwrights to advance contemporary feminist concerns in a manner that members of their audience may already be accustomed to, whether consciously or otherwise, given the popularity and near universal appreciation of oral traditions and aesthetics. The two outstanding traditional organizing elements are: didactic retributive ideology and the ideology modelled on myth poesy, as delineated below.

Didactic Retributive Ideology

One of the most notable features of the indigenous folk traditions is their collective commitment to instilling values and safeguarding order and justice. Oral traditions consistently sought to socialize members of the community through inculcation of didactic themes as well as through a never wavering distinction between right and wrong. Through some form of poetic justice, right was ever rewarded as evil was perpetually punished. In each of the four texts, the resolution comes with a restoration of an abused social order.

In Kyalo's*The Hunter is Back,* for instance, justice is served to the oppressive Chief of Chama, Sivu, in a manner so emphatic as to leave no doubt about evil eventually coming to some form of punishment:

Sivu: Shh! Shh! Wait a minute my people…what have you done to me?

(*His pleas are swallowed by cries of the crowd as the people jeer and mock him. There is more confusion, name-calling and disorder as Ngumi enters, staggering. Rita, Naomi and Kito watch the unfolding events as the CURTAIN slowly closes*) (p. 68)

Such an ending can only bear didactic implications given the sense of finality with which it is presented. The Curtain closes once the victims are restituted by way of ascendance to power and a stern punishment handed to the main villain, Sivu.

In Imbuga's *The Green Cross of Kafira*, a state of equilibrium is restored and justice served when a former detainee, Pastor Mgei, defeats his tormentor, Chief of Chiefs, in an election and thus bringing the plundering of Kafira to an end. In all these instances women are either instrumental or on the driver's seat while benefitting one way or the other from the emerging order.

(*This is the swearing in ceremony. Several traditional troops can be heard approaching from different directions. The atmosphere is electric as the venue for the swearing in ceremony is prepared*)

Mgei: So help me God. (*Bishop Ben'sa takes the Bible from Mgei and hands him another Bible. Raising the second Bible*) so help me God. (*Tremendous and sustained applause for the president elect. Mgei steps forward to address the nation*). My fellow countrymen, after consultations with our advisers and our intended partners in development, we have decided that this swearing-in ceremony should be different from what Kafirans are used to. Because the word protocol has no equivalent in each of our ten national languages, we shall ignore it henceforth. But since you do not ignore something you are used to without replacing it with something else, we have decided to replace the term protocol with the term common sense…. (p. 55).

The same type of ending is present in Imbuga's other selected text *The Return of Mgofu* and Githumbi's*A New Dawn*. In a*A New Dawn,* the hope for a new start is more evident than ever:

Mama Nuru: …Can we roll back the cloud of negative ethnicity and together, bask under the sun that is our common heritage? These are the questions that are begging for answers, weighty questions that have been left unanswered for decades! Ultimately, I dare say, the answer lies with us—with you and me—and the decisions we make!

From the foregoing discussion and illustrations, it may be concluded that didacticism and retribution are some of the traditional ideological strategies that the playwrights have used. The two are indeed familiar to audiences that are already familiar with traditional folk aesthetics and are therefore highly expressive to them.

Dramaturgies Modelled on Myth Poesy

Simply put, myth poesy refers to the act of appropriating the poetics of the folk myth in the weaving and dissemination of otherwise modern dramatic forms. Okpewho (1983) sees myth not as a tale-type or genre, but as a quality: "that quality of fancy that which informs the creative and configurative powers of the human mind in varying degrees of intensity" (5). From this definition it is then possible to have stories, poetry, and even drama modelled on myth. According to Okpewho, a tale is most mythic when it is "unbound to time or space, where the creative imagination is least fettered by the obligation to be like life" (5). The main argument fronted by Okpewho is that the more mythic a narrative is, the more it approaches a state of free intellectual play and the more it is able to engage in abstract philosophical speculation. This half-mystical half-real attribute is what underlies indigenous forms of drama and their sense of ritual characteristic.

Asagba (1985) considers the approach that recognizes the role of indigenous forms in the development of modern African drama as being evolutionary in nature and cognizant of "the peculiar nature of contemporary African drama and theatre as

a product of two cultures—African and European. Asagba (1985) posits that "an attempt to discuss modern African drama using the modern criteria would not only create stereotypes but also a superficial understanding of it" (p. 84). Asagba adds:

> The evolutionary approach postulates that drama in Africa developed from man's need to control and dominate the natural and unforeseen forces that co-inhabit the world around him. Through ritual propitiation and sacrifices, which evoke elements of magic and spiritual possession, man dominates and empathizes with the repressive and unpredictable forces of nature…. From the argument of the evolutionary theorists, folklore, legends, myths and history become sources for dramatic and theatrical presentation (p. 85).

The traditional methods, therefore, have special effect when appropriated in modern drama and even a sense of control. The above elements of myth poesy are mostly evident in Imbuga's texts. The conflict in Imbuga's *The Return of Mgofu* clearly unfolds in a realm above the strictly realistic. Traditional African myths are indeed replete with fantastic scenes that involve characters who shuttle between the real physical world and the spiritual world. It is also true that in African oral traditions, humans that have transitioned into spirits or have become ancestors are accorded even greater respect that those who are still alive. They are also believed to have known the truth and are therefore considered wise. Imbuga's *The Return of Mgofu* exploits the traditional wisdom in many ways: Thori and Thoriwa return from the world of the spirits armed with words of wisdom on how to avoid conflict. In their conversations it is clear that ancestors hold each other with uttermost respect regardless of their gender. Thori and Thoriwa, who are husband and wife, interact and hold each other with exemplary decorum.

Thori: Yes, a woman pushing a man in a wheelchair. (Yawns loudly). I'm dog tired.

Thoriwa: Tired? Thori you haven't even pushed me half the distance I have pushed you.

Thori: That means we have overdone it today. We need to take a break. The rabbit saved her life by resting under the pawpaw tree.

Thoriwa: No. We've not overdone anything. One can't overdo a good deed. As Messengers of those who went before us, we can't overdo anything.

Thori: So you really think we should stop here and talk to them?

*Thoriwa***:** Where we come from, we are not used to walking long distances. That is why we are taking turns to ride in this machine. Give some mechanical advantage, you know.

Thori: That's right (Pause). You could say that Thoriwa and I fused seed of the pawpaw tree…

Thoriwa: (Outburst) Were! You and I were husband and wife. Don't forget that. Now, we are not. Maybe comrades in arms.

Clearly, above is a dialogue between two individuals who are equally endowed intellectually. The import of their assignment is what brings them together. The above scene alone, and especially the return from the world of the spirits, carries its own significance that needs to be discerned. There acts are a metaphor by themselves and metaphor may be said to be the main ideology behind traditional African art so that, as Nganyi (2014) has said, "nothing concerning art is self-evident" (p. 47). It may then be argued that Imbuga's is more of a metaphorical ideology. The *Green Cross of Kafira*is even more surreal with the conflict unfolding, in most instances, in the form of mind games.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the foregoing discussion, it may be noted that ideological inclinations of playwrights as well as their treatment of history have, to a great extent, influenced their feminist dramaturgies both in terms of authorial thought and form. There is indeed evidence that while there areplaywrights who have relied on western ideologies to shape their feminist dramaturgies,others like Imbuga have tampered western approaches with rich resources provided by traditional artistic methods to end up with some sort of hybrid feminist dramaturgies.It may then not be far-fetched to observe that, going forward, emerging, and somewhat peripheral, ideologies such as popular culture alongsidemultiple of developing queer aesthetics will find their way into mainstream feminist dramaturgies.

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